**Community Rail Development Fund (CRDF)**

**2024-2025**

**This pack consists of the following documents:**

 **Scheme Conditions**

**Application Form (Annex A)**

**Post Project Evaluation Form (Annex B)**

**Community Rail Development Fund (CRDF):**

**Scheme Conditions**

**Introduction**

The Department for Transport (DfT) and the Community Rail Network have established a fund to help to support initiatives by accredited community rail partnerships (CRPs) during the financial year 2024/25. CRPs who have reached the point in the initial accreditation process where an accreditation meeting has taken or is about to take place can also apply, but approval may not be given until accreditation has been confirmed by the DfT.

The fund will be administered by Community Rail Network.

The fund contains public money - it is therefore particularly important that it is properly accounted for. However, it is recognised that the sums involved are relatively modest and partnerships have limited administrative resources, so the aim is to keep the administrative effort involved in applying for and then accounting for the funds claimed to a minimum.

The Impact platform, available to Community Rail Network members, could be a useful tool for monitoring progress and collecting evidence for your project. Sign up for an account now if you don’t already have one by contacting impact@communityrail.org.uk

The maximum grant will be £25,000 for any one project. However **larger bids must demonstrate clear passenger/community benefits.**

**Planning for success**

No application may be made to the CRDF unless that project is clearly in support of the aims set out in the CRP Activity Plan for that financial year. There will be no grant given for producing a CRP plan.

No grant for 2024/25 will be approved until any/all earlier CRDF assessment forms (Annex B) have been submitted and approved.

CRP Activity Plans themselves may include reference to the CRDF, but the success of those plans should not rest completely on the assumption that an application will be approved.

**What can the grant cover?**

There is considerable flexibility over what can be paid for by this fund - but three tests will be applied:

1. Does the project further the four key pillars contained in the DfT Connecting Communities with the Railways: The Community Rail Development Strategy:
	1. Promoting a voice for the community
	2. Promoting sustainable and healthy travel
	3. Bringing communities together and supporting diversity and inclusion
	4. Supporting social and economic development
2. Is the project in line with the CRP Activity Plan?
3. Does the CRDF application show how it will deliver social value connected to the railway, but outside of railway ‘business as usual’ work?

**What will not be covered by a grant?**

The fund will not cover costs which are the contractual responsibility of the Station Facility Owner or the Train operator.

The fund cannot cover the employment costs of the CRP officer for core CRP business. However, it can fund staff resource specifically allocated to delivery of the project.

The fund cannot fund any projects which are already underway.

**Who can apply?**

Applications can only be made by CRPs who are members of Community Rail Network and are formally accredited by the DfT / Welsh Government or are actively working towards said accreditation.

We welcome innovative bids from CRPs involving multiple partners and funding organisations, however the grant can only be paid to the CRP making the application. It must be used **solely** by that organisation to deliver the project or for them to commission partners to work together on the project as described on the application form. Therefore, it is not permissible for the grant to simply be ‘passed through’ to another organisation for them to deliver the scheme.

**How to apply**

**Discuss the project with your main Community Rail Network Support & Development contact before applying. All formal applications must be made on the Application Form (Annex A). Check the final application with your CRN S&D contact before submitting**.

Applications must be received by 28th February 2025.

**How much grant funding can be applied for and what are the match funding requirement?**

There is no limit to the number of applications which can be made.

If the fund is to provide the biggest possible impact, we would encourage an element of match funding **to the grant** for all funding bids. However, it is recognised that finding match funding can be time consuming and for small grants may not be best use of time. We therefore require a minimum sliding scale of match funding **to the grant** as follows:

**A grant of up to £2,500 requested**.

No match funding required – it is assumed that match funding "in kind" is provided in the form of officer time producing the application and implementing the proposal.

e.g., the project cost is £2400, so no match funding required.

**Grant awarded is £2400.**

**A grant of between £2,501 - £9,999 requested.**

 In this case **50%** match funding **of the grant** is needed of which 20% of the match can be volunteer time with the rest in cash. Volunteer time cannot include any officer time for the calculation.

e.g., the project cost is £8000, so match funding of £2667 is required which is 50% of the £5333 grant.

**Grant awarded is £5333.**

**A grant of over £10,000 is requested.**

 In this case **100%** match funding **of the grant** is needed (there is no volunteer time allowance)

e.g., the project cost is £24000, so match funding of £12000 required which is 100% of the £12000 grant.

**Grant awarded is £12000.**

Volunteer time is calculated at £15/hour.

Volunteer time **cannot** include any paid officer time for the calculation.

In the case of multiple applications on a route, we reserve the right to request a higher minimum level of match funding than those stated above.

**How will applications be judged?**

Assuming that the application is eligible, the application will be judged against:

***Deliverability***- we will look for evidence that the proposal can be delivered in the required timescales **but no later than 30th June 2025.**

***Planning*** - we will require an outline, dated project plan supported by an outline budget. If projects are looking for interim funding the plan and budget must identify what deliverables should trigger release of part payment.

***Scope*** - Linked projects have the potential to delay projects and we will want to understand how such risks would be managed. We will need to be assured there is no risk of scope change through the linked project and we will need to review carefully the scope of the project. Interdependencies with other projects should be clearly stated.

***Scale of benefits*** - we will not be carrying out a formal economic appraisal, but will assess whether the outputs and intended outcomes look strong or weak in relation to the grant from the CRDF. This will tend to benefit match funded applications - note that the match fund guidance given above is the **minimum** required amount for applications and higher match funding rates will tend to improve the possibility of funding.

***Innovation*** - we will give preference to projects which represent a new initiative for your CRP and which may provide lessons for other CRPs.

**Community art -** If the proposal is for the area of the railway which forms part of the “TOC leased area” (generally stations and their immediate surroundings), any proposal will be subject to approval from the train operating company (TOC) and the landlord consent process. If the area being considered is outside the TOC lease area Network Rail must also be consulted **before** applying to the fund and work starts. For further information please contact the relevant route lead.

**Best practice**

 We are keen to encourage the sharing of best practice and will therefore consider bids that include funds (up to £250) for the writing up of best practice guides and reports on lessons learnt that we are able to disseminate via Community Rail Network. The awarding of grants for such purposes will not count towards the maximum grant for a particular project, i.e. this is additional funding.

As far as possible we will attempt to balance the award of grants across the regions to achieve “regional equity”. However, poor quality applications will be rejected even if that means an uneven spread, and some regions are likely to receive more grants simply due to the fact that they may have more accredited CRPs.

**All projects delivered with funding from the CRDF must make clear in all associated publicity material that the project has been funded or part funded by Community Rail Network and the Department for Transport.** Further advice on this and branding is available from **news@communityrail.org.uk****.**

**Payments and follow-up**

Funds will be released as follows:

**Up to £2,500** Grant can be forwarded immediately on approval if requested. However an Annex B report must also be submitted when the project is complete **by 30th June 2025**

**£2,501 and above** Up to 50% **of the CRDF grant** can be paid at the point identified **in advance in the project plan**. Evidence that the deliverables are progressing will be required such as contracts in place for scheme delivery or some physical works. The plan should show the level of funding that will be sought for interim payment. Balance of payment will be made in arrears, after the partners have approved the Annex B for the project.

The Post Project Evaluation Form (Annex B) must provide evidence that the funds have been spent as per the application form. Receipts and appropriate records must be kept for six years for audit purposes.

Failure to demonstrate that the monies have been spent as per the application may lead to a requirement to re-pay funding and in extreme cases may lead to legal action. Should there be genuine difficulties in carrying through the proposal as made, this should be reported immediately and arrangements will be made to ensure that funding is either returned or used appropriately in the circumstances.

**Department for Transport and Community Rail Network June 2024**

**Data Privacy:** Personal information supplied on this form will be used to communicate with you specifically about your grant application, and to allow us to evaluate and assess the progress of the project for which you are applying for funds. It will not be used for any other purpose. This information will be processed, stored & transported lawfully and correctly, in accordance with the principles and safeguards contained in the Data Protection Act 1998 and GDPR Regulations (Article 5). Your personal information may be shared with third parties, such as the Department for Transport, Network Rail, train operating companies and devolved government, where it is deemed necessary to assess the application. Community Rail Network s Data Privacy Policy can be found on its website.

**Annex A** Application form Page 1 of 4

**Community Rail Development Fund**

**Application Form**

**Basic details**

**1 Name of your Community Rail Network Support & Development team contact**

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2 Please **confirm** that you have discussed the project with your CRN S&D contact .....................

3 Name of project/proposal ……………………………………………………………………………….

4 Which route(s) does it relate to? ­­­­­­­­­ ………………………………………………………………………

**About you**

5 Name of CRP …………………………………………………………………………………………….

6 Address of CRP…….…………………………………………………………………………………….

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 Postcode …………………………………………………………………….……………………………

7 Name of contact in CRP …………………………………………….…………………………………

 Email ………………………………………………. Tel…………………….………………………….

**The proposal**

8 What are you trying to achieve? (*Please continue on an additional sheet if necessary*)

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9 What are you proposing to use the money for? (*Please continue on an additional sheet if necessary)*

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Application form Page 2 of 4

10 How does this fit with your CRP Plan? (*Please continue on an additional sheet if necessary)*

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11 Which one of the four pillars of community rail does this project most closely align with?

*Please be specific and select a single pillar if possible and briefly state why it aligns with this pillar.*

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12 What do you expect the outcomes of this project to be for the CRP and/or for the local community?*An outcome is a change that occurs as a result of your actions (i.e. this project) e.g. passengers feel safer at the station, people have improved health and well-being from taking part in station walks, increased use of station buildings, increased visitor satisfaction, decrease in occurrences of vandalism.*

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*(Please continue on an additional sheet if necessary)*

13 When do you intend to implement the project/proposal?

 ***Attach a dated indicative work programme. You must inform Community Rail Network of any significant change in the programme (for example, slippage of more than a month).***

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14 How do you propose to publicise that the project/proposal was delivered through funding from Community Rail Network and DfT

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15 Has this project been approved by your TOC Community Rail Manager (or equivalent)

 **Yes / No** And with whom?......................................................................................................

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16 For projects involving infrastructure, shelters, artwork, CiS etc or work on Network Rail land have you consulted with Network Rail locally?

 **Yes / No** And with whom?....................................................................................................

Application form Page 3 of 4

**Finance**

17 What is the total cost of this project proposal? …………………..………………………….….….

***Attach an indicative project budget***

18 How much are you asking for from the CRDF? …………………………………….……….……..

19 What match funding is being provided? ……………………………………………………….……..

20 Who is providing that match funding and is it confirmed? …………………………..………………

Other information (optional)

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*(Please attach additional information if necessary)*

Application form Page 4 of 4

**Your commitment to the scheme**

We confirm that we have read and understand the *Community Rail Development Fund (CRDF): Scheme Conditions* and thatto the best of our knowledge this application is in line with their requirements.

We confirm that, if the application is successful, we will keep appropriate records of expenditure and other financial aspects of this application and make them available to the CRDF's administrators (currently the Community Rail Network) as required. We will retain these records for six years after the grant has been awarded.

We will comply with any additional conditions stipulated in the grant offer letter.

We also confirm that we will complete and submit a Post Project Evaluation Form (Annex B) and attach a final budget for the project.

We acknowledge that failure to comply with these conditions may lead to non-payment of the grant or a requirement to return the grant.

**[ ] By putting an X in this box you agree to the terms and conditions of this grant, and confirm that this application has been approved by both the Partnership Chair (or deputy) and the Partnership Officer (or deputy).**

Name ………………………………………………………………………

Position…………………………………………………………………….

On behalf of (organisation) ……………………………………………...

Date …..……………………………………………………………………

**What next?**

Please email completed forms to CRDF@communityrail.org.uk.

We will endeavour to give you an answer within 4 weeks of your application being received.

Many thanks for your interest.

**Annex B** Evaluation Form Page 1 of 2

**Community Rail Development Fund (CRDF)**

**Post Project Evaluation Form**

**Basic details**

Name of project/proposal …………………………………….……………………………………………...

Which route(s) does it relate to? ……………………………………………………………………………

Name of CRP ……………………………………………………………………………….…………………

What were you trying to achieve and how did you achieve it?

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What were your expected outcomes? (*Please continue on an additional sheet if necessary)*

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What evidence do you have that these **outcomes have been achieved?**

*(Please continue on an additional sheet if necessary or add attachments and links to documents, reports, and other media)*

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Were there any unexpected outcomes?

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Did the project run to the timescales envisaged?

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Evaluation Form Page 2 of 2

Did the costs turn out as expected - if not why was this?

**You must supply a final budget.**

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If there was match funding, did these arrangements work as envisaged and were the funders pleased with the result?

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What do you think was good about this project?

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What lessons can be learnt from this project? Is there anything specific that we should pass on to other CRPs?

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How did you promote/publicise that funding for this project had been made available by Community Rail Network and DfT? Please attached appropriate photographs of the completed project.

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Name …………………………………………………………………………………………………...……….

On behalf of (organisation) …………………………………………………………………………………...

Email ………………………………………………………… Telephone ………………….………….

Date …………………………………………………………………………………………………….………