

**CULTURE &  
BUSINESS  
FUND  
SCOTLAND**

**Guidelines**  
2024-2025



**Scottish  
Government**  
Riaghaltas  
na h-Alba

# Concept

## From idea to innovation

The Culture & Business Scotland Fund (C&BS Fund) is a funding programme which receives direct investment from the Scottish Government.

It is designed to encourage culture and business organisations to develop innovative and mutually beneficial partnerships. Creating a partnership with an arts or heritage organisation can help businesses to meet core objectives in creative ways.

Culture organisations (arts and heritage) can apply to the C&BS Fund for up to **£1 for every £2 invested** by the business organisations. The minimum investment request is £1,000, so the minimum business sponsorship must be £2,000.

Culture organisations can apply up to two times between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025, provided the total C&BS Fund investment does not exceed **£10,000**.

# Eligibility

## What and who we fund

We make C&BS Fund investments to non-profit culture organisations delivering cultural activity in Scotland which have attracted a business to sponsor a project or aspect of their work, either in the form of cash or in-kind sponsorship. Our defined lists of areas of culture (arts and heritage) activity that applicants should be involved in and the sectors that business sponsors should operate in can be found [here](#).

We make investments for sponsorships where funds, goods or services are provided by the business organisation in exchange for certain rights or benefits provided by the culture organisation that may be used for competitive advantage.

We encourage partnership working, where culture and business organisations take a broader and more integrated approach to the relationship, resulting in true collaboration and the achievement of mutually agreed objectives.

Our investments are made to enable the culture organisation to give the business organisation additional sponsorship rights or benefits relating to a separate project or aspect of their work which provides public benefit, helping to enhance the impact and reach of the partnership.

We expect all applicants to be committed to becoming a Fair Work First employer as outlined in the Scottish Government's [Fair Work First guidance](#) and will be required to pay at least the Real Living Wage and provide appropriate channels for effective workers' voice as a minimum standard.

We also require the culture and business organisations to be in alignment with our [Ethical Fundraising & Funding Policy](#).

Culture organisations eligible to apply to the C&BS Fund are as follows:

**Registered Charities**

Charities registered with OSCR (the Scottish Charity Regulator) and undertaking activity related to culture (arts and heritage)

**Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisations**

SCIOs registered with OSCR and undertaking activity related to culture (arts and heritage)

**Community Interest Companies**

CICs registered with the Regulator of Community Interest Companies, undertaking activity related to culture (arts and heritage), and with an asset lock in place

**Companies Limited by Guarantee**

Companies Limited by Guarantee registered with Companies House, undertaking activity related to culture (arts and heritage), and with an asset lock in place

We require all applicant organisations to have the following:

- A governing document (your Constitution or Articles of Association)
- A bank account in the organisation's name (as written on the governing document)
- Latest annual accounts/return/statement filed with OSCR/Companies House
- A board, committee or advisory panel with a minimum of two unrelated members

## Process

### What you can expect

**Eligibility**

Our aim is that our short film, guidelines and frequently asked questions will help you to establish whether your organisation and project is eligible to apply for a Fund investment. However, if you are unsure, please do contact our Head of Development and Programmes at [fund@cultureandbusiness.scot](mailto:fund@cultureandbusiness.scot) or on 0131 243 2757.

**Stages**

- Stage 1 | Watch our short film [here](#)
- Stage 2 | Submit your Expression of Interest
- Stage 3 | Submit your Application (if invited to apply)

**Outcomes**

We will aim to respond to your Expression of Interest within five working days. If invited to apply, we will aim to respond to your Application within four weeks of submission.

**Priorities**

We reserve the right to prioritise applications in certain circumstances. For example, where the applicant has had a Fund investment within the last two years or their business partner is an existing one, other applications may need to take priority.

## Applications

In line with Culture & Business Scotland's environmental policy to support a greener Scotland, we encourage applications and associated documentation to be submitted by email with electronic signatures in PDF format to [fund@cultureandbusiness.scot](mailto:fund@cultureandbusiness.scot). If you would prefer the form in a different format, please contact us on 0131 243 2757 or at [fund@cultureandbusiness.scot](mailto:fund@cultureandbusiness.scot) to request this.

## Documentation

Before we can review your Application, we require the following documentation to be submitted:

- a signed and dated sponsorship agreement
- a budget showing all income and expenditure (see our template)
- your child protection and/or vulnerable adults policy, if relevant

## Evaluations

An Evaluation and financial statement must be submitted to Culture & Business Scotland within two calendar months of the end of the project to confirm appropriate use of the sponsorship and Fund investment, prior to release of the remaining 20% of the Fund investment.

## Changes

Culture & Business Scotland reserves the right to amend these Guidelines and the process itself at any point. Previous C&BS Fund recipients should check the website to ensure they have read the latest Guidelines before proceeding with an Expression of Interest.

# Applications

## How we review applications

The following five areas of your application will be reviewed:

### Partnership

Does the application demonstrate clear business objectives for investing in culture? How innovative is the partnership between the culture and business organisation?

### Activation

In what ways is the partnership being used to create interaction and engagement with their target audiences? Are there clear plans to promote the business organisation?

### Outcomes

What potential is there for the cultural experiences of the beneficiaries of the activity to have a positive impact? Are there clear plans for measuring partnership success?

### Value

Do the original benefits, and additional benefits offered, demonstrate value for money? Is there a good return on investment for the business organisation and the C&BS Fund?

### Priorities

To what extent will the project enrich Scotland's social, civic or economic life? Should the application be given precedence in relation to the priority criteria?

# Support

## How we can help promote your partnership

### Acknowledgment

We require all Fund recipients to recognise the support of their business partner and the Culture & Business Fund Scotland publicly. We will provide advice as to how best to do this and will provide a C&BS Fund logo toolkit to help with promotion.

### Events

We ask that all Fund recipients invite Culture & Business Scotland to any events or performances supported through the C&BS Fund. This enables us to talk passionately about the positive impact our investments make on projects and partnerships.

### PR & Media

We aim to provide PR and media support to promote your partnerships and projects, so that we can continue to champion the value of culture and cultural experiences. We will be in touch with you and your business partner to help create engaging content.

# Specifics

## What additional conditions we require

C&BS Fund investments must go towards supporting different cultural activities, for example a separate season of work, a different production or exhibition, or a different performance or public presentation.

The related business sponsorship activities could take place outside Scotland, in other parts of the UK or internationally. However, C&BS Fund investments must also go towards cultural activities taking place within Scotland.

C&BS Fund investments cannot be used for a capital project. However, the business sponsorship can support building or renovation costs if the C&BS Fund investment is used for cultural activities directly engaging with the public.

C&BS Fund investment requests should always relate to sponsorships exclusive of VAT.

We would expect your business sponsor to be a sole trader, partnership, limited liability partnership, or a limited company. We cannot accept applications where the business sponsor is a public body that supports or has a remit for cultural delivery, for example, universities or charitable trusts, or any local authority organisations or charities.

C&BS Fund investments cannot:

- be used to pay for corporate hospitality
- be used to support commercial trading activities such as attending trade fairs
- be paid to the business sponsor
- be used to pay or reimburse the business sponsor for goods or services

For in-kind sponsorship:

- the value of the goods provided is at cost price and not retail price
- any goods or services that the business does not provide as a part of its operations will not be eligible
- we reserve the right to ask for evidence to substantiate the estimated financial contribution
- we will require evidence that goods have been delivered up to the agreed value in the form of a delivery note/docket for products or a signed delivery statement for services

The following are not eligible to be used for an application for C&BS Fund investment:

- core salary costs
- appeal funding or fundraising events
- corporate philanthropic donations
- grants from a charitable trust or foundation
- volunteering of business staff (non-professional skills) to support cultural activities
- use of business premises for meetings
- payments or fees to agents, such as sponsorship and fundraising consultants
- partnerships where there is a service agreement in place with the sponsor
- projects where scholarships, bursaries or awards are involved
- discounts on goods or services, including free rent for a period of time as part of a lease agreement, and free venue hire where the business will gain financially from exclusive catering, alcohol or retail sales

### **Dates**

Applications must be submitted at least two months before the sponsored activity begins, unless otherwise agreed. The partnership may already have been publicised at the time of application. The proposed Fund supported activity should ideally begin with 12 months from the date of application.

### **Payment**

C&BS Fund investments will be paid in two instalments: 80% on receipt of the signed Declaration and evidence that the business sponsorship has been paid, and 20% once the Evaluation has been received and approved. For cash sponsorships, evidence should be in the form of a copy of the culture organisation's bank statement, clearly showing the date(s), amount(s) and source(s) of payment). For in-kind sponsorships, evidence should be in the form of a letter signed by the Chief Executive, Director or Chair of the business sponsor, providing a detailed cost breakdown of the in-kind sponsorship and dates for delivery.

### **Appeals**

If there is no money left in the C&BS Fund, applications will be declined. If an application is turned down for any other reason, an applicant may appeal against the decision by writing to Culture & Business Fund Scotland, Thorn House, 5 Rose Street, Edinburgh EH2 2PR, or emailing [fund@cultureandbusiness.scot](mailto:fund@cultureandbusiness.scot) within 14 days of the date of our decision.

An independent panel consisting of a member of the Senior Management Team of Culture & Business Scotland (who was not involved in the assessment process) and a member of the Culture & Business Scotland Board will consider the appeal and respond within 21 days of receipt.

## FAQs

Do you have a frequently asked question?

### **What do you mean by innovative partnerships?**

Culture and business organisations have the potential to learn a great deal from each other and achieve mutually beneficial objectives. While we recognise that straightforward, traditional sponsorships are of value, we believe that a more innovative partnership approach can generate much greater value. This might be, for example, a tech company providing in-kind support to a museum where they're collaborating on a digital project to showcase their services; an orchestra being sponsored to commission and record a new piece of music to feature as part of an ESG climate-focused campaign for a financial services company; or a local family firm sponsoring a performance at a community hub to drive customer engagement and brand awareness through a mutually beneficial partnership marketing campaign.

### **Do you make investments in partnerships where a philanthropic donation is received?**

We do not make investments where a philanthropic or corporate donation is received by a culture organisation. The application for an investment must relate to a sponsorship, i.e. where funds, goods or services are provided in exchange for certain rights or benefits.

### **Why do you no longer provide multi-year investment?**

We appreciate that the opportunity for support for up to three years was very useful for encouraging the sustainability of partnerships. However, we feel our one-off investments should incentivise new partnerships and help get them off the ground.

### **Why has the maximum amount of investment reduced over the last few years?**

As you can imagine, with increasing pressures on investment across all sectors and with our vision being for a Scotland where culture thrives, we need to ensure that the C&BS Fund supports as many partnerships as possible. Analysis shows that the average Fund investment request is £8,000, so we can still support organisations at the right level.

### **Why do you only make investments to registered charities, SCIOs, CICs and Companies Limited by Guarantee?**

We need to ensure we have a high level of confidence in the organisations to which we make investments and how the money would be managed. We believe the best way of doing this is to only make investments to organisations which have a strong level of governance requirements.

### **Why do you require CICs and Companies Limited by Guarantee to have an advisory panel?**

We are strong advocates for good governance, but we recognise that the CIC framework is an increasingly popular one through which benefit can be delivered to communities. We are therefore keen to support CICs which enter into innovative partnerships with business organisations. However, similar to some major funders, we need to see evidence of the additional scrutiny that unconnected members to the organisations would provide.

### **What do you mean by unrelated members?**

By unrelated, we mean not married to each other; not in a relationship with each other; not living together at the same address; or not related by blood.