



Working in
partnership with

HS2



Guidance for projects involving schools

This guidance document has been written primarily for schools and organisations whose project focuses on work with or in schools interested in applying for HS2 Community and Environment Fund (CEF) funding.

Please note this additional guidance has been designed to help with commonly asked questions and support the application process. It is not a replacement document for the Funds main CEF Guidance and FAQs document which organisations will need to read before applying.

You can find the CEF Guidance & FAQs document containing important information for all applicants here: <https://hs2funds.org.uk/home/community-environment-fund/community-environment-fund-guidance/>

CEF Applications

- **Section 1:** How to ensure the correct organisation is the applicant
- **Section 2:** Evidencing wider community benefit
- **Section 3:** Criteria for organisations working with schools or delivering their project on school sites

Section 1: How to ensure the correct organisation is the applicant

The applicant organisation must manage its own funds and have its own bank account which the grant funds will be paid into. If you are a school considering applying and operate using a local authority bank account then the local authority should be the applicant.

Application Contacts

Both contacts must be from the applicant organisation. If a local authority school is submitting an application both contacts must be staff employed by the local authority. School Governors and/or PTA contacts cannot submit applications on behalf of the school or local authority.

Applications for Revenue Funding

Section 3.5 of the CEF Guidance & FAQs document highlights what revenue funding can be used for.

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If you are requesting revenue funding to cover salary costs then the applicant needs to be the organisation that will employ this person directly. For example, an academy school employs its own staff and has full control of their own funding so the academy school should be the applicant. If the school is run by the Local Authority who employ the staff and manage budgets and funding then the Local Authority need to be the applicant.

Applications for Capital Funding

Capital Projects – up to £20,000: section 3.4 of the CEF Guidance & FAQs document states that if you are applying for capital funding of up to £20,000 you do not formally need security of tenure if the freeholder/landowner is a not-for-profit organisation. However, you will require permission from the freeholder/landowner which includes a statement guaranteeing public access to the project for a minimum of 2 years from when the capital work is completed. You will find the Funds permission form that will need to be completed by the freeholder/landowner and submitted with your application here <https://hs2funds.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/HS2-Landowner-Permission-Form.docx>

Capital Projects – over £20,000: section 3.4 of the CEF Guidance & FAQs document states that to be eligible to apply for capital funding of over £20,000, the applicant must either own the freehold interest or have a sufficient leasehold interest in the land involved in the project. A copy of the leasehold or freehold document will need to be submitted with your application.

You will need to check who owns the land or building that will be improved through the project.

- If the land is owned by the school, for example if you are an Academy Trust, then the applicant must be the organisation named on the freehold or leasehold document.
- If the land is owned by the Local Authority, then the Local Authority must be the applicant.

If you are the leaseholder, please check your leasehold document and if the document refers to the landowner needing to give permission for any capital work or changes to the land/building then you will need to provide evidence of permission from the landowner. You will also need to provide a copy of your lease and ensure that it meets the eligibility criteria of the Funds (see section 3.4 of the CEF Guidance & FAQs document for further information)

Section 2: Evidencing wider community benefit

Section 3.3 of the CEF Guidance & FAQs document highlights that projects used solely for delivering curriculum activity are not eligible, and that if the project is for a school or education establishment it should ensure it opens opportunities for the wider community.

Section 3.3 of the CEF Guidance & FAQs also highlights that any funding provided through the HS2 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). Projects that are solely for National Curriculum use are ineligible under this funding programme.

This funding programme will only provide funding for projects delivered outside of school hours. Projects that involve delivery during the school day as well as providing wider

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community benefit are however eligible but you can only request funding for the costs that relate to activities that are linked to the wider community benefit element of the project that is delivered outside of school hours. Additionally, the project should primarily benefit the wider community.

How much funding you can apply for depends on what type of project you are proposing and the amount of wider community benefit (community use) in comparison to school use.

How to calculate what proportion of funding you can apply for.

- For this funding programme and for the purpose of your calculation, school use will be 6 hours per day between 8/9am to 3/4pm, 5 days per week during term time.
- You should provide information on the number of hours that the project will be in use to deliver wider community benefit, for example, 4-6pm each week day.
- You should provide information on which organisations will be benefiting/using the project during the hours outside of the school day.

The proportion community use should be calculated based on term time hours only as this is the majority of the year.

Community use at weekends can only be included in your calculation, if you have written confirmation from organisations confirming the number of hours that they will use the facility at weekends and that they have been consulted on what the hire costs will be. This should be submitted with your application.

Your application needs to show clear understanding and acknowledgment of how your project will benefit the wider community. This includes:

- Details of how many people from the local community will use your project. This should include detail on the number of community beneficiaries, residents and groups that will use your project (equipment, facilities, service etc.). You should name groups and provide letter/s or emails from them confirming their support for and their need for the project.
- Detail of need for the project from the wider community through community consultation. Your consultation information should include details of consultation with the wider community, such as residents, and any community groups, and a summary of the results of this consultation, if relevant, specifying findings by types of groups or specific local areas.
- Details of when groups will use the project and the frequency they will use it.
- Numbers of how many beneficiaries there will be from each group.
- Where the wider community beneficiaries will be drawn from (e.g. the location of the groups and people that will use the project) and how these beneficiaries will be disrupted by the construction of HS2.
- How the project will be accessed by these groups out of school time. An example would be how they gain access to the site, how the site will be opened and lock for them and what hire charges there will be if there will be charges.

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- If your project is a capital project, please provide a plan and photographs that show where on the school site the project is. These can be uploaded in your application with your security of tenure document.

Section 3: Criteria for organisations working with schools or delivering their project on school sites.

Along with your application, you will need to submit written confirmation from the schools involved in your project. This confirmation will need to include:

- That they have been consulted about the project.
- That the project start and end dates are realistic.
- That the number of pupils quoted for the school over the duration of the project is realistic.
- That the project can be accommodated within the school grounds, if you are delivering sessions at the school.
- If the school is providing match funding, for instance free space hire, the amount should also be confirmed.

In your application you will need to confirm the times/days that your project will be delivered.

Please note, activities delivered during the school day for schools or at schools are not eligible for funding.

Section 4: Project examples

School Community Annex

School X has an annex with its own entrance. The rooms are used by the community other than between 1130am – 230pm each school day when the annex is used as additional space for the children during lunch time. The annex rooms need updating to make them a more modern and welcoming space.

During the daytime the annex is used by community groups/organisations between 10am – 1130am and between 230pm -7pm. The community also use the annex for 3 hours on Saturdays. The annex is used for a range of community activities - family support sessions, mother and toddler groups, older people coffee mornings, ESOL sessions and for activities such as yoga as well as by Scouts and Brownies.

Term time school benefit is 3 hours per day/15 hours per week. Term time community use is 6 hours per day/30 hours each weekday, plus 3 hours on Saturdays, a total of 33 hours per week. School use is 31% and community use is 69%.

The school is an academy, has control over its own budgets and staff and has a 125 year lease for the whole school site.

In this example, the community will have the majority of benefit from the improved annex so it could be an eligible project. Match funding would need to be provided for a minimum of 31% of the costs of the project to cover the school benefit. The same would apply if it was a local authority school managed by the Council.

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School Playground

School X wants to replace their playground (or create a new playground). The playground will be available for school use during school hours. After school between 3.30pm-4.30pm the community will have access to the playground.

Term time school benefit is 6 hours per day/30 hours per week. Term time community use is 1 hour per day/5 hours per week. School use is 86% and community use is 14%.

The school is an academy, has control over its own budgets and staff and has a 125 year lease for the whole school site.

The school will have the majority of benefit from playground so for this reason the project would not be eligible for funding. The same would apply if it was a local authority school managed by the Council.

After School Activities (application from a school)

School X wants to employ a sports coach/youth worker to provide after school sports activities twice a week.

The school is an academy and has control over its own budgets and staff.

The project could be eligible as it will be providing activities outside of the school day. Activities would need to be provided for free. Staff would need to be employed by the school. Alternatively, if the school wanted to use the services of another provider at least three competitive tenders/quotes for the service would need to be obtained to demonstrate that a transparent process was used for selection of the provider and to demonstrate value for money.

Community Support Officer

School X wishes to employ a Community Support Officer to provide support to the local community through evening and weekend classes on topics including literacy and technology.

The school doesn't have its own bank account and is run and maintained by the Local Authority (LA).

In this situation, the project could be eligible as it is designed to support the local community (and therefore has wider community benefit) but the applicant would need to be the LA.

Information Technology Suite

School X wishes to build and kit out a new IT suite. The IT suite will be used solely by children during the day as part of their classes and will not be open to for use by the local community.

This project is ineligible as the project is solely for the benefit of the school. Additionally, it is delivering elements of the National Curriculum which is a statutory obligation.

After School Activities

Organisation X wants to deliver sports activities for children after school has finished in two different schools.

The project is eligible as sessions will be after school, subject to confirmation from the schools.

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Prior to an application being submitted, organisation X will need written confirmation from both schools that confirms they have been consulted about the project, that the number of pupils attending the sessions that has been quoted is realistic and that the sessions can be accommodated at the school. Activities would need to be provided for free. If schools are providing match funding, for example free hire, details of this should also be included their confirmation. This information will need to be submitted with the application.

Further Information

If you need any further information please contact Groundwork UK by email (HS2funds@groundwork.org.uk) who can arrange a telephone call to speak to you about your project idea and the criteria of the Funds. You can also visit the Funds website (<https://hs2funds.org.uk/>) which includes an online map of projects that have been funded to date by the programme.