

UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)



Rochford District Events Grant Programme 2025-2026



Funded by
UK Government

Information and Guidance Notes

For all enquiries contact ukspf@rochford.gov.uk.

The UK government has set out an ambitious plan for change, focused on 5 national Missions: ambitious, measurable, long-term objectives that provide a driving sense of purpose for the country.

The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) proactively supports Mission-delivery: pushing power out to communities everywhere, with a specific focus to help kickstart economic growth and promoting opportunities in all parts of the UK.

Please read more in the [UKSPF technical note](#).

Rochford District Council will be running an **events grant programme** to support the new 'Thriving Places' theme for UKSPF 2025-2026. The total amount to be distributed via this grant scheme will be up to £40k and will apply to **events only**. All events must take place within Rochford District and must demonstrate how they are supporting the visitor economy. Events may take place outdoors or indoors.

Your project may be one event or a series of events.

All events must be delivered between 1 August 2025 and 31 March 2026.

We are seeking applications for projects between £5,000 and £20,000.

Organisations can apply for capital and/or revenue within a single project but the total amount requested should not exceed £20k. The council reserves the right to award grants of more than £20,000 in exceptional circumstances only. If you anticipate that your event grant requirement may exceed £20,000, please contact ukspf@rochford.gov.uk before you submit your application form.

It will be your responsibility to ensure that all of the correct permissions and licenses are in place. Your event may need a Temporary Event Notice or to go before the Safety Advisory Group for approval. Please contact our Licensing team if you have any questions licensing@rochford.gov.uk.

This grant scheme will not fund any events that are 'business as usual'. However, this grant could fund a new phase or element of an existing event.

Grants will be paid 100% in full upon receipt of a signed agreement.

Who can apply?

Any organisation with legal status. This may include local authorities, public sector organisations, arms-length bodies of government, higher and further education institutions, private sector companies, voluntary and community organisations and registered charities.

Your organisation must have its own bank account and formal articles, such as a constitution, terms of reference or purpose statement.

Sole traders can apply. They should include their Unique Tax Reference number on the application form where it asks for the Charity or Company Registration number.

If you are delivering a project as a partnership, a lead applicant organisation will need to apply.

We are seeking a minimum of 20% match funding for applications for this grant scheme. This can be in the form of sponsorship, your own funds, other secured grant funding, volunteer hours or other in-kind commitment to the project. An organisation may apply for more than one project. However, no more than one application from an organisation will be successful.

The Council wishes to encourage applications that will also deliver on the priorities outlined in the Culture and Visitor Economy Strategy, published in December 2024. A copy of the strategy can be found here www.rochford.gov.uk/CultureVisStrategy. Priority may be given to fund events that particularly support local heritage, culture and landscape.

Subsidy control

It is possible that grants awarded under UKSPF will be deemed as being a subsidy.

Rochford District Council intends to use the exemption of Minimal Financial Assistance (MFA), which allows public authorities to award low value subsidies without needing to comply with the majority of the subsidy control requirements.

MFA is capped at a financial threshold, meaning no recipient can receive more than £315,000 over three years.

If approved, the applicant will be requested, as part of the grant funding agreement to declare that the cap hasn't been met.

More information is available on the following link:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1117122/uk-subsidy-control-statutory-guidance.pdf

What UKSPF cannot fund

- Paid for lobbying, entertaining, petitioning or challenging decisions, which means using the fund to lobby (via and external firms or in-house staff) in order to undertake activities intended to influence or attempt to influence Parliament, government, or political activity, including the receipt of UKSPF funding, or attempting to influence legislative or regulatory action.
- Activities of a political or exclusively religious nature.
- VAT reclaimable from HMRC.
- Gifts, or payments for gifts or donations.
- Statutory fines, criminal fines or penalties.
- Payments for works or activities which the lead the local authority, project deliverer, end beneficiary, or any member of their partnership has a statutory duty to undertake, or that are fully funded by other sources.
- Payments made in cash.
- Contingencies and contingent liabilities.
- Dividends.
- Bad debts, costs resulting from deferral of payments to creditors, or winding up a company.
- Expenses in respect of litigation, unfair dismissal, or other compensation.
- Costs incurred by individuals in setting up and contribution towards private pension schemes.
- More than one bid per applicant, per funding round.
- Retrospective bids (where work has already commenced prior to funding being awarded).
- Hospitality and catering (but volunteer refreshments are eligible).
- Organisational running costs (unless these are directly related to the project delivery) and ongoing costs incurred post project completion (such as maintenance of equipment or licenses/ subscriptions).
- Funding for projects outside of the District of Rochford.

UK Public Procurement

The UK Government expects all grant recipients to work within the UK public sector procurement rules. These are:

- For purchases up to £2,499 you can make a direct award- i.e. you only need to have one quote
- For purchases of £2,500-£24,999 you must have three quotes
- For purchases of service or goods £25,000 and above you must undertake a tender, and this must include publishing the tender on Contracts Finder at <https://www.gov.uk/contracts-finder>

Please ensure that you are able to fulfil these before applying. If your project involves a specialist product or service please contact us to check for any applicable exemptions. You

can also evidence that you have attempted to obtain three quotes even if three quotes have not been forthcoming.

What is considered revenue and what is considered capital?

Capital expenditures are usually one-off costs (over £5,000) of acquiring, improving or maintaining fixed assets which will be used to deliver your project, such as sound and lighting equipment or staging.

Revenue expenditure is short-term, operational, day-to-day running costs of your project, such as salaries linked directly to delivering the project, marketing and performer fees.

How to manage VAT

Please note that as grant funded projects are not a usual business activity, the funding falls 'outside scope' of VAT. Therefore, the grant payment will be inclusive of all costs (including the VAT that you will pay on goods and services).

Application process

To give organisations the longest possible delivery window, we are asking for best and final applications to be submitted by 23:59 on 23 June 2025.

The final application must be submitted online. However, there will be a Word version of the form available to use as a working draft. Each applicant must also upload a Budget and Milestones spreadsheet to complete the application process.

Deadline for final applications	23 June 2025
Applicants notified of decision and grant agreements sent	w/c 14 July 2025
Project delivery begins	1 August 2025

Accessing further support

If your organisation has accessibility requirements, please contact us at ukspf@rochford.gov.uk