



COATBRIDGE PRIDE IN PLACE PROJECT CATALYST FUND 2026-27

GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS



PART ONE: ABOUT THE PROJECT CATALYST FUND

Introduction

The Project Catalyst Fund is part of the UK Government's Pride in Place programme and supports delivery of the Coatbridge Regeneration Plan. The fund is operated by North Lanarkshire Council on behalf of Coatbridge Neighbourhood Board. North Lanarkshire Council acts as the Accountable Body for the fund, meaning it is responsible for ensuring public funding is managed appropriately and in accordance with UK Government requirements.

Coatbridge Neighbourhood Board is an independent, community-led body established to set the strategic vision and priorities for delivering the Coatbridge Regeneration Plan as part of the Pride in Place programme.

The Project Catalyst Fund provides grants of up to **£15,000** to support community and third sector organisations in Coatbridge to develop and test project ideas for improving local buildings, spaces and facilities.

This is a project **development** fund, which means it supports the work needed to plan and shape a project, not to deliver or construct it.

What the Fund is For

Coatbridge Neighbourhood Board has created this fund to provide funding support for activities that help you move your project forward in a structured way, including:

- Testing and shaping ideas
- Feasibility studies and options appraisals
- Design work and technical surveys
- Cost planning and financial assessments
- Preparing for planning applications or preparing for future funding bids

What the Fund Does Not Support

- Physical works, construction or delivery costs
- Ongoing running costs or core staffing costs
- Costs incurred before a grant offer is made

What We are Looking For

The types of projects that are encouraged will include projects that contribute to the Coatbridge Regeneration Plan outcomes, including projects that:

- improve health and wellbeing
- create better life chances for young people
- build stronger and more connected communities

- enhance community, cultural, leisure and green assets

We are particularly looking for projects that create opportunities for children and young people — particularly where these projects are shaped by young people themselves.

Our Approach

This fund is designed to be supportive by helping good ideas develop and by encouraging groups to turn their ideas into projects, which they will develop in stages. Developing projects in stages helps groups test ideas, explore options, make better decisions and use funding more effectively, before committing to delivery. For more information on this, we would encourage you to read our guide to The Project Development Journey, and you will find a copy of this on the fund webpage.

This fund is designed to be **proportionate**, and we will only request information and evidence appropriate to the stage of project development being supported.

Is This Fund Right for You?

You can apply if you are a:

- Community group
- Voluntary organisation
- Charity
- Social enterprise
- Development trust

and your organisation is working in, or for the benefit of, **Coatbridge**.

You Are Likely a Good Fit if:

- You have an idea to improve a community space, building or local place in Coatbridge
- You need support to develop the idea further
- You are not yet ready for construction or delivery
- You want to reduce risk, test options or prepare for future funding

This fund will not be right for you if:

- Your project is already ready for delivery or construction
- You are seeking funding for ongoing services or activities
- Your project does not provide wider community benefit

Support and Accessibility

We want this fund to be accessible. We can:

- Help you develop your idea
- Talk through your application before it is submitted

- Provide additional support if needed

If you need this support, please contact us by email: coatbridgetownplan@northlan.gov.uk

Before You Apply Checklist

Before investing time in an application, you should check that:

- ☐ your organisation is a not-for-profit, community-led or third sector organisation
- ☐ your organisation has a governing document, (e.g. constitution, trust deed, or articles of association)
- ☐ your organisation has a UK bank account in its own name
- ☐ your project is located in, or will clearly benefit, Coatbridge
- ☐ your funding request relates to project development activities rather than construction, delivery or ongoing service delivery
- ☐ your funding request relates to the next logical stage of project development
- ☐ your organisation can manage a grant award

Not sure?

We encourage you to contact us before applying. We are happy to discuss your idea and help you determine whether the Project Catalyst Fund is the right fund for your project. If you are unsure whether your organisation or project is eligible, please contact us before

Our Contact Details:

Please contact us early if you require support:

Email: coatbridgetownplan@northlan.gov.uk

PART TWO: THE PROJECT DEVELOPMENT JOURNEY

Projects work best in **stages**, especially when there is uncertainty.

Each stage helps you test ideas, explore options, reduce risks and ultimately make better decisions.

Early Project Development Stages

Your project may be at an early stage if you are still exploring ideas, considering different options, consulting with your stakeholders or testing feasibility.

These stages in the Project Development Journey typically includes feasibility studies, community consultations, commissioning building and ground surveys and the preparation of early designs or cost estimates.

More Advanced Project Development Stages

Your project may be at a more advanced stage if you have already identified your preferred project solution, have already demonstrated its feasibility, and you now need to prepare more developed design, secure planning consents and other approvals, and prepare more detailed cost plans.

These stages typically include technical development work, more complex cost planning, and preparing information to secure planning and other legal approvals.

Important Principle

You should apply for funding for one stage only — the next logical step, not the whole project.

Further Information

We have prepared a separate guide to The Project Development Journey that you can access on our website to explain this in more detail.

PART THREE: HOW THE APPLICATION PROCESS WORKS

The Project Catalyst Fund uses a two-stage process.

Stage 1: Registration of Interest (ROI)

This is a short screening stage. The purpose of Stage 1 is to help us to check your project's eligibility and fit and understand your idea. It's important that you explain to us the stage on the development journey that your project is currently at and what you want to do next. We can provide you with guidance if needed.

What You Submit to Us

- A short description of your project
- A description of the local need or opportunity that your project aims to address
- Your current stage of project development and your proposed next step
- An indication of the grant that you will request

What Happens After You Apply?

Stage 1: Registration of Interest

We will review your Registration of Interest to confirm your eligibility, your fit with the aims of the Project Catalyst Fund, and whether the proposed work represents an appropriate stage on the project development journey.

Following review, we may:

- Invite you to submit a Stage 2 application
- Recommend further project development before progressing
- Signpost you to alternative support or funding
- Confirm that the project is not suitable for the fund

Stage 2: Full Application

Stage 2 is **competitive** and by invitation only. Applications invited to Stage 2 will:

1. Undergo eligibility and verification checks
2. Be assessed against the published assessment criteria
3. Be reviewed through a moderation process
4. Be considered by the Coatbridge Neighbourhood Board
5. Applicants will be informed of the outcome once the decision-making process has been completed.

PART FOUR: GUIDANCE FOR STAGE 2 APPLICANTS

At Stage 2, we will assess applications based on whether they represent a clear, realistic and well-justified next stage of project development.

You do **not** need to provide us with final designs or certainty. We recognise that development-stage projects involve risk and unknowns.

Section 2: Project Overview

We want a summary (bullet points will do) of what your project idea is. We will ask you to clearly explain the problem, need or opportunity that your project will address, why it matters to your group and to the wider community and why your overall project is needed. This section enables you to explain the problem that your overall project is trying to solve.

Section 3: Details of your project's strategic fit with the Coatbridge Regeneration Plan

We want to support projects that will clearly contribute to one or more of the Coatbridge Regeneration Plan priorities:

- 1. More opportunities for young people:** helping improve health and wellbeing, develop skills and improve life chances
- 2. Invest in what we have:** providing improved opportunities to address health inequalities and access to local culture and sport facilities and activities
- 3. A safe and friendly town centre at the heart of the community:** helping the town centre to be a place where people can access key local services and socialise together and be a place where local business can start up and thrive

For example, your project might address one or more of these as follows:

- 1. More opportunities for young people** – your project might create or improve buildings, vacant or underused spaces and facilities where young people can meet, take part, and feel included
- 2. Invest in what we have** – your project might make better use of the buildings, spaces and facilities that Coatbridge already has
- 3. A safe and friendly town centre** – your project might make vacant and underused town centre buildings and spaces feel more welcoming, well used and comfortable for people to visit and spend time in

Section 4: Stage in the Project Development Journey

Your application should explain to us what stage of development your project has reached, where it is now and what is the next logical step your group wants to take in the Project Development Journey for taking your project forward. This section explains why you want to take this next step, explaining to us the key questions or project uncertainties that this next step will help you answer.

Section 5: Proposed Development Work (This Stage of Work)

This part of the application is where you tell us about the stage of work that you are seeking funding for. We strongly recommend that you consult with our guide to The Project Development Journey as this will help you explain to us the stage of work that you want to do next.

Section 6: Community benefit and engagement

We want to be confident that you are clear about how your overall project will benefit your service users and/ or the wider community. We will ask you to explain to us who will benefit and how, and how your service users and/or local people have been or will be involved.

If you eventually wish to apply to a major funder for funding for construction costs later on, it's important that you are able to demonstrate that your project stakeholders have been consulted and have been involved **throughout** the project development journey, and not just at the beginning, and Section 6 is designed to encourage you to think about this.

Section 7: Risks and Uncertainty

Most projects involve risks, unknowns and assumptions. In fact, one of the main reasons for undertaking project development work is to better understand these uncertainties before committing significant time, money or resources.

We do not expect you to have all the answers at this stage. We recognise that projects at an early stage of development will often involve unanswered questions. What matters is that you can identify the key issues affecting your project and explain how the proposed work will help you make better informed decisions.

Examples of risks or uncertainties might include:

- Whether there is sufficient community demand for the project
- Whether a building or site is suitable for the proposed use
- Whether planning permission or other approvals are likely to be required
- Whether the project is financially viable or affordable
- Whether there are technical constraints affecting the site or building
- Whether the project can attract future funding or investment
- Whether ownership, lease or legal issues need to be resolved

In this section, we would like you to tell us:

- What the main risks, uncertainties or unanswered questions are
- Why these issues are important to the future of your project
- How the development work you are seeking funding for will help address them
- Any significant external factors that could affect progress, such as permissions, approvals, partnership arrangements or funding dependencies

A strong response will demonstrate that you have thought realistically about your project and understand what information, evidence or analysis is needed before deciding what to do next.

Remember, the purpose of this fund is often to help organisations reduce uncertainty and make informed decisions. In some cases, the outcome of the funded work may be that a project should be revised, postponed or not progressed further. This can still represent a successful outcome if it helps avoid future costs, risks or poor investment decisions.

Section 8: Costs

Coatbridge Neighbourhood Board is supporting the Project Catalyst Fund with funding it receives from the UK Government, under its Pride in Place programme, so it's important that you show us that:

- Costs are reasonable and proportionate
- Spending is clearly linked to outputs
- That your organisation can use funding in an accountable and well managed manner

When seeking quotes, we would ask that you obtain at least 2 quotes for individual cost items that are less than £10,000 and at least 3 quotes for items that are over £10,000.

We would also like to know if there are any other sources of funding that you have applied for, or secured, as this helps us understand how the Board's funding might contribute to a larger piece of work where multiple funders are or might be involved.

Section 9: Organisational Capacity

This information you provide in this section will help us understand whether your organisation has the people, skills, experience and arrangements needed to oversee the proposed development work.

We recognise that organisations vary greatly in size and resources. You do not need to have extensive in-house expertise to apply. In many cases, the purpose of the Project Catalyst Fund is to enable organisations to obtain specialist advice and support that they do not currently possess.

When completing this section, please tell us about:

- The organisation and what it does.
- Any relevant experience of delivering projects, services or community activities.
- The people who will oversee the proposed work.
- Any partners or specialist advisers who will support the project.
- How decisions about the project will be made.
- How you will manage any funding awarded.

What Are We Looking For?

We want to understand whether there is sufficient capacity to:

- Manage the proposed development activity
- Engage effectively with consultants, contractors or specialist advisers
- Monitor progress and oversee expenditure
- Make informed decisions at key stages of the project
- Take forward the findings and recommendations arising from the funded work.

If You Are New to Project Development

Do not be concerned if your organisation has limited experience of developing projects of this type. We recognise that many applicants will be exploring opportunities for the first time. In these circumstances, it may be helpful to explain why the project is important to your organisation, who will be responsible for overseeing the work and what additional support or expertise you intend to obtain.

Examples of Relevant Capacity

You may wish to explain your capacity by providing information on the experience of the people who will be involved, for example the experience of staff, trustees or committee members. If you are using professional advisers or consultants please describe these.

It would also be useful to provide us with an overview of your existing decision making processes, financial management or project management arrangements.

We will ask you to demonstrate that you have a clear and realistic plan and have a clear idea of the outputs that the work will produce. It's important that you have a plan for carrying out the work and realistic timescales. If your application is successful we would ask that you start the funded work before **31 March 2027 and complete it within 12 months.**

Section 10: Access, Inclusion and Equalities

In this section we would like you to explain how your project, or the development work you are seeking funding for, will help make community spaces, places, services or opportunities feel more welcoming, accessible or inclusive. This might include:

- Improving physical accessibility for disabled people
- Understanding the needs of different groups through community engagement
- Reducing barriers to participation
- Making a building, facility or public space easier to access and use.
- Improving safety, comfort or usability
- Ensuring that future designs or proposals take account of a wider range of community needs

If your project is at an early stage, you can explain how the proposed development work will help you better understand accessibility or inclusion issues before decisions are made.

For example, as part of the feasibility study, you might assess the accessibility of the building you are proposing to improve and consult with potential users to understand any barriers to participation. This will help inform future design proposals and ensure the project is inclusive and accessible to a wider range of community members.

Section 11: Declaration

Before submitting your application, an authorised representative of your organisation must complete the declaration. The declaration should be completed by someone who is authorised to act on behalf of the organisation, such as Chairperson, a Trustee, a Director, your Committee Secretary, or a senior member of staff. The signatory should have sufficient knowledge of the proposal and authority to commit the organisation to the statements made within the application.

If it is later found that information supplied within the application was knowingly incorrect, misleading or incomplete, the application may be rejected. Where funding has already been awarded, the Fund reserves the right to review the award and take appropriate action in accordance with the grant conditions.

Thinking About Your Project (Some Helpful Tips)

Before applying, ask yourself:

- What key questions do we still need to answer?
- What uncertainties do we need to reduce?
- What is the next logical step, not the final outcome?
- Have we considered different options?
- How will this next stage help us in our decision making?

Supporting Documents

North Lanarkshire Council is Accountable Body to the UK Government for the management of Pride in Place investment and is administering the Project Catalyst Fund 2026-27 on behalf of Coatbridge Neighbourhood Board. For organisations applying to North Lanarkshire Council for funding for the first time, will need to provide us with a range of supporting documents, including:

A signed and dated copy of Constitution or Memorandum and Articles of Association .
A copy of your most recent Bank Statement showing the account name, account number and sort code.
A copy of your organisation's most recent, fully signed, independently examined annual accounts covering the last full year of your operation.
A completed Bank Mandate Form

Depending on the nature and stage of your project, we may also ask you to provide further information to help us to verify your application. Examples may include:

- Evidence of ownership, lease arrangements or permissions where relevant to the project
- Information relating to planning, consents, approvals or statutory requirements
- Additional information to support subsidy control, governance or due diligence checks

We aim to take a proportionate approach and will only request information that is relevant to the stage of project development you are applying for.

Important: If we require additional supporting information, we will explain why it is needed and provide a timescale for its submission.

PART FIVE: ASSESSMENT AND DECISION-MAKING

How we will Assess Your Application

Stage 2 applications will be assessed using a scoring framework, considered comparatively against other applications, and reviewed in the context of available budget.

Possible outcomes of the Stage 2 process

Your application may be:

- Approved for funding **OR**
- Approved with conditions (e.g. refining scope or costs) **OR**
- Not approved on this occasion

Important Note

A strong application does not need to be perfect. It needs to be clear, realistic and appropriate for the stage of development that your project has reached.

PART SIX: IF YOU RECEIVE AN AWARD

Successful applicants will receive a formal grant offer setting out the grant amount awarded, the approved purpose of the grant, any conditions attached to the award, project completion timescales and monitoring and reporting requirements.

Funding must only be used for the activities approved within the grant offer.

Changes to Your Project

If there are significant changes to the scope of work, project costs, proposed outputs or completion timescales, you must contact us as soon as possible. Significant changes may require approval by Coatbridge Neighbourhood Board.

Record Keeping

Organisations must retain appropriate records relating to the funded activity, including evidence of expenditure and project outputs.

Completion of the Funded Stage

At the end of the funded stage, you will be asked to provide information on activities completed, outputs produced, key findings and recommendations, and an indication of how your organisation intends to move forward with the project.

This helps us understand the impact of the fund and the progress being made towards future investment and delivery.

PART SEVEN: OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

General Conditions of Grant:

The following General Conditions shall apply to all organisations funded by North Lanarkshire Council acting on behalf of Coatbridge Neighbourhood Board and the UK Government's Pride in Place Programme.

Depending on the level of the grant award, the Council may wish to apply more detailed or stringent conditions through a separate funding agreement in addition to these General Conditions. Failure to comply with any of the following conditions may void the grant approval and result in the withdrawal of any funding.

- 1) The grant award may only be used for the purpose (or purposes) originally applied for, any changes must be submitted in writing and approval given.
- 2) North Lanarkshire Council's liability shall be to make payment of the grant to the organisation. All other liabilities or claims are the responsibility of the organisation.
- 3) The funded organisation must be free from any political bias and must not be involved political campaigning.
- 4) All funded groups must carry out appropriate publicity to ensure that local residents are aware of their project, activity or event, and understand its link to Coatbridge Pride in Place and the UK Government's Pride in Place Programme. As part of your grant, you will be expected to:
 - Clearly state in all publicity that your project is **funded through the Coatbridge Pride in Place Project Catalyst Fund**.
 - Use Pride of Place branding or wording provided by the Council (e.g., logos, standard text).
 - Ensure this acknowledgement appears on:
 - Social media posts
 - Press releases or communications
 - Websites or newsletters
 - Where relevant, promote your project using accessible and inclusive methods.
 - Social media posts
 - Community newsletters or noticeboards
 - Use positive, community-focused messaging:
 - Celebrate Coatbridge's strengths and community pride
 - Avoid negative framing of the town or local people
 - Explain how your project will benefit the local community
 - Ensure any project publicity is accessible. All communications materials should be:

- Easy to read, using clear language
 - Available in accessible formats upon request
 - Suitable for a wide range of ages, backgrounds, and abilities
 - Keep records of your communications and publicity. As part of monitoring, groups should:
 - Keep copies or screenshots of any project communications or publicity that is in the public domain, e.g. press coverage, social media posts
 - Be prepared to share examples with the Council as part of monitoring
- 5) All purchases and services paid for through the grant award must be made by the grant recipient and be backed up with receipts. You may be asked to submit these receipts as proof of expenditure and so should retain these for at least 3 years along with all financial records relating to the grant award and its subsequent expenditure. These financial records and any outputs funded through the grant award should be made available for inspection by Council Officers if requested.
 - 6) Any monitoring reports that have been requested should be completed promptly. (N.B. failure to comply with monitoring requirements will mean that future grant applications will not be accepted, and late monitoring returns could affect your application during the scoring process).
 - 7) Any unused grant should be returned to the council, and
 - 8) In the event of the organisation disbanding, any remaining monies must be returned to us. The disposal or dispersal of any equipment purchased through the grant should be discussed with us in the first instance.

UKGDPR (General Data Protection Regulation)

The data you supply to us will be held and processed under the terms of the UKGDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018. The information you provide will be held electronically. It will only be used to enable a decision to be made about whether a grant to your organisation may be approved. We might give copies of all or some of this information to individuals and organisations we consult with when assessing applications, administering the programme, monitoring grants, and evaluating funding processes and impacts. We might use data you provide for research purposes. We recognise the need to maintain the confidentiality of vulnerable groups. Individuals named in any application, or any official return will not be identified but the organisations in receipt of funding may be.

Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty (General Duty)

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) general duty is a proactive duty with three requirements:

- 1) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other prohibited conduct.

- 2) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 3) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

This means that public bodies like the council must take active steps to reduce disadvantage and encourage participation of people whose characteristics are protected by the Equality Act 2010.

Those characteristics are:

- age (18+)
- disability
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

The duty also covers marriage and civil partnerships, with regard to eliminating unlawful discrimination in employment.

Although the onus of the duty is on public bodies, the council requires that the organisations it funds should also pay due regard to the general duty.

1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation, or any other prohibited conduct

Example of how this can be done:

An organisation conducting a consultation as part of project development work changes the day and time of a planned drop-in session as it realised it could be excluding some religious groups from being able to participate. The same organisation produces any written consultation materials, e.g. community questionnaire in different formats – easy read, large print different languages etc. to reach as many people as possible.

These activities help eliminate indirect discrimination by removing practices that can disadvantage certain groups.

2. Advance equality of opportunity by having due regard to: -

- removing or minimising disadvantage
- meeting the needs of particular groups that are different from the needs of others

- encouraging participation in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low

Example of how this can be done:

A youth organisation is concerned that some of the young people who may be questioning their sexuality aren't getting information and support that they may need. The organisation arranges Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) awareness raising training for youth work staff. The organisation then organises activities as part of LGBT History Month providing access to information, support and advice for all the young people. These activities assist in minimising disadvantage and meet the needs of particular groups.

3. Foster good relations: -

Tackle prejudice, and promote understanding between people from different groups

Example of how this can be done:

The management committee of an organisation is concerned that very few local residents from the local Eastern European communities have responded to their project's community survey. The committee speaks with the local nursery and school where many of their children attend and representatives from the management committee are then invited to speak to the PTA about their project. The two organisations then work together to encourage participation in the survey and this builds relationships and helps more of the local community to participate in the development of the project. These activities will break down barriers between different groups of people and promote understanding.

For more advice or information on how your organisation could better meet the needs of the general duty please contact the Equalities Manager by emailing equality@northlan.gov.uk

PART EIGHT: SUPPORT DIRECTORY

You do not need to develop your project alone. Getting advice and support can strengthen your application and improve your chances of delivering a successful project. There are organisations across Scotland that can help you develop your idea, strengthen your proposal and prepare for funding.

If you are unsure where to start, contact us and we can help signpost you to the most appropriate support.

Local Support

[Volunteer Action North Lanarkshire](#) - Third Sector Interfaces (TSI) provide local, one-to-one support and should usually be your first point of contact. TSIs are available in every local authority area, and in North Lanarkshire, our third sector interface is Volunteer Action North Lanarkshire. It can help with:

- Developing your project idea
- Funding advice
- Governance and setting up your group
- Connecting you to local partners

Website: [Home - Voluntary Action North Lanarkshire](#)

[North Lanarkshire Council](#) - Engaging with North Lanarkshire Council's Community Partnership Team can help ensure your project aligns with local priorities, and this increases your chances of success.

North Lanarkshire Council's Community Partnership Team provides local support, engagement and fosters partnership working. Working across Community Boards, Local Outcome Improvement Plans and community led initiatives and funding programmes, the Team can provide advice on:

- Community capacity building
- Development of community-led projects
- Engagement and participation in decision-making
- Partnership working between groups and public services

The Council also supports groups through:

- Community Empowerment funding
- Local Development Programme
- Community Asset Transfer support
- Participatory Budgeting

Website: [Community planning](#)

[Business Gateway Lanarkshire](#) – provides advice to social enterprise and

- Business planning and business advice
- Workshops and training
- Start-up and growth support

Website: [Business Gateway Lanarkshire: Free Support and Advice for New and Growing Businesses | Business Gateway](#)

National Support

Development Trusts Association Scotland (DTAS) – provides advice and support for community-led regeneration and development trusts

- Advice on developing community projects
- Training and peer learning
- Support on community ownership and enterprise

Website: [homepage - DTAS](#)

Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO) - provides general organisational support, including *Funding Scotland* (a grant search tool)

- Governance and running your organisation
- Training and guidance
- Funding search tools

Website: [Running your organisation - SCVO](#)

Community Ownership Support Service (COSS) - provides advice on taking on building and land:

- Advice on asset transfer
- Development process support
- Training and guidance

Website: [About COSS - DTAS Community Ownership Support Service](#)

Foundation Scotland – provides advice on funding and social investment

- Access to a range of funds
- Support for place-based projects
- Social investment opportunities

Website: [Foundation Scotland | Scotland's Community Foundation](#)