## People and Places External Q&As

**For grantholders, future applicants and supporter agencies.**

August 2024

**1.Why are we refreshing our People and Places programme**

We launched our new strategy, It Starts with Community, in 2023. This strategy details our ambition to deliver our funding to strengthen society and improve lives across the UK. It Starts with Community has been shaped by what we heard through our conversations with communities, civil society organisation and others in 2022. The strategy involves us refreshing our programmes to ensure they reaffirm our local, relational, and strengths-based approach, with a commitment to support communities to shape their future.

**2. What has changed?**

The main changes are that we have moved towards applicants having to demonstrate a more needs-based approach in highlighting why their project is required.

We have introduced questions about how projects will mitigate any negative impacts on the environment, or how they will lead to positive impacts on the environment. This will be asked of all applications, whether the project is environmentally focused or not.

The Fund is committed to an equity-based approach, which means that we will invest the most in places, people and communities who experience poverty, disadvantage and discrimination. As part of our assessment, our Funding Teams will consider how your application will support this.

We have also moved applications online, enabling applicants to apply through a digital application portal. However an offline version is still available to those who are not able to apply digitally.

**3. Will there be more funding available?**

No, we will still be working towards committing £20m through People and Places across the financial year of 2024/2025. The People and Places programme will continue to award grants from £20,001 to £500,000.

**4. Will there be any changes to the application process?**

We have received positive feedback from customers about our application process to People and Places and therefore the only change is that the application form will be online but beyond that the process for both the medium strand and large strand will remain the same as highlighted below:

 -  The medium strand will still be a one stage application process to apply for £20,001 to £100,000, and the large strand will continue to be a two-stage application process to apply for £100,001 to £500,000.

 - Capital development grants will also still be available through our medium strand. This will involve completing a medium application form on the portal for the development grant. If approved, you will then be asked to write and submit a stage-two application.

 - There will be an eligibility checker on the website, for applicants to check if their project is eligible.

All applicants will have the opportunity to speak with our Advice Team and/or a  Funding Officer.

**5. How will the digital application portal work?**

Customers will be emailed a link to our digital application portal. If they have never completed an online application form before, they will be asked to set up an account. Once created, this account can be used to apply for any funding programme that is set up on the digital application portal.

The next step is to begin completing the application online. Customers will be able to leave and complete the application later, and all information entered will be saved (as long as the ‘save and continue’ button is clicked before leaving the portal). Once the application is submitted all answers to questions will be sent to the main contact specified on the application, via email.

With large grant applications, you will be asked to complete an idea form with just the one question to complete about your project idea. If you are invited to proceed with your application, this ‘project idea’ answer will then be copied over into the stage two application form for you to review, amend or add to.

**6. What happens if the customer can’t access the digital application portal?**

If customers can’t access the digital application portal, we will have PDF forms available for completion. This will be checked at the initial enquiry stage.

**7. What is an equity-based approach?**

Our equity-based approach means that we will invest the most in places, people and communities who experience poverty, disadvantage and discrimination. It also means that we will treat all our customers fairly by removing any barriers that they may face in completing an application.

People and Places will welcome applications from all communities, but we will prioritise those applications where the needs are the greatest. This means that when we make decisions about the applications we will fund, we will consider things like how it might benefit those in poverty, how it might improve locally available services, or whether it will benefit particular groups facing discrimination or social exclusion.

When you apply to us, we will adapt the support that we offer you so that all applicants have a fair opportunity to access our funding.  For instance, it might mean that some customers require more support than others when completing an application form.

Similarly, we will want the projects we fund to put in place their own measures to make their project fully accessible to all. Where there is a cost associated with this, it can be included in the project budget as part of your application. For example, we require that funded projects are bilingual, so we allow for additional costs such as Welsh translation to be included as part of your budget.

**8. What are the changes in terms of Equality, equity, diversity and inclusion?**

We expect your organisation and the activities we fund to be open and accessible, to promote equalities and challenge discrimination. You can include costs to help your project be more accessible to your community in your proposed budget.

In the application form, we’ll ask you how you’ll reach underrepresented groups in your community. By underrepresented groups, we mean groups that focus on representing the needs of:

* older people
* disabled people
* women
* ethnically minoritised people
* faith-based communities
* LGBTQ+ people
* rural communities.

We would like to understand your approach to equality, equity, diversity and inclusion. We might ask to see your organisation’s equalities policy as part of our assessment.

**9. What do we need to show in terms of environment?**

We are looking for customers to demonstrate how the project is considering its environmental impact. In the application form, you will be asked to tell us what steps you’ve taken to reduce negative impacts on the environment, or how you’ve had a positive impact on the environment. This could be through things like reducing your travel, waste or energy use. For more information, read our guidance [Learning and insights | The National Lottery Community Fund (tnlcommunityfund.org.uk)](https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/key-initiatives/climate-action-hub/learning-and-insights)

**10. We are not proposing to deliver a project that involves environmental activities, do we still need to answer the environmental question?**

Yes, we will be asking this question of all customers, regardless of the theme of their project.

**11. Can I get any support to help me demonstrate how I will address the environmental question?**

Yes, you can read our guidance on reducing your environmental footprint or visit our Climate Action Hub. [Learning and insights | The National Lottery Community Fund (tnlcommunityfund.org.uk)](https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/key-initiatives/climate-action-hub/learning-and-insights)

**12. What is acceptable in terms of capital projects under the new environmental expectations?**

At the very least we will be expecting customers to have considered a low carbon approach to capital projects. Where capital is being requested, we will expect customers to be looking towards the purchase of an electric vehicle. Where these approaches cannot be met, we will expect customers to demonstrate clear justification for this. [Learning and insights | The National Lottery Community Fund (tnlcommunityfund.org.uk)](https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/key-initiatives/climate-action-hub/learning-and-insights)

**13. What are the benefits of projects adopting these ways of working?**

There can be some financial incentives to taking a more environmental approach to delivery. For example, some materials could be cheaper, or the use of an electric vehicle can save on fuel costs.

There are also benefits in reducing the causes of climate change i.e. deciding to organise travel for beneficiaries can cut down on pollution. Recycling can cut down on items being sent to landfill.