**AXA PARKS Fund FAQs**

Please read through the following FAQs regarding the AXA PARKS Fund. If your question is not answered, please email the Grants Team at applications@communityfoundationni.org

## What types of organisations can apply to the fund?

Local community organisations and charities can apply to the AXA PARKS Fund. Organisations must be embedded in local communities and should have a track record of responding to community needs.   
Organisations must have an annual income of less than £500,000. Branch networks for larger national charities are also eligible, provided that the local branch has an annual income of less than £500,000.

## What types of organisations are not eligible to apply to this fund?

Ineligible organisations include:

* Organisations with an annual income of £500,000 or more
* Statutory bodies
* Sports bodies
* Organisations outside of Northern Ireland
* Private companies or profit-making enterprises
* Organisations established solely for the prevention or relief of suffering of animals
* Individual people who are not part of a constituted organisation

## My organisation is not eligible, can I still receive funding?

Organisations that do not fit the criteria above are not eligible to apply for funding and any ineligible applications submitted will not receive funding.

## I would like to apply for my local sports club to run a project, would we be eligible?

Unfortunately, sports clubs are not eligible in this grant round, as The Community Foundation can only make grants to organisations with charitable objectives. Under the Charities Act 2009, the promotion of sport is excluded is a charitable object, so The Community Foundation would not be able to award a grant to a sports club, even if they are not for profit. If you would like more information on this, please email applications@communityfoundationni.org

## How much funding can my organisation apply for?

Eligible organisations can apply for funding in the range of £3,000 to £20,000. We will not be accepting proposals of less than £3,000. This funding must be restricted to the project that has been applied for and must be spent within 12 months.

## My organisation is a local group, which is part of a national network, can I apply?

Local branches can apply for funding in this grant round, provided the local branch has an annual income of less than £500,000. Applications from multiple branches of the same organisation will be accepted.

## My organisation is based in the Republic of Ireland, can I apply to the AXA PARKS Fund?

AXA has provided funding to ensure grants can also be made in the Republic of Ireland as well as Northern Ireland. Our partner organisation, Community Foundation for Ireland (CFI) is running a grant-round parallel to this one, so applications should be submitted to CFI. Find out more here:

## What types of proposals are eligible for funding?

Proposals to this grant round must be to enhance/develop an outdoor physical space in the local community. This space must be accessible to the whole community except for specific cases, for example refuges, schools, or community day care centres.

The space must encourage local community engagement and participation. The space must also improve local biodiversity through protecting current native biodiversity or supporting the recovery of neglected or damaged natural habitats.

## I have an idea for developing a green space, but it is not on your list of examples, can I still apply?

Yes, even if your idea is not included on our list of example projects, you can still apply for funding. However, your project must encourage community engagement and enhance local biodiversity.

## What types of proposals are not eligible for funding?

Ineligible projects include:

* Ongoing programme delivery or core organisation costs such as rent, insurance etc.
* Green spaces that are closed off to the community apart from the cases listed above
* Large scale construction, or land/building acquisition
* Work on land or buildings where the applicant does not meet requirements around land ownership and permissions
* Activities that promote religion or a political party
* Projects that will take place before the grants are awarded at the end of July 2022
* Projects taking place outside of Northern Ireland

## I know of a space that my organisation can develop and enhance with this funding, but I don’t have permission to use the land, can I still apply?

If an organisation does not currently own the land, they must have permission to develop the land prior to applying for funding. This includes permission from the landowners, and any planning permission that is required. Applications to buy land will not be accepted.

## Is there additional support available to make sure that biodiversity is at the core of our project?

Yes, The Community Foundation has provided a Resource Pack to support organisations to keep biodiversity central to the project. We will also be providing a webinar on applying to the grant round and providing additional information there too.

## Some projects are being prioritised in this grant round, is it worth applying even if my project isn’t a priority?

We have indicated in the criteria that particular types of projects will be prioritised. We hope to fund both priority and non-priority projects, however, we anticipate this grant round to be very competitive so that may not be the case for every proposal.

## Do we need to provide volunteer opportunities for AXA staff members in order to be successful in this grant round?

It is not a requirement to provide opportunities for AXA staff to volunteer with your organisation as you develop your green space, and it will not put you at a disadvantage if you do not provide an opportunity. However, if you would benefit from additional support from AXA staff members, you can indicate how many people could volunteer in your application. If you are successful, you will have the chance to confirm what volunteering opportunities are available.

## Can I send in my proposal via email or post?

All proposals must be submitted through our online application form, we cannot accept applications in other formats.

## When is the grant round deadline?

The deadline is **1pm on Friday 20th May 2022**. No applications will be accepted after this time, including forms that have been partially completed prior to the deadline. We recommend that you submit your application well before this deadline in case of any unexpected issues.

## When will we find out the outcome?

We are expecting a large number of applications in this grant round so the outcome of your application will be announced in July/August 2022. We expect successful organisations to start work in August/September 2022.

## How long should the project last?

Projects should last no more than 12 months and funding should be spent by August 2023.

## Can I apply for a project that has already happened?

The Community Foundation cannot award funding for projects that have already happened or already started. Please bear in mind that, if successful, grants will be awarded in July/August 2022 and projects should start in August/September 2022. Projects that are planned to start before August 2022 will not be eligible for funding.

## Do we need to develop a new space, or can we develop a current space?

Proposals can be to develop a new green space or to enhance a current green space.

## Can I apply for equipment or capital costs?

Budgets can include the costs of building materials, plants and flowers, equipment and furniture. Where possible, all materials purchased with this funding should be sustainable and environmentally friendly. Large scale construction, or land/building acquisition is not eligible in this grant round.

## Can I include staff salaries in my application? Proposals to this fund can include the proportion of staff time or consultation costs specifically related to the project (eg Ecologist consultancy costs or surveyors). Budgets can also include labour costs where an external company is contracted. We are not able to cover core staff salaries outside of what is relevant to the project.

## I have received part-funding for my project from another trust or donor; can I apply to this grant round as well?

Yes, you can apply to the AXA PARKS Fund for projects that you have already received part funding for, but you must state this on your application. Your application to the AXA PARKS Fund must cover at least 75% of the total cost of the project.

## Can I apply for a project that costs more than the amount I can apply for?

Yes, organisations can apply for projects with an overall cost that is larger than the amount applied for, but applicants should demonstrate how this gap will be filled. Your application to the AXA PARKS Fund must cover at least 75% of the total cost of the project.

## If my organisation has already, or is currently in receipt of a grant from The Community Foundation for, can I still apply?

Yes, if you have previously been in receipt of funding or are currently being funded by The Community Foundation you can still apply to the AXA PARKS Fund.

## Does my organisation need a bank account?

Yes, The Community Foundation can only pay out grants to charitable organisations with a dedicated bank current account and not to individual accounts.

## What documents should I submit with my application?

The following documents must be submitted alongside your application. We can only accept digital copies of these documents.

* The Constitution or Memorandum and Articles of Association.
* A bank current bank statement
* The organisation’s most recent signed annual audited accounts.
* A copy of your child/adult safeguarding policies.
* An equality policy.

I am not able to submit my governance documents, what can I do?  
We cannot accept applications without all the correct governance documents. If you are having trouble submitting the documents, email us at applications@communityfoundationni.org before the deadline, and we will be able to help you. Please be mindful that if you are submitting last minute and are not able to submit your documents, we may not be able to help you before the round closes.

## What type of annual accounts do I need to submit?

Organisations with an annual income of less than £100,000 should provide a Profit and Loss account for the previous year. Organisations with an annual income of more than £100,000 must provide audited annual accounts.

Accounts should be from 2020/2021 and must be signed.

## Will I be required to report on what the grant has been used for?

All grantees will be required to submit before and after photos and an Interim and Outcome Report during the project. Interim reports will be due by the end of February 2023 and Outcome reports will be due in September 2023. We will also require before and after photos of the space to show the impact of the AXA PARKS funding.  
All reporting will be detailed in the Grant Agreement prior to payments being made.