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HS2



## HS2 Community and Environment Fund

### Guidance for Health & Wellbeing Projects Applications

This guidance document has been written for organisations looking to deliver health & wellbeing projects/interventions who are interested in applying to the HS2 Community and Environment Fund (CEF).

Please note this has been designed to help with commonly asked questions and support the application process. It is not a replacement document for the CEF Guidance and health & wellbeing related organisations will need to read the full CEF Guidance and FAQs document 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/>

### Eligibility Criteria

Before applying for CEF funding, you need to fully consider the points set out in this document and the additional guidance documents noted above. Please also review the eligible and ineligible project examples that are included at the end of this document.

The applicant must manage its own funds and have its own bank account, which the grant funds will be paid into. If the application is for a capital project over £20K (e.g. the refurbishment of a building), the applicant must either own the freehold or have a lease that meets our minimum requirements. Additionally, if the project is requesting funding towards a staff post, the applicant must be the employer.

Projects that support the delivery of services that are covered through statutory provision and funding are **ineligible** under this funding programme. For example, this includes projects relating to Local Authority adult social care or NHS services which are funded by exchequer monies. An application for funding to CEF should not act as a replacement for government funds where there is a statutory obligation to deliver a service or activities.

### Assessment Criteria

All CEF applications are reviewed against four assessment criteria. These are Need, Planning, Disruption and Sustainability. Whilst all of the criteria contain the same weighting, the most important one from a health and wellbeing project perspective is disruption.

The applicant 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. All applications must be able to evidence this type of disruption.
- 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.

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.

London to the West Midlands Environmental Statement;

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/hs2-phase-one-environmental-statement-documents>

London to the West Midlands Additional Provisions;

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/additional-provisions-for-the-high-speed-rail-london-to-west-midlands-bill>

There may also be additional information on what construction work is happening in your area can be found on the HS2 local community webpages

<https://www.hs2.org.uk/in-your-area/local-community-webpages/> There is also an interactive map which shows what current and upcoming works are being carried which can be found here <https://www.hs2.org.uk/in-your-area/map/#7/52.4530/-1.4880/filter=hs2-stations,hs2-network>

Funds are prioritised for projects that are closest to the route and the most disrupted by construction. Capital work must primarily benefit disrupted communities and also be in a disrupted location that does not exceed 5km from the construction route. Applications for capital work in locations further than 5km are unlikely to be funded.

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

For health and wellbeing projects based on a hospital or health service site, it is particularly important for you to consider the location of the site, the radius of the communities it serves, who uses the services that are provided on site and how many of these will be disrupted by the construction of HS2 as noted in the Environmental Statement(s). If a hospital or health service site is within 1 mile of the line of route of HS2, it is highly probable that most people using services on the site will be disrupted in some way by the disruption. If the hospital or health service site is 10 miles from the line of route then disruption is only likely to be faced by a smaller percentage of users who travel in from disrupted areas.

## **‘Above and Beyond’ Statutory Provision**

Applications are welcomed, especially from community and charitable organisations, which aim to improve the health and wellbeing of communities, beyond statutory provision and beyond services provided by the NHS through exchequer monies. We would particularly welcome projects where local people are in control of the design and delivery of the project, for example, a project which supports a neighbourhood or community to come together to address an issue or be part of an opportunity that is important to them.

Projects that are deemed to add value to the provision of a statutory service are deemed ineligible under this funding programme.

### **How to evidence that your project is beyond statutory provision**

- You should confirm where the project will be based, what services will be delivered and who the beneficiaries are.
- You should provide information on the times that the project will be delivered, for example, during the evening or weekends.
- You can provide information on what services you currently provide, how these are funded and how the project for which you are applying for funding is separate to or complements these other services, especially if linked to the NHS.

## **Project Funding**

### **Applications for Capital Funding**

**Capital Projects – up to £20,000:** section 3.4.1 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 3.4.1 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.

### **How to ensure the correct organisation is the applicant**

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

- If the land is owned by a public body (for example an NHS Trust or a Local Authority), then the public body should be the applicant. If the NHS or Local Authority body is the applicant, then there is a match-funding requirement of 10% if the application being submitted is a CEF Strategic application for over £100,000.
- 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 directly. This will not be sought by Groundwork UK.

## **Applications for Revenue Funding**

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

With specific regards to applications for health and wellbeing related projects, if you are requesting revenue funding to cover the cost of a salary and general running costs then the applicant needs to be the organisation that will employ this person directly. For example, a mental health charity who employs its own staff and has full control of their own funding should be the applicant. If a Charitable Trust wishes to apply, but the service they provide is run by the Local Authority who employ the staff and managed budgets, then the Local Authority need to be the applicant.

We allow applicants to apply for up to 20% 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 these costs are directly linked to the delivery of the project. These costs will need to be included in the project budget with a breakdown of what they cover.

## **Specific Guidance for Applicants from NHS bodies**

An application from a body linked to the NHS (Trust or Charitable Trust) must demonstrate that:

- Before applying for funding there has been a clear, open and independent decision-making process to make this application from the Trust or a related charitable entity;
- The applicant has the proper infrastructure to ensure charitable and grant funds are managed efficiently and effectively, and;
- The applicant maintains a proper distinction between their responsibilities as charity trustees and any exchequer functions which they might also have as the Board of an NHS body.

To reiterate the application must evidence the need for funding in addition and not instead of NHS exchequer funds and statutory service provision obligations, preferably applied for by a charitable organisation. If your application is successful, CEF funds awarded to an NHS body's charity must be managed separately from an NHS body's own exchequer monies.

## **Specific Guidance for Applicants from Hospices**

If your organisation runs or manages a hospice and you meet the programme eligibility criteria (e.g. you are a registered charity and own/lease the facility) you can apply for funding towards capital projects to refurbish or enhance facilities such as a building extension, replacing windows/installing a new roof or the creation of a peace/healing garden. We will not however fund any core costs or projects that support the directly delivery of services linked to statutory provision that are funded through the NHS.

## **CEF Health & Wellbeing Case Studies**

### **Example – ineligible health project**

The charitable arm of an NHS Trust wants to build a community room at a hospital which is run by the Trust. The room will be used solely by NHS patients/service users during the day as part of NHS statutory provision, then it is ineligible as it is a statutory obligation to provide this facility. The charity also does not have any security of tenure over the facility and therefore the applicant would be ineligible.

### **Example – eligible health project**

A charity who support people with disabilities in an area disrupted by the construction of HS2 wishes to provide exercise classes for members to help improve their physical and mental well being. The charity is seeking CEF funding to support the delivery of this service for the next three years. The charity is eligible to apply, the project is additional to statutory provision and they can evidence how members are disrupted.

### **Example – ineligible equipment project**

The charitable arm of an NHS Trust is raising money for new equipment (e.g. a scanner). The equipment costs £250,000 and they are looking to apply to CEF for a contribution to this. Once the equipment is purchased it will be given to the NHS Trust. The charity would not own the asset or monitor its usage to maintenance. The equipment would also be used to support the delivery of a statutory healthcare service. For these reasons, the application would be deemed ineligible.

### **Example – eligible hospital garden project**

An NHS Trust own the freehold land upon which a hospital is based. The hospital is based close to the line of route of HS2 and patients and staff will be disrupted by works linked to its construction. The hospital has a small plot of land that is overlooked by patients which is derelict and unsightly. They are looking to apply for CEF money to help transform this space into a garden for patients and staff to relax and engage with nature, flora and fauna. This project would be classed as eligible as the Trust can apply and the project is additional to statutory provision.

## **Further Information**

If you need any further information please contact Groundwork UK by email ([HS2funds@groundwork.org.uk](mailto: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/>). The website also includes an online map of

projects that have been funded to date by the programme (including health & wellbeing projects).