

Youth Scotland Grassroots Youth Work Fund 2025/26

Supporting community-based youth work

Guidance for applicant youth groups





Guidance for applicants

What is the Grassroots Youth Work Fund?

The Youth Scotland Grassroots Youth Work Fund is a small grant fund supported by the Scottish Government CLD Unit.

It is widely recognised that Scotland's young people face unprecedented challenges, from the lingering impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic to the escalating cost-of-living crisis. These pressures disproportionately affect young people in disadvantaged communities who are experiencing increased mental health struggles, increased impact of anti-social behaviour and criminal justice activity, increased poverty, and barriers to education and employment. Trusted community-based support is critical in helping young people navigate these challenges and this fund will support grassroots youth work to secure safe spaces for young people, helping them overcome barriers to learning and develop skills.

Priority will be given to youth groups and projects working with young people in SIMD 1-2 areas/ with young people experiencing multiple ACEs and impacted by poverty, criminal activity and anti-social behaviour.

Grants of up to £2,000 will fund grassroots, community-based youth work groups to create or enhance safe spaces for young people, providing vital environments where trusted adults can support young people to develop resilience, confidence, and skills for life. Through the Grassroots Youth Work fund, youth work groups will be resourced to run a wide range of youth work activity, addressing key issues such as poverty, isolation, anti-social behaviour, and mental health challenges.

Funding can be used to fund a range of youth work activity but examples might include:

- Outdoor physical activities to engage young people in positive behaviours.
- Peer mentoring schemes for young people with additional support needs.
- Workshops on risk-taking behaviours and emotional well-being.
- Creative projects, such as upcycling workshops for exploring identity.

The maximum amount per award is £2,000.

Who can apply?

Youth Scotland member youth groups and other local community -based youth work groups that:

- Are based in Scotland;
- Can demonstrate that they are working with young people in SIMD 1–2 areas/ young people experiencing multiple ACEs and impacted by poverty, criminal activity and anti-social behaviour.
- Work with young people aged between 11 and 25 years old;
- Want to try new things, enhance existing provision or increase their capacity to deliver a specific project or programme;
- Are able to spend the grant and complete all delivery by 31st March 2026;
- Are applying for up to £2,000. No match funding is required.
- Have turn-over of less than £500,000

FOR NON MEMBERS ONLY

Please note that if you are NOT a Youth Scotland Member group, you will need to evidence that you are a bona fide local community-based youth work group/organisation who operates to quality standards. This will include demonstrating that you:

- are a constituted, voluntary organisation with appropriate governance structures in place
- have appropriate Health & Safety and Safeguarding policies and procedures in place, including PVG's for staff/volunteers
- are a youth work organisation and not just a single activity sports/arts/thematic organisation delivering classes/workshops to young people
- have a bank account in the name of your group/organisation.

When is the application deadline?

For Youth Scotland Member groups:

Applications should be received by:

- 12 noon, Monday 15th December 2025.

For non-Youth Scotland Member groups:

Applications should be received by:

- 12noon, Thursday 11th December 2025.

This is to allow us time to do due diligence and check you meet the required Non-member criteria, as outlined above.

What happens after you apply?

Once we have received your application, we will review it to make sure all the information we need is included. Applications will be considered by a Grants Panel and we aim to let you know whether you have been successful by Friday 19th December 2025 but we will update you if there are any delays.

What will we fund?	What won't we fund?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with young people aged 11 to 25 • Programmes of activities. • One-off events. • Equipment and programme materials. • Travel costs to an activity. • Youth Worker costs to deliver the activities above. • All the above should support youth work with young people in SIMD 1-2 areas/young people experiencing multiple ACEs and impacted by poverty, criminal activity and anti-social behaviour. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with children under age 11. • Uniformed youth groups. • National Organisations • Local Authority Services • Non youth work organisations ie/ single activity sports/arts/thematic organisations delivering classes/workshops to young people; • Building upgrades. • Activities which take place outside of Scotland. • Projects and activities which incorporate the promotion of political or religious beliefs.

Supporting grassroots community-based youth work

We know that funding is only one of the factors that contribute towards high-quality youth work opportunities for young people. At Youth Scotland, we offer support and training to youth workers and youth groups to help improve the quality of youth work which young people are experiencing. We would expect that youth groups funded through the Youth Scotland Grassroots Youth Work Fund will either take part in our suite of trusted adult training and other related training programmes or be able to demonstrate that they have attended similar training with another provider. This is intended to help build the capacity of your youth group over the longer term. Further

details of Youth Scotland's training can be found at <https://www.youthscotland.org.uk/training/> or please contact us by calling 0131 554 2561 or emailing training@youthscotland.org.uk to discuss how we can support you.

Supporting youth work in these challenging times

We know that we are all living in challenging times. Youth Scotland has supported community-based youth work for over 90 years and we stand ready to support youth workers in communities across Scotland to meet this issue head on. Our aim is to be at the heart of sustaining youth groups to support young people in meaningful ways.

Please stay in touch with us throughout this period so we can share your stories of endeavour and success in supporting young people and your communities. The questions we have asked in the application form and the feedback you give us will help us communicate to funders and other decision-makers about the challenges you are facing. If things change due to factors beyond your control just let us know and we can discuss how you may be able to use the funds in another way that benefits young people in your youth group and community.

Completing the Application Form

The questions asked in the application form will help the Grants Panel gain a picture of your youth group, the proposed activities covered by the application and whether the activity and target group match the criteria for this fund. Please complete all questions carefully.

If you have any questions, would like to discuss your idea before applying or have challenges completing the application form then please get in touch. We want to help.

You can contact us either by calling 0131 554 2561 or emailing office@youthscotland.org.uk