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UK Community Renewal Fund

Invitation to Submit Project Bids

**Introduction**

Medway Council is seeking bids from organisations wishing to deliver activity as part of the UK Community Renewal Fund.

Please read the UK Community Renewal Fund Prospectus and the UK Community Fund Technical Note for Project Applicants and Deliverers before starting work on a bid. They are available [here](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-community-renewal-fund-prospectus).

The Prospectus provides detailed information on the objectives of the Fund, the types of projects it intends to support and how it operates, including the process and selection criteria that will be used to assess bids.

Successful UK Community Renewal Fund bids will be for 2021/22 only and **activity must end in March 2022.**

**Background**

To help local areas prepare for the introduction of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, the UK Government is providing funding in 2021/22 through the UK Community Renewal Fund. We are interested in bids that build on local insight and knowledge, and project proposals that align with long-term strategic plans for local growth, target people most in need and support community renewal. In addition, projects should show how they complement other national and local provision. A focus for this Fund is to support innovation and new ideas in these areas, investing in pilots that draw on local insights and which will help places to prepare for the introduction of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund in 2022.

Medway Council has been designated as a lead authority by the UK Government. As a lead authority, Medway Council is responsible for:

* issuing this invitation
* receiving bids
* selecting the bids that will be sent to UK Government for consideration
* paying grants to successful projects and manging their performance

Full details of the role of lead authorities can be found in the UK Community Renewal Fund Prospectus.

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

Projects must deliver activity that is line with the UK Community Renewal Fund Prospectus and align with at least one of these investment priorities:

* Investment in skills
* Investment for local business
* Investment in communities and place
* Supporting people into employment

There are no financial allocations to these priorities.

The UK Government anticipates supporting a range of projects by theme and size, but **applicants are encouraged to maximise impact and deliverability through larger projects (£500,000+)** where this is possible.

As 90% of funding available through the UK Community Renewal Fund is revenue funding and only available in 2021/22, projects should be predominantly, or exclusively revenue based. Projects that focus predominantly on the construction or major refurbishment of buildings, the purchase of land or the purchase of large pieces of equipment will not be supported.

**Local Priorities**

In selecting the bids that will be forwarded to the UK Government for consideration Medway Council will prioritise the bids that have the greatest potential to deliver against key local growth priorities. We would expect bids to make reference to at least the following local strategies:

* [Medway 2035](https://www.medway.gov.uk/downloads/file/3615/medway_2035)

Bids may also, subject to their chosen investment priority/ies usefully reference:

* [Skills and Employability Plan for Medway 2035](https://www.medway.gov.uk/downloads/file/4244/skills_and_employability_plan_2035)
* [Medway Cultural Strategy 2020-2030](http://medwayculturalstrategy.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Medway-Cultural-Strategy-final.pdf)
* [Kent and Medway Economic Renewal and Resilience Plan](https://www.kent.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0014/112280/Economic-Renewal-and-Resilience-Plan-Backing-Jobs-and-Businesses-Plan.pdf)
* [Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy](https://kccconsultations.inconsult.uk/consult.ti/energyandlowemissionconsultation/consultationHome#:~:text=The%20Kent%20and%20Medway%20Energy%20and%20Low%20Emissions,identify%20an%20evidence-based%20approach%20to%20deliver%20clean%20growth.)

Geographic Coverage - projects must operate within the Medway Unitary Authority boundary.

Projects which intend to operate across local authority boundaries should pay particular attention to the published government guidance.

**How Bids Will be Assessed**

As the lead authority Medway Council will assess all bids submitted. Bids will be assessed against:

* the gateway criteria set out in the UK Community Renewal Fund Prospectus – bids that fail to meet these criteria are ineligible for support and will be rejected
* the extent to which they meet the objectives of UK Community Renewal Fund
* the extent to which bids would support the delivery of local growth and employment support priorities

Following assessment Medway Council will submit those eligible bids which most strongly meet the UK Community Renewal Fund and local priorities to the UK Government for consideration, up to a maximum of £3m per place.

The UK Government will assess all bids submitted by lead authorities against the criteria set out in the UK Community Renewal Fund Prospectus.

The UK Government will announce the outcome of the assessment process from late July 2021 onwards.

Medway Council will enter into a funding agreement with successful bidders.

**We recommend that projects are not proposed to begin prior to 1 September 2021, to allow sufficient time for government decision and for funding agreements to be entered into**.

**Submitting a Bid**

We are asking prospective bidders to confirm their intention to bid no later than 5pm on 28 April. This should be via email submitted to [communityrenewalfund@medway.gov.uk](mailto:communityrenewalfund@medway.gov.uk) providing:

* the name of the lead applicant
* the chosen investment priority/ies
* a short (100 word max) summary of the project

Bids must be submitted using the UK Community Renewal Fund Application Form, which is available [here](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-community-renewal-fund-prospectus). Bids submitted in any other format will not be accepted.

Bids must be submitted to Medway Council using this email address: [communityrenewalfund@medway.gov.uk](mailto:communityrenewalfund@medway.gov.uk).

Bids must be submitted by 5pm on 14 May 2021.

The UK Community Renewal Fund is a competitive process and Medway Council and the UK Government are under no obligation to enter into discussions with bidders.

Bidders are asked to take note of the **Privacy Notice** which identifies the personal data that will be collected as part of the application process, how this will be used, who it will be shared with, and the legal basis for its use.