



## **UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND**

### **INVITATION TO SUBMIT APPLICATIONS FOR FUNDING - Version 2**

Pembrokeshire County Council is pleased to invite interested organisations to apply for funding from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) for projects taking place in Pembrokeshire.

Please read the Guidance Documents that accompany this Invitation thoroughly before starting on your application. They are available [here](#). The webpage also contains links to further information on the UK Government's website, including the UKSPF Prospectus, which provides detailed information on the objectives of the Fund.

The UKSPF is available during the 2022/23, 2023/24 and 2024/25 financial years only. Our advice to applicants is presently that all UKSPF projects must be completed by December 2024, with the period between January to March 2025 being used for programme (not project) closure. It is possible for some activity to be funded retrospectively, provided it does not date before April 2022. However, we do not expect that this will be the norm and such projects will need to provide powerful evidence of need for the funding.

### **Background**

The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF or the Fund) is a central pillar of the UK Government's ambitious Levelling Up agenda and a significant component of its support for places across the UK. The UKSPF will support the UK Government's wider commitment to level up all parts of the UK by delivering on each of the levelling up objectives:

- Boost productivity, pay, jobs and living standards by growing the private sector, especially in those places where they are lagging.
- Spread opportunities and improve public services, especially in those places where they are weakest.

- Restore a sense of community, local pride and belonging, especially in those places where they have been lost.
- Empower local leaders and communities, especially in those places lacking local agency.

The primary goal of the UKSPF is to build pride in place and increase life chances across the UK. This aligns with Levelling Up White Paper missions, particularly: ‘By 2030, pride in place, such as people’s satisfaction with their town centre and engagement in local culture and community, will have risen in every area of the UK, with the gap between the top performing and other areas closing.’

Delivery of the UKSPF across Great Britain is through local authorities, but in Wales it has been agreed that councils will work together on a regional basis.

Pembrokeshire is part of the South West Wales region, along with Carmarthenshire, Swansea and Neath Port Talbot. The regional lead authority is Swansea Council, whilst Pembrokeshire County Council will lead on UKSPF delivery in its area. In this role, Pembrokeshire County Council is responsible for:

- issuing this invitation
- receiving bids
- appraising and approving funding for projects
- paying grants to successful projects and managing their performance

## **What type of bids are we looking for?**

Projects must deliver activity that is in line with the UK Shared Prosperity Fund Prospectus and align with one of these investment priorities:

- Communities and Place
- Supporting Local Business
- People and Skills, which includes:
  - “Multiply” (adult numeracy initiative with a ring-fenced budget)

Within these investment priorities are a number of interventions. A full list of these may be found [here](#). Each application must say which one of these interventions it is primarily addressing, even if it contributes to more than one.

We anticipate supporting a range of projects across most interventions (see below for exclusions) and size, but we expect bids to seek UKSPF of around £300,000 to £500,000 on average. This does not exclude larger or smaller bids, but we do not expect to receive bids that could be funded by UKSPF grant schemes (see below) or which exceed £750,000.

UKSPF is primarily a “revenue” fund. Whilst some capital is available, this is very limited. Consequently we expect that most applications will be seeking funding for revenue costs such as staff costs, and the cost of consumables, as opposed to

capital costs, such as costs involved in the creation or acquisition of an asset of value greater than £10,000 and a life of more than a year. It is possible for an application to seek both revenue and capital costs.

All bids must contribute to the aims and objectives identified in the Pembrokeshire sections of the South West Wales Investment Plan. Bids should also contribute to local strategies, including but not limited to Pembrokeshire County Council's Renew and Regenerate Strategy 2020-2030, and the Pembrokeshire Public Service Board's Wellbeing Plan. Please see Local Priorities section below for further information.

### **What type of applications are we not looking for?**

We are not seeking bids to all investment priorities. We have not allocated funding against the following interventions and so applications that primarily address these will not be supported:

- W10: Funding for local sports facilities, tournaments, teams and leagues.
- W15: Investment and support for digital infrastructure for local community facilities.
- W25: Grants to help places bid for and host international business events and conferences that support wider local growth sectors
- W27: Funding to develop angel investor networks nationwide.
- W28: Export grants to support businesses to grow their overseas trading, supporting local employment and investment.

In order to ensure that the UK Shared Prosperity Fund could commence quickly, given the limited time available, all local authorities in South West Wales have followed UK Government guidance that permits in-house delivery of UKSPF projects. Pembrokeshire County Council will therefore deliver some "Anchor" projects with delivery commencing as soon as feasible, and by April 2023 at the latest. It is important that applications submitted under this Invitation do not duplicate the Anchor projects as a whole or in part. In practice, we do not anticipate this to happen because the Anchors are focused on areas that local authorities are best placed to deliver or which fall within their legislative competences. Details of the Anchor projects are provided below. Note that duplication is not necessarily fatal to an application, but early discussion and evidence of unmet need will be required.

Some of the Anchors include grant schemes to which third parties can bid for funding. Where an application can obtain funding through an Anchor project grant scheme, it should not be submitted through this Invitation to Apply. Details of these grant scheme are also provided below.

Applicants must also avoid duplication with national governmental programmes from both the UK and Welsh Governments:

- For the Communities & Place Investment Priority, attention is drawn to the Welsh Government's Transforming Towns programme.
- For the Supporting Local Business Investment Priority, attention is drawn to the Welsh Government's Business Wales programmes.
- For the People & Skills Investment Priority, attention is drawn to Welsh Government programmes delivered by Careers Wales, and UK Government programmes delivered through Jobcentre Plus, as well as mainstream delivery by further and higher education.

These suggested potential areas of duplication are examples and should not be taken as exhaustive.

That the Welsh Government or the UK Government programmes conduct similar types of activities as a proposal for funding does not necessarily mean there is duplication if the government programme fails to satisfy the level of demand for an intervention. In such cases, applicants should be prepared to demonstrate unmet need for their intervention.

## **Local Priorities**

The local priorities that the UK Shared Prosperity Fund will be used to address may be found in the South West Wales Investment Plan. They can be found in the sections titled "Local Challenges" and "Local Opportunities" under each of the three Investment Priorities.

In selecting applications for funding, Pembrokeshire County Council will prioritise those that have the greatest potential to deliver against the Investment Plan.

Applications to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund for projects to take place in Pembrokeshire should also address the priorities set out in our Renew and Regenerate Strategy 2020 - 2030.

## **Anchor Projects**

There are four Anchor projects. Essentially, these combine activity to be carried out by the County Council itself with grant schemes (detailed below) which will offer funding to third parties. The scope of the Council delivered activity is set out below.

### Community Anchor Project

This Anchor project addresses the Communities & Place Investment Priority. There are two strands to the Council activity under this Anchor project. Under the first, the Council will provide non-financial support to community-based organisations. This will:

- support communities and local organisations take ownership of assets such as buildings or land via Community Asset Transfer (CAT) increasing the number and strength of locally-controlled, enterprising community organisations
- help people identify and act on the priorities in their areas
- help people to co-ordinate action and respond to challenges in areas
- support a network of community events to increase participation and create event based opportunities across Pembrokeshire towns through a range of activities
- increase and sustain the level of social enterprise activity along with community ownership and reuse of vacant or derelict buildings or land
- increase the number of community-led initiatives that contributes towards the town centre and secondary town offer
- support potential community organisations, voluntary groups, trusts, charities, town and community councils access external funding to develop assets and projects
- develop a range of meanwhile space opportunities across towns to support innovative temporary use of vacant units in town centres

The second strand is the Community Green Team. This will allow the Council to progress the following activities:

- green-led community based interventions delivering enhancements/improvements to local community doorstep green spaces
- increase community participation in community green spaces
- encourage beelines, biodiversity and planting schemes in our primary and secondary towns

#### Place-making in Pembrokeshire Anchor Project

This Anchor project addresses the Communities and Place Investment Priority, and will take place in the towns of Haverfordwest, Milford Haven, Pembroke, Pembroke Dock, Tenby and Fishguard / Goodwick. Activity elsewhere will not duplicate this Anchor project.

Investment through the Anchor Project where there may be potential for duplication or complementary activity are:

- Improvements to town centres & high streets
- Support for local arts, cultural, heritage, and creative activities

Townscape Improvements will be guided by the six Pembrokeshire Place-making plans and will include both capital investment and professional support. Investment will take place to develop cultural and heritage related visitor facilities within heritage

buildings. A complementary heritage skills programme will promote the development of heritage building skills.

### Supporting Local Business

This Anchor project addresses the Supporting Local Business Investment Priority.

The Business Support Anchor Project will include the provision of sectoral business support with officers to support aquaculture, youth enterprise, energy, transport, employment support, creative industries, food and new initiatives.

### People & Skills Anchor Project

This Anchor project addresses the People & Skills Investment Priority including the Multiply adult numeracy initiative. It should be noted however that the Anchor project will not deliver the whole of the Multiply initiative and that applications for other numeracy skills proposals for people aged 19 and over are welcome.

Aside from Multiply, this Anchor project will deliver:

Supporting Employability - This element of the project will provide employment support to economically inactive people furthest away from the training and labour market who are disengaged from mainstream services. This will include people of all ages (16+) including those with disability, learning disability or neuro-diverse conditions and young people who are NEET and care leavers.

Preparing for Employment Programme - engagement and softer skills development for young people. Year 11 learners at risk of becoming NEET will be provided with a range of vocational tasters by work based trainers to enable them to make informed decisions of their post 16 pathway.

Skills Futures - Intensive key sector focused skills initiatives to assist people who are out of work or in work on a low income to start their journey towards economic activity or improve their household income and future career prospects.

## **Grant Schemes**

Three of the Anchor projects include grant schemes to which organisations including businesses may apply, depending on the scope of the grant. Details are given below:

The Communities Anchor Project includes a grant scheme will support agile communities to tackle a myriad of community-based regeneration opportunities on their own terms, that will:

- address local priorities and needs;
- increase active inclusion;
- build on the assets of local communities to reduce poverty and to enable inclusive growth;
- embed the greening agenda across communities.

It will be targeted at voluntary and community groups, social enterprises, and town and community councils.

The Place-making in Pembrokeshire Anchor Project includes a grant scheme that will offer capital grants towards the refurbishment of commercial property in order to bring it back into use.

The Business Support Anchor Project includes four grant schemes aimed at businesses. These are:

- A start-up grant.
- A business growth grant.
- A decarbonisation grant.
- A youth enterprise grant.

## **How Much Money is Available?**

The amount of funding available under this Call for Applications is at least:

UKSPF Core (i.e. non-Multiply)    £6.25 million.

Multiply    £1.4 million

## **How will Applications be Assessed?**

Staff from Pembrokeshire County Council's Strategic Funding Team in the Resources Directorate will assess all applications submitted.

The first stage will be to ensure that the application is complete. We shall then carry out checks to ensure that the applicant is eligible, and that the activity proposed in the application is eligible. This part of assessment is a pass / fail stage.

In the second stage, the advice of the Pembrokeshire Economic Ambition Forum will be sought on all applications passing the eligibility checks.

The third stage will assess the quality of applications, in which applications will be scored out of 5. Ratings will be Very Good (5), Good (4), Acceptable (3), Marginal (2), Poor (1) and Unacceptable (0). Applications must score 3 or more on each question to proceed. Please refer to separate matrix showing what is required to achieve each rating.

Following scoring, a percentage score will be calculated showing the achievement of that project against the maximum score it could have achieved.

The Strategic Funding Team will then conduct an exercise to consider the overall balance of applications that have passed assessment, taking into account the percentage scores each project achieved, the aggregate funding requests in each year, the split between core UKSPF and Multiply, and the capital/revenue breakdown. We shall also consider the balance across interventions and especially between the three Investment Priorities. This will result in either a proposed portfolio of projects that could be funded, or options for more than one possible portfolio of projects.

The proposed portfolio of projects, or the available options, will then be presented to the Council's Director of Resources, who will determine which projects will be funded in conjunction with the Cabinet Member for Finance. The Director and Cabinet Member will have access to the full applications submitted, the assessments carried out, and any advice received from the Pembrokeshire Economic Ambition Forum in respect of the applications.

Pembrokeshire County Council will announce the outcome of the assessment process from early May 2023 onwards, at which point the Council will enter into a funding agreement with successful applicants.

## **Submitting an Application for Funding**

Applications must be submitted using the Pembrokeshire version of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund Application Form, which is available [here](#). Bids submitted in any other format will not be accepted.

Applications must be submitted to Pembrokeshire County Council using this email address: [spf@pembrokeshire.gov.uk](mailto:spf@pembrokeshire.gov.uk).

Applications must be submitted by **11:59pm on Friday, 31 March 2023**. Applications received after this will not be accepted.

The UK Shared Prosperity Fund is a competitive process and Pembrokeshire County Council, Swansea Council or the UK Government will not enter into discussions or negotiations with applicants.

## **Last Words**

If you are not sure how best to secure the UKSPF funding you need to deliver your project we have produced a Flowchart that will help you navigate the various routes through the programme. It can be downloaded from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund page on the County Council's website, [here](#).



Pembrokeshire County Council's Strategic Funding Team, which manages UKSPF in the county, can be contacted on [spf@pembrokeshire.gov.uk](mailto:spf@pembrokeshire.gov.uk). This email address will reach every member of the team so using the generic address will help ensure you receive a response even if individual team members are unavailable.

*GOOD LUCK!*