



Working in
partnership with

HS2



COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT FUND GUIDANCE DOCUMENT

The following document provides guidance on the Community and Environment Fund and should be read in conjunction with the Frequently Asked Questions document.

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 High Speed Two (HS2) is a new, high speed north-south railway. It is being taken forward in two phases: Phase One is between London, Birmingham and the West Midlands. The High Speed Rail (London – West Midlands) Act (the Act) received Royal Assent in early 2017. Phase Two will extend the route to Manchester, Leeds and beyond subject to future Parliamentary approval.
- 1.2 In October 2014, Government announced two funding programmes to offset the disruption of Phase One of HS2 on local communities – the Community and Environment Fund (CEF) and the Business and Local Economy Fund (BLEF). The following guidance applies only to applications for funding from the Community and Environment Fund (CEF). A separate guidance document has been created which relates to the Business and Local Economy Fund (BLEF).
- 1.3 A combined total of £40 million has been made available for these two funds (exclusive of administration costs) throughout the Phase One construction period and for the first year of operation of HS2 services. The funds will provide support for good quality bids and rigorous management of the spend profile will ensure that money is available throughout this time period. Accordingly, potential applicants can be assured that there will be no advantages of submitting early or disadvantages of submitting later during the construction period.
- 1.4 Both funds will allocate awards from the same £40 million funding pot and so the amounts allocated from each fund will depend of the number and quality of applications. The geographic allocation of funds is set out later in this document as announced in October 2016 by the Transport Secretary.
- 1.5 The funds were launched at Royal Assent in February 2017 and opened for applications on 8th March 2017.

2. The Community and Environment Fund

- 2.1 The objective of the CEF is;

To add benefit over and above committed mitigation and statutory compensation to communities along the route that are demonstrably disrupted by the construction of Phase One of HS2 from London to Birmingham. These will be principally along the line of route of HS2, but there are a small number of off-route locations which may also be disrupted e.g. due to relocation of railway facilities, and these will be eligible to apply to the funds. There will be two types of CEF grant: CEF Local will focus on quality of life and environment in individual communities and CEF Strategic will focus on large projects across several communities and address strategic rather than purely local concerns. Wherever possible, the CEF fund aims to leave a sustainable legacy.
- 2.2 CEF Local will fund smaller projects (up to a maximum of £75,000 per project) which will benefit quality of life for individual communities. CEF Strategic will fund larger grants (from £75,001 up to £250,000 per project) and will provide a legacy by supporting projects which benefit multiple communities along the Phase One route.
- 2.3 These grants may fund projects that cross a number of local authority areas. Initiatives the CEF may support might include:

- Improved pedestrian, equestrian, or cycle access not provided under statutory services;
- Landscape and nature conservation enhancement projects which increase biodiversity (including pop up interventions such as skip gardens);
- Enhancement or replacement of sports and recreational facilities;
- Improved access and enhancements to public open space;
- Provision of enhanced or new community facilities; and
- Refurbishment/re-use of historic buildings and monuments.

2.4 These examples are purely illustrative and we welcome applications for any projects that will enhance the quality of life and the environment of communities disrupted by the construction of HS2.

2.5 Environmental Benefit and Community Benefit have equal priority and any applications for funding must meet at least one of the primary and secondary outcomes.

2.6 In line with the aims of the fund, any improvements to the environment must also ultimately have a benefit to communities disrupted by HS2. We would not therefore fund an environmental project which solely focuses on protecting the environment in the same way that we wouldn't fund a heritage project just to protect a building or area of land – there would need to be additional tangible benefits which could be realised by disrupted and/or associated communities. Applicants therefore need to think wider about how they involve people from disrupted communities and how the project will benefit the local area (for example access to the environment, setting up a local volunteer group, undertaking awareness raising with schools and other community organisations or could a webcam or interactive website be established).

2.7 If you are considering applying for funding from CEF Strategic, please note that any application would also need to make the strategic case for the environmental improvements e.g. how the project meets priorities identified in strategies, local plans, the strategic importance of the environmental space, habitats supported, species developed etc. CEF Strategic applications will also need to evidence partnerships that provide environmental expertise and strategic alignment as well alignment with and expertise in the communities where the project is based and provides benefit, such as alignment with regional or county public sector policy.

2.8 For further information on the requirements for CEF Strategic funding, please see CEF FAQ 13.

3. Who can apply for funding?

3.1 You are eligible to apply for funding if your organisation is:

Formally established for public benefit and is not for profit. For non-statutory bodies, you must have a governing document (e.g. constitution or memorandum and articles of association) which includes appropriate statements on members, Directors or Trustees not benefiting financially from the organisation or its dissolution, a minimum of 3 unrelated people on the committee and have your own bank account (which requires 2 signatories).

3.2 Primarily this funding programme is targeted at the voluntary/community sector including registered charities, constituted community groups, Community Interest Companies (CICs), social enterprises and community businesses. More information on eligible organisations is included in the FAQ document.

3.3 Subject to meeting the requirements set out in this guidance document, examples of eligible organisations include;

- Registered charity
- Fully constituted club, association or trust which is set up for charitable purposes
- Local authorities
- Other public sector statutory bodies such as a parish and town councils
- Local education authority
- Foundation school or college
- Voluntary aided or controlled school
- Independent school or college
- Institute of further education
- Academy schools
- Institute of higher education (including universities)
- Community Interest Company (CIC)
- Industrial Provident Society
- Community amateur sports clubs (CASC)

3.4 We will not directly fund individuals, limited liability partnerships, private sector company/business or any organisation that cannot demonstrate appropriate governance.

4. Can we apply as part of a partnership/consortium?

4.1 Some organisations may decide to work together and adopt a joint approach; however, any application to CEF must be made by an organisation which has a legal entity. So one organisation in the partnership needs to be nominated as the lead organisation and make the application. That organisation will be legally accountable for managing the grant and reporting back on project delivery, including the management of any workers funded by the project, and for ensuring that the project achieves its stated outcomes.

4.2 Any partnership/consortium based application will be asked to submit a partnership agreement that has been signed by all parties if they are successful with their funding application.

4.3 Neither the accountable lead organisation nor the partner organisation(s) receiving awarded grant funding via the lead organisation can use the awarded grant funding for private benefit or gain.

4.4 A maximum of 40% of the total amount of CEF funding requested can be utilised by partners, therefore the lead partner (i.e. the applicant) must be directly responsible for 60% of the total CEF funding.

5. Are there any restrictions on how many times an organisation can apply?

5.1 Only one application from each lead applicant is allowed at a time. We will, however, consider applications more frequently from the same applicant in exceptional circumstances. This time period may vary, depending on the demand for funds and the construction timetable; on occasions quality applications may be brought forward or deferred for consideration due to this.

- 5.2 A second application can only be submitted six months after a satisfactory Final Completion Report has been submitted to demonstrate that a first project has achieved its outcomes. For capital projects, the Final Completion Report is submitted 12 months after the capital work has finished. If an applicant receives an award and grant management is considered to have been poor or the project does not achieve its outcomes (even following sustained engagement with Groundwork UK), subsequent applications will be deemed a low priority and are unlikely to be successful.
- 5.3 Please note we will not fund the same project twice.
- 5.4 There are no restrictions on reapplying if a previous application has been unsuccessful.

6. Can my organisation apply for multiple projects?

- 6.1 Organisations that have previously received a CEF or BLEF award are eligible to apply again. However in the interest of ensuring that there is a fair and inclusive spread of funding across the route, priority in subsequent years may be given to organisations that meet the criteria but have not received funding previously, taking into account the regions along the line of route.

7. What type of funding can I apply for?

- 7.1 For both CEF Local and Strategic, funding can be capital only, revenue only or a blend of revenue and capital grants.
- 7.2 We will not provide funding retrospectively for projects for any related work that has already taken place or any costs incurred prior to receiving your award offer.

8. What does capital funding cover?

- 8.1 Funding can be used towards capital infrastructure costs, including, refurbishment of existing facilities, the installation of fixed equipment, new buildings and structures, enhanced access and landscaping.
- 8.2 For capital grants, work should be able to start within 6 months of an award being received and works completed within 2 years.
- 8.3 A contribution of up to £1,000 towards legal fees on capital grants to enable grant security (e.g. securing a lease or placing a restriction on title) to be obtained can be included in the budget. However, the fund will not pay for any other up front development costs, such as planning permission or feasibility surveys that are required to be completed.
- 8.4 Relevant planning permission, other permissions (e.g. Environmental Agency consent) and building regulations do not need to be in place at the time an application is submitted but will need to be evidenced (if relevant) before any funding can be drawn down if your application for capital funding is approved.

9. If I'm applying for capital funding, do I need security of tenure?

- 9.1 If you are applying for capital funding of up to £10,000 you do not formally need security of tenure. If you own or lease the land or building, you must supply a copy of your leasehold or freehold document with your application. If you do not own the land

or building, you will require the permission of the landlord which includes a statement guaranteeing public access to the project for a minimum of 2 years.

- 9.2 To be eligible to apply for capital funding of £10,001 or over, your organisation must either own the freehold interest or have a sufficient leasehold interest in the land involved in your project. To demonstrate this, you must supply a copy of your leasehold or freehold document with your application. If you do not own the land or facility, you will also need the permission of your landlord (or the landowner).
- 9.3 The relevant lease term required varies depending upon the size of the grant sought. The guide is as follows:
- £10,001 to £75,000 – Five years
 - £75,001 to £250,000 – Ten years
- 9.4 For more information on the security of tenure requirements for this funding programme, please see sections 8 and 9 of the CEF FAQ document.

10. Can I apply for equipment?

- 10.1 Yes. Funding to purchase equipment to support the delivery of a project is eligible. We are also happy to fund projects where the costs are 100% only for equipment.
- 10.2 If equipment is moveable (e.g. not fixed to the floor or building) the costs are classified as revenue expenditure.
- 10.3 The fund will not pay for the purchase of minibuses or vehicles, however will allow reasonable vehicle hire costs on a project by project basis if it is integral to the delivery of the project (e.g. a sports activator who delivers coaching sessions in multiple rural areas and needs to take equipment to each session).

11. What does revenue funding cover?

- 11.1 Revenue grants can be used to cover running costs, staffing and project delivery costs.
- 11.2 Revenue grant awards are available for up to a maximum three years in length.
- 11.3 We will only fund direct project costs, that is, costs that relate clearly and directly to the delivery of the project. These can include salaries, volunteer expenses, building hire costs and travel costs. In many cases project costs will also include less delivery-focused aspects such as administration, insurance and utility costs.
- 11.4 We will also allow applicants to apply for up to 10% of the total funding request to cover a contribution to existing costs such as overheads (e.g. heating, lighting, rent) and management costs - as long as the costs are linked to the project. These costs will need to be included in the project budget and appropriate evidence submitted to confirm what they cover.
- 11.5 Revenue projects must be able to start within six months of the date of an award being offered to your organisation.

12. Can we apply for costs to cover salaries?

- 12.1 Yes. If your request is partly or wholly for salary costs, please ensure that the salary element of your budget includes the salary plus on-costs, including National Insurance and pension contributions (if applicable). Salary costs must relate directly to the delivery of the project for which you are applying and staff must be employed by the applicant organisation.

13. General guidance on project costs

- 13.1 A detailed breakdown of the budget for your project must be included in your application. It is important for us to make sure that your project costs are realistic, so your budget must include all the costs that you will incur. You also need to tell us where any partnership funding will be sourced from, and evidence of confirmed match contributions need to be provided with your application. If you are requesting a grant which covers multiple years we will consider reasonable increases each year to account for inflation, please include inflation costs in the cost breakdown.

14. Do I need to include VAT in my project costs?

- 14.1 You need to include any non-recoverable VAT relating to your request in your budget. If you are unsure if your organisation is eligible to reclaim all or a proportion of the VAT you will pay on this project you should consult with HM Revenue and Customs to clarify. Please note, we are unable to provide tax advice.

15. Are there any project costs that you consider to be ineligible?

- 15.1 The following costs/projects are not eligible for funding through CEF;
- Personal equipment and clothing
 - Purchasing vehicles
 - Buying land or facilities for future use (for example where the community/public benefit will not be realised within the timescales for this funding programme or to stop future development)
 - Projects intended primarily for private gain
 - Projects that contribute directly to a company's distributable profits
 - To help with budget shortfalls, debt repayments or endowments (including funds to build up a reserve or surplus and loan repayments)
 - Retrospective funding – we will not reimburse costs already incurred
 - Projects or activities that are primarily for the promotion of religion, religious belief or faith. Whilst religious organisations and faith groups may be able to apply for funding, the project must deliver wider community or public benefits to be eligible. In addition, we will not part fund a post which provides both community and religious/faith based work.
 - Any project or activity that may bring HS2 Ltd, its sub-contractors or its partners (including Groundwork UK) into disrepute.
 - Projects that do not meet the 'Additionality' principle (set out below in 15.3)
 - Projects used solely for delivering curriculum activity (If your project is applying for a school or education establishment it should ensure it opens opportunities for the wider community. Please see additional guidance for school applications).
 - Unspecified expenditure
 - Costs associated with fundraising or bid writing
 - Any project where funding will be passported to other organisations (for example though a grants programme)

- Organisational overheads or running costs which the organisation would incur whether the project was running or not (although we will consider funding support costs incurred as a direct result of running the project)
- Campaigning or lobbying projects
- Feasibility studies
- Holidays (UK and Overseas)
- Overseas trips or any international activity
- Any activity that would be in breach of State Aid rules
- Broadband (please see CEF FAQ section 20)
- Business rates and subsidies
- Car parking subsidies
- Ongoing maintenance costs or ongoing running costs linked to capital projects
- Speed cameras or vehicle activated signs
- Speed bumps or other speed reduction measures such as speed tables, speed cushions, priority narrowing or chicanes
- Junction improvements or changes to road layouts
- Maintenance/upkeep of pavements, public rights of way or public footpaths

15.2 Please note that the above list of examples is not exhaustive.

15.3 In addition to the above, funding requested should conform to the 'Additionality' principle tests;

- Any funding provided through the Community and Environment Fund should not act as a replacement for government funds where there is a statutory obligation to deliver a service or activity (for example the national curriculum or adult social care services).
- All public funding (including CEF) has to obey State Aid rules. State Aid is any advantage granted by public authorities through state resources on a selective basis to any organisations that could potentially distort competition and trade in the European Union (EU). It is anything which an undertaking (an organisation engaged in economic activity) could not get on the open market.
- This funding is additional to the comprehensive mitigation outlined in the Act and Phase One Environmental Statement to address the environmental impacts of Phase One. Funding from the Community and Environment Fund cannot be used towards costs or projects that are already being covered through other mitigation schemes, compensatory mechanisms or specific funding related to Phase One.
- CEF awards will be made after consideration is given to the Road Safety Fund, the Woodland Fund and Additional Mitigation packages have been confirmed in areas to avoid any duplication. The Additional Mitigation packages, the Road Safety Fund, the Woodland Fund and the Community Investment Programme (CIP) via contractors are separate to the CEF and BLEF, though are aligned to avoid duplication of funding or double funding. The CIP can be used as match for applications as it is delivered by third party contractors but no other HS2 initiative can be used as match as they are delivered direct from HS2 as the funding source. However, you may be able to apply to CEF for a distinct project on a site that adds benefit over and above committed mitigation and statutory compensation and has been funded from another funded scheme. As long as it is not for the same project, the fact that you might have received or applied for funding across other schemes that distribute HS2 funding would not be taken into account when your application for CEF is assessed. For further information on Other Funds – please see CEF FAQ 18.

16. Does the funding have any set allocations per region?

- 16.1 Combined indicative regional allocations for both CEF and BLEF were publicly announced by the Transport Secretary on the 12th October 2016. These allocations are as follows for Phase One;
- £7.5 million for the Greater London area.
 - £15 million allocated for the Central area (Staffordshire, Warwickshire, Buckinghamshire, Northamptonshire, Oxfordshire and Hertfordshire).
 - £7.5 million for the West Midlands area (Birmingham, Solihull and Coventry).
 - £10 million will remain unallocated to allow flexibility to fund bids for cross-border, route-wide projects, as well as to fund bids from other areas affected by the construction of the Proposed Scheme, but geographically separated from the main route (such as off route construction as contained within the High Speed Rail Act). For further information please see section 7 of the CEF FAQ document.
- 16.2 If your project is not based in the above geographical areas it is not eligible for funding.
- 16.3 Priority will be given to projects that are based within 1km (0.62 miles) of the high speed rail line and areas disrupted by construction of Phase One (see section 20 for further information).

17. Do you require partnership funding (known as match contributions)?

- 17.1 We recognise that in the current environment, it will be more difficult than previously to attract match contributions, and we are therefore comfortable being the main contributor to projects that meet the Fund criteria. As such the Funds will be able to be 'the first brick in the wall' of funding for projects which are larger than the maximum grant sizes. CEF and BLEF grants can therefore be used as match funding against grant applications to other funders for contributions to the same project. Double Funding, i.e the same project is funded twice by the same public funding source, is not allowed. If partnership funding is not secured at the time an application is submitted, evidence of a fundraising or income generation plan and a contingency plan must be provided.
- 17.2 We are keen to leverage other investment into projects via this approach which aims to ensure a legacy for the Funds, especially from high value grants.
- 17.3 The match contributions for both funds are therefore as follows;
- For CEF (Local) grants up to £75,000;
- For projects led by community or voluntary sector organisations there is no requirement for match contributions
 - For local authority led bids, there will be minimum 25% requirement for match contributions
- For CEF (Strategic) grants from £75,001 to £250,000:
- 10% minimum match contribution for all applications
- 17.4 Although partnership funding does not have to be confirmed at time of submission, it does need to be in place before an award can be paid to you if you are successful. We would therefore encourage you to get as much of your partnership funding in

place before applying as this will make your project more viable. If large amounts are outstanding at the point of decision, then we may decide to reject the project or delay our decision until those amounts have been confirmed.

18. What type of match contributions will you consider?

- 18.1 Applicants to CEF are encouraged to secure some level of match funding for their project and evidence their match funding in their applications. Outlined below is guidance on which match funding contributions are acceptable.
- 18.2 Potential sources of match contributions (partnership funding) include both cash and non-cash (also known as In Kind).
- 18.3 Cash contributions can include income earned from an activity (for example ticket sales, and facility hire fees), funding from public organisations such as local authorities, grants from trusts and foundations or contributions from your own organisation. We will need to see formal documentation to support your In Kind partner funding, for example, an invoice for professional services showing the reduced rates.
- 18.4 In Kind contributions take the form of goods and services provided free of charge, where you would normally have to pay for them.
- 18.5 The value of the contributions In Kind should be identified separately and it is important that they are included in both the project costs and partnership funding sections of the application form. Volunteer time is considered as an In Kind contribution. In the interest of equality, all volunteer time should be valued at the national living wage (currently up to £8.72 per hour dependant on age).
- 18.6 Any professional service or labour provider must be acknowledged by a recognised and reputable association or trader scheme.

19. What criteria will my application be assessed against?

- 19.1 Initially, we will check that your organisation and proposed project meet the eligibility criteria as set out in this document.
- 19.2 We will then assess eligible applications against the following criteria;

Need - Why is the project needed in the local community? How is the community demonstrably disrupted by the construction of HS2? How have local people been involved in the project's development e.g. through community consultation? What support does the project have from the local community and where appropriate other public bodies (for example the local authority, environment agency, wildlife trust etc)?

Planning - How have you planned your activity to be successful? The level of detail you need to provide will vary depending on the complexity of the activity you are planning. We want to gain a full picture of what will happen and have assurance that everything has been planned thoroughly. Examples of things to consider for a revenue project include, who will take part, when and where will sessions take place, how long will sessions last? For a capital project, examples include - who will oversee the project, how long it will take, is planning permission required/in place? How will the risks be managed? How will you monitor the project and evaluate its success?

Disruption - The application needs to demonstrate the level of disruption from construction of HS2 on the community or communities that will benefit from the project. Funds are targeted at communities most affected by the construction of the railway. There are two potential types of disruption:

- Effects which have been recognised within Environmental Statements, but which have not been addressed through formal mitigation.
- Perceived disruption not identified within the Environmental Statements - this could include a range of community and local economy effects, and anything unforeseen which may emerge through the course of the construction period.

How does the project improve the quality of life and environment within the local community or communities experiencing disruption? What are the proposed outputs/outcomes of your project?

It is important that you read the Environmental Statement(s) that cover the project area(s) and use the information contained within it to evidence the level of disruption in your application. The Environmental Statements can be found here - <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/hs2-phase-one-environmental-statement-documents>

Please also refer to HS2's Common Place website for information about construction and disruption in your area. <https://hs2funds.org.uk/about/local-hs2-information/>

If your project will also benefit people or communities who are not disrupted by the construction of HS2 Phase One, please note that the % of funding from CEF towards your project total should be equal to the % of beneficiaries experiencing disruption.

Sustainability/Legacy - How will the project be sustainable or leave a sustainable legacy? If a capital project, will sufficient revenue be generated to keep the facility running and well-maintained for years to come (e.g. setting up a long term replacement fund) and who will be responsible for its long term operation and maintenance? If it is a revenue project, how will it continue post any investment? Is the project innovative and can it be replicated?

- 19.3 In addition, all projects need to demonstrate how they contribute to the HS2 legacy. By legacy, we mean we are aiming to develop and extend the positive impact of the investments so that they contribute to a meaningful legacy from HS2 for local people, communities and businesses.
- 19.4 We will award funding to organisations that have made a formal application for a grant, that fulfil the requirements of the relevant fund and which have the necessary systems in place to administer a grant. All funding applications are subject to a formal appraisal before being presented for a recommendation. A scoring system and process is used to guide decisions. Before any funding is distributed, we carefully and thoroughly assess the public benefits of the proposed activities.
- 19.5 Groundwork UK will undertake the assessment of bids against the published criteria and will be responsible for making awards up to £75,000. For decisions on grant awards of £75,001 up to £250,000, Groundwork UK will assess the applications and put these to an Independent Panel, appointed by HS2 Ltd.
- 19.6 The Panel will make recommendations to the Secretary of State on whether applications should be approved. The final decision will either be made by a Minister

or by a senior civil servant in the Department for Transport with delegated authority from the Secretary of State.

- 19.7 The distribution and achievements of CEF and BLEF are reported to relevant stakeholders, including HS2 Ltd and Department for Transport.

20. Do you have any priorities within the assessment process?

- 20.1 Yes. If the organisation and project meet the formal requirements for this funding programme, priority will be given to projects that are based within 1 km (0.62 miles) of the high speed rail line. In some circumstances, projects that have match funding may also be prioritised.

21. What is the process for applying to CEF?

- 21.1 For all CEF Local projects, it is a two stage process with applicants completing an online eligibility checker before submitting an application through the online portal.
- 21.2 For CEF Strategic projects with a funding request of between £75,001 and £250,000 the process will be split into three stages. The first stage will be for applicants to complete an online eligibility checker. The next stage will be to submit a Stage One application form which will be reviewed to ensure the project is of demonstrable strategic impact. For applications that are encouraged through this stage, the final stage is to submit a Stage Two application through the online portal. If a Stage One application is approved, you will have up to six months to submit a Stage Two application.

Please note however that passing Stage one and being encouraged to submit a Stage Two application does not guarantee that funding will be approved towards your project.

- 21.3 If you do not pass the online eligibility checker or are not encouraged through Stage One, you will not be able to submit a Stage Two application.
- 21.4 Further information about the application process including copies of the downloadable application forms are available on the following website – <https://hs2funds.org.uk/>. The website will also include a link to the eligibility checker and online application portal.

22. Can we provide additional supporting information with our application?

- 22.1 Yes. You can provide additional documents by email but these should be kept to a minimum. Additional documents must be supplementary information only and not provided as a response to questions or be essential for the application. Please discuss this with Groundwork UK before submitting any additional documents.

23. When can/should I apply?

- 23.1 There are currently no deadlines for submission as this is a rolling grants programme, linked to quarterly Panel meetings; the dates of the panel meetings to consider CEF Strategic grants are available at <https://hs2funds.org.uk/home/community-environment-fund/the-application-process/>.

- 23.2 Following the launch of the funds at Royal Assent, the fund opened for applications from 8th March 2017. However, we encourage applicants to review the environmental statement information relevant to their area to determine when construction works will be taking place in their communities and therefore when to make their application.
- 23.3 The Panel meeting dates will be published regularly online to guide applicants as to when it is likely that their application will be considered. Application process timeframes are outlined below:
- Applicants should expect to receive our decision up to 8 weeks after their application for grants of up to £75,000 is submitted.
 - Applicants should expect to receive our decision approximately 16 weeks after their application for grants of £75,001 up to £250,000 is submitted.
- 23.4 The decision to run a rolling grants programme has been taken so as to reduce the time pressure on applicants, therefore encouraging the submission of the best quality applications. The Grant Management Body will be able to manage application flow more easily which will reduce the time period between application submission and decision.
- 23.5 As CEF funding is aimed at giving something back to areas experiencing disruption from the construction of Phase One of HS2, the timing of any committed investment will be linked to the timing of the construction programme and applicants will need to clearly demonstrate how their communities and environment are disrupted. Accordingly, potential applicants can be assured that there will be no advantages of submitting early or disadvantages of submitting them later during the construction period.
- 23.6 Please refer to relevant information included in the HS2 Phase One environmental Statement and subsequent Environmental Statements and Additional Provisions to support your application. As a guide, please refer to Information Paper E32 on the Gov.uk website;
[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/509518/E32 - Guide to the Environmental Statement v1.0.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/509518/E32_-_Guide_to_the_Environmental_Statement_v1.0.pdf).
- 23.7 Further information on the construction of Phase One in your area will be made available by HS2 Ltd in due course and when applicable.

24. When will we know the outcome of our application?

- 24.1 Once you have submitted your application and we are happy that it is complete, it will be assessed and put forward to the next available decision point. We will then notify you in writing and by telephone once the outcome has been confirmed.
- 24.2 Applications for funding of up to £75,000 should be assessed and notified within around 8 weeks of a complete online application being submitted. Applications for £75,001 up to £250,000 should be assessed and notified within 16 weeks of a complete online application being submitted (subject to the timings of the relevant panel meeting).
- 24.3 If for any reason it will take longer to notify you of a decision, we will let you know and give the reasons why.

25. What happens if our application is successful?

- 25.1 If your application is successful, you will be given a conditional award. The conditions must be met before you can claim your funding, but we will provide support to help you through the process.
- 25.2 Groundwork UK will also be responsible for monitoring the delivery of your project. You will therefore be asked to submit regular progress reports on your project to confirm what has been delivered and achieved through the funding.

26. What happens if our application is unsuccessful?

- 26.1 If your application is unsuccessful we will write to you and let you know what your options are with regards to either working with Groundwork UK on your application with a view to resubmitting in future or explaining why on this occasion we are unable to take your application any further.
- 26.2 We aim to provide constructive feedback to all unsuccessful applicants in order to support them to re-apply and/or seek funding from other sources. There is no guarantee of funding if an applicant re-applies, however, there are instances of successful re-applications that have fully taken on board our feedback.
- 26.3 There may be specific circumstances where it is more appropriate to defer your application, and we will write and let you know what this means for you.

27. Is there any further help available to us?

- 27.1 Groundwork UK will lead on the promotion of the Funds, and a helpline telephone and email service has been set up for applicants. If you have any queries regarding the Funds, please contact Groundwork UK on 0121 237 5880 or email HS2funds@groundwork.org.uk
- 27.2 Groundwork UK will also attend pre-arranged, ad hoc public events aimed at promoting the funds specifically, to provide an overview of the funds and to share the publicly available information on them. They will not however attend one to one meetings or provide development support to individual applicants. If you wish to arrange an open, public meeting or event, please contact Groundwork UK at HS2funds@groundwork.org.uk
- 27.3 General application guidance in line with publicly available information will be given by Groundwork UK by phone and email and at public meetings and events.
- 27.4 Updates on the Funds will be issued through the website <https://hs2funds.org.uk/> and through Groundwork UK's existing communication channels. Updates on the funds will also be included in the regular HS2 Community Update newsletter which is issued to local line of route residents along the line of Phase One route, they are also available on the Gov.uk website.