



Centre for
**Public
Engagement
Practice**
in Arts and Humanities



Community Connections Grant

Application Guidance 2026

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About the grant

The Community Connections Grant aims to bring communities and university researchers in arts, humanities and social sciences closer together. The grant will give **up to £5,000** to community groups for them to develop meaningful projects expressing something important to them and their community, **with the support of an arts, humanities or social sciences researcher.**

For this round, we are seeking applications from community groups and individuals embedded in communities in the UK's coastal regions.

There are lots of different ideas that you might have for your application, and you will be best placed to decide what is important to your community. Here are some, but not all, examples of activities or projects we would consider funding:

- Curating an exhibition
- Co-ordinating an oral history project
- Developing a creative output
- Mapping local sites
- Filming cultural activities
- Creating a resource relevant to your community
- Creating local change

Connecting with a researcher

To support community groups further in these activities, the Centre will link groups with arts, humanities or social science researchers – people who have a background in subjects such as :

- Ancient Languages
- Archaeology
- Art
- Dance
- Design and Technology
- Drama
- English
- Film

- Geography
- History
- Law
- Music
- Modern Languages
- Philosophy
- Policy
- Psychology
- Sports

To connect successful applicants with a researcher, CPEP will host an online matchmaking event for lead applicants to meet and share their project ideas with researchers who have expressed an interest in supporting a community grant. Alternative processes for matchmaking grant holders with researchers will be available if an online event is not preferable.

Why work with a researcher?

Researchers have specialist skills that can help you develop your project. For example, they can support you through workshops to introduce you to some key concepts in their subject area that will be relevant to your project, or by introducing you or helping to connect you to other resources that you can use to develop your project.

If you already have an existing relationship with an arts, humanities or social sciences researcher, you can name them in your application. There will be a section in the application form for you to provide details about them and your relationship. Please note that for this grant named researchers must be employed at a Higher Education Institution in England, Scotland, Wales, or Northern Ireland, or a UK Research & Innovation (UKRI)-recognised Independent Research Organisation.



Help to apply

Our Public Engagement Officers can support applicants with questions about filling out the application form. You can email cpep@sas.ac.uk with questions or book in a 10-minute call on Teams, Zoom or phone.

The guidance is available in accessible formats, including formatted PDF, Plain Text and large print. If you require an alternative format, please get in touch.

We will be hosting an information webinar on 2 November 2026, 1.30-2.30pm.

[Sign up to the application webinar](#)

Who can apply?

We are looking for applications from a wide range of people involved in **coastal** communities. Communities are experts in their own right and are best placed to define their needs, priorities, and what excites them. Through this grant, we aim to ensure all voices and experiences are valued.

Applicants to the Community Connections Grant can be either **representatives of formal or informal community groups or individual figures in their community.**

Individuals applying as community figures will be asked to supply two references from people who have worked with the applicants in a professional or voluntary capacity.

All applicants must demonstrate

- Their connection to the community or group
- That they are keen to make a meaningful contribution to their community or local area
- That they have the capacity and ability to lead a defined project
- That they can actively involve and engage others in delivering the project

Applicants can apply on behalf of formally and informally constituted community groups including:

An incorporated community group or organisation, such as

- Charitable trust
- Registered charity
- Community Interest Company (CIC)
- Charitable community benefit society
- Charitable Incorporated Organisation
- Social enterprise
- Cooperative society
- Community benefit society
- Voluntary/community group
- Non-profit company limited by guarantee

An unincorporated association or constituted group or club, such as

- Collective
- Club
- Society
- Community project or group
- 'Friends of' group
- Online community
- Volunteer group
- Membership organisation.



How much funding is available?

There is up to £5,000 available for projects.

You don't need an organisational bank account to receive the grant. We will work flexibly with successful applicants to ensure fair and convenient ways of making payments, such as through instalments or pre-paid cards. This will be confirmed when we award the grants.

The grant can be spent on:

- Paying people (please note no more than 50% (£2,500) of the grant can be spent on staff or contractor fees and no individual can be paid more than £1,000)
- Materials and travel relevant to the project
- Venue or equipment hire relevant to the project
- Marketing and promotion
- Access costs*

The grant can't be spent on:

- Activities to promote a political cause or a religion
- Activities to change a law
- Activities for monetary gain
- Building construction or maintenance
- Transportation unrelated to the project
- Ongoing organisational running costs
- Past activities
- Paying researchers who are already employed by Higher Education Institutions or Independent Research Organisations
- Hardware

***Access costs**

In your main grant budget, please include any access costs that remove barriers to general participants who might be taking part in your project.

CPEP has separate funding to support access needs which may be available in addition to the grant. If you, as the lead applicant, or up to two additional individuals you are designing and managing the project with, need access costs covered to be able to deliver the project, reasonable costs will be covered by the Centre.

Some examples are:

- a sign language interpreter
- specialist equipment or software
- a Personal Assistant for a disabled person

Please note that this list is not exhaustive, and you should tell us what you require in order to deliver the project. These personal access costs are treated separately to your main budget.



How will applications be assessed?

Applications will be reviewed by CPEP staff for eligibility and initial assessment. Shortlisted applications will be reviewed by a panel of community representatives and academics with experience of working with communities.

The strongest applications that will be shortlisted for community panel review will:

- Be clearly structured, addressing all required details
- Demonstrate an exciting connection to and engagement with a community or community group and their needs
- Produce meaningful activities for the community
- Relate to arts, humanities or social sciences
- Be achievable and realistic within budget and timeline

Completing the application form

We know that preparing a grant application takes considerable time and resource. As such, we have tried to keep the application form as short as possible and easy to understand. If you have any questions about the language or meaning of a question, please get in touch.

All applications must be submitted through Microsoft Forms. In Microsoft Forms you can translate the application into different languages (11 options) but please write your answers in English.

We will not be policing the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in applications. However, we would be more interested in hearing in your own words.

A Word version of the application form is available on [our website](#), which can be used for reference when preparing your application. However, please note that applications will only be accepted through Microsoft Forms. Applicants can save their progress and return to their applications before submitting. Applications can be downloaded during or after submission.

We have an Equal Opportunities Monitoring form as part of our application process, which will help us to ensure that CPEP opportunities are accessible to as many people as possible and to continue our commitment to inclusive grantmaking. More information on how this data will be used is included on the form. The information you provide will not be used as part of the application review process.

Supporting documents

Applicants must email supporting documents to cpep@sas.ac.uk where relevant.

The following supporting documents should be submitted, according to lead applicants who are:

Applying on behalf of a formally constituted organisation:

- Organisational constitution
- Safeguarding and EDI policies

Individual applicants

- Two letters of recommendation from people who know the applicant in a professional or voluntary capacity

Applying with a pre-existing relationship with a researcher:

- A letter of support from the researcher must be emailed

You can provide a budget directly in the application form. If you have your own template, or wish to use CPEP's [budget template](#), please email it along with any other supporting documents you are providing.



How and when to apply?

Call for applications opens	7 October 2026
Application webinar	2 November 2026, 1.30–2.30pm
Application deadline	1 December 2026
Notification of outcomes	Mid-January 2027
Matchmaking with a researcher	February 2027
Grant starts	From March 2027
Grant ends	Within 12 months of the project start date

Applications must be submitted through Microsoft Forms.

You will find the application form [on Microsoft Forms](#) or on our website engagementpractice.org.

Feedback

We welcome feedback from potential applicants and other users of this guidance. We may use your feedback to improve and clarify it. We may also make revisions in response to questions we receive. In fairness to potential applicants, we will always try to avoid making significant changes. You can email your feedback to us at cpep@sas.ac.uk.

Contact

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