



**Community Solutions to Housing and Homelessness
Seed Fund 2023
Information and Guidelines for Applicants.**

Application Process

The application process for the Seed Fund award will comprise of two stages.

Stage one – Completion of an online application which will assess fit with the eligibility criteria for the fund and ensure your project idea is in line with the fund priorities and programme outcomes. If your application meets the criteria, you will be invited to stage two of the application process.

Stage two - Your project team will attend a Participatory Budgeting Decision making event in which your team will pitch your project proposal to a panel and an audience of people with expertise of housing and homelessness.

Decision making process

A participatory budgeting grant making process will determine the outcome for Seed Fund awards at this event using an audience participation digital voting platform.

Definition of terms

Individuals with expertise* Expertise is recognised as either someone who has direct lived experience of housing stress or homelessness or those working or volunteering to support individuals in housing and homelessness.

***Pitch:** A presentation to an audience followed by a question-and-answer session.

***Participatory Budgeting process** A Participatory Budgeting process is where people affected by the issues have a say in deciding where funds are allocated.

***Audience participation Digital Voting Platform:** An online voting system that can be used for casting and counting votes instantly and electronically.

Stage one: Completion of an online application.

Applicants are invited to submit an application in advance of the Participatory Budgeting event to ensure:

- The application is in line with the stated purpose of the fund
- The proposed objectives, activities and budget seem logical and achievable
- To complete due diligence checks on the applicant organisation

If there are any concerns in relation to the above, organisations will have an opportunity to make amendments to their application prior to the Participatory Budgeting event.

- Applications open on **Friday 19th May 2023.**
- The deadline for written applications will be **Thursday 15th June 2023 at 4pm.**

- You will be informed of the outcome of the written application by **Tuesday 27th June 2023**. If successful, you will be invited to stage two of the application process.

Stage two: A team pitch at a Participatory Grant Making event.

This event will take place on **Thursday 20th July 2023 in the Braid Museum & Arts Centre, Ballymena. Time: 11am – 3pm**

Each project team will pitch their project proposal to an audience of individuals with expertise of housing and homelessness in NI. Presentations will be a maximum of 10 minutes and will be followed by up to 2 questions from a panel to further explore or clarify the idea.

Following a short break, your team will present your idea at a table (market stall style); providing the opportunity for participants to discuss the idea with your project team to further explore or clarify the idea.

Digital voting and results; Voting will take place and results will be announced at the event.

Time-keeping will need to be strict to avoid running behind and to create a fair and equal opportunity for all.

Event Attendees:

Project teams will be allocated a set number of places for service users/lived experience volunteers to attend the event. Transport will be provided.

Guidelines for pitching

Panellists will be asked to consider how well your pitch addresses each of the following points:

- **Describe your challenge and potential impact:** Groups should clearly outline their social challenge and how it relates to the root causes of housing issues and homelessness. Clearly articulate what the scale of need is and what the social impact could be i.e. who will benefit and how.
- **Describe your project idea:** Provide a concise summary of your project. You should clearly articulate a set of project outcomes, and the main activities that you will undertake to achieve the outcomes. Describe how the approach is innovative and different from what is already being done, and how people affected by housing issues and homelessness have been involved in the planning of the project and will be involved in the delivery of the project.
- **Strategic commitment to project:** Describe how the proposed project fits with your organisations' or group of organisations' wider strategy and demonstrate that you can dedicate the time and personnel needed for delivery.
- **Sustainability and influence:** Tell us how you've considered the potential longer-term impact of your project beyond the end of the grant. This could be through influencing government and public services and/or through scaling up or replicating your model. What are your options for ensuring sustainability?
- **'X factor'** - extra points for demonstrating passion, creativity, and an overall compelling case!

In terms of the format for your pitch - we would recommend you use some slides or other visuals to illustrate your points. If you are using PowerPoint slides, please use **no more than 5 slides** and try not to have too much text on your slides. Feel free to be creative in terms of other ways of presenting - get in touch with Gemma McCaughley at gmccaughley@communityfoundationni.org if you'd like to check what would be possible.

Where possible we'd like to hear from more than one member of your team, including past or current service users.

Decision-making:

A participatory budgeting process will determine the outcome for Seed Fund awards. Decisions will be made by the audience at the participatory budgeting event via an audience participation digital voting platform to determine a rank order for allocation for the Seed Fund awards

A select number of applicants with the most votes will receive a Seed Fund award of up to £25,000, to be spent within 12 months. Remaining applicants will be offered a Development Grant of up to £5,000 to be spent within 6 months.

Voting process

An Audience Participation Digital Voting system will be in place to determine a rank order for those who shall receive an award. The following rules will apply:

- The participatory budgeting event will be open to an audience of those affected by housing and homelessness.
- Individual organisations will be permitted a maximum of 7 representatives at the event.
- Every individual audience member, with the exception of CFNI, Oak Foundation and WorkWest staff, who have been directly involved in programme delivery, will have 5 votes.
- These votes must all be used, with only 1 vote per project. If the total number of votes cast does not match the number of participants, the vote will be re-run.

Those organisations that do not receive a Seed Fund award and are instead offered a Development Grant, will be required to complete a short budget and activity plan and sent to CFNI shortly after the event.

Final decisions will be announced to the audience at the Participatory Budgeting Decision Making event. Decisions for Grant awards are final.