



UK Community Renewal Fund

Invitation to Submit Project Bids

Introduction

The **North of Tyne Combined Authority (NTCA)** is seeking bids from organisations wishing to deliver activity as part of the UK Community Renewal Fund (UKCRF).

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](#).

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. Their guidance indicates that they 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.

The North of Tyne Combined Authority has been designated as a lead authority by the UK Government. As a lead authority, the North of Tyne Combined Authority 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 managing 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 in 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 and the NTCA welcomes bids in all priorities, or ones which fit multiple priorities

In line with Government guidance, the NTCA encourages applicants 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 the North of Tyne Combined Authority will prioritise the bids that have the greatest potential to deliver against key local growth priorities.

1. Investment in Business

1.1 Local Priorities

The UK Community Renewal Fund provides an opportunity for short but impactful interventions which will support the Combined Authority's vision to create the conditions for businesses to flourish, nurturing investment and supporting new jobs growth.

1. Support business start-ups

We have witnessed an increase in business start-ups since the start of the pandemic and are keen to see this new wave of entrepreneurs supported to create and develop new businesses.

We would welcome bids which increase existing capacity to meet demand and which find novel ways to meet evolving requirements.

2. Accelerate growth in key sectors and support Covid-recovery

The NTCA has a number of sectoral programmes and strategies – covering digital & tech sector; healthy ageing; culture, creative & tourism; Energy, Green Growth and Climate Change.

We would welcome projects which are aligned to our sector strategies and which find new ways to expand benefits or meet unmet needs.

3. Encourage innovation

The NTCA has invested significantly in supporting both innovation in individual businesses and in supporting the wider innovation environment, through investment in our innovation assets in universities and catapults.

4. Support decarbonisation

The NTCA is interested in both projects which are specifically designed to help businesses reduce carbon emissions and by having a low-carbon theme associated with projects designed to support start-ups, sectoral growth and innovation.

1.2 Outcomes

The NTCA's key objectives under this theme are to create jobs, help businesses flourish and support them to be environmentally sustainable in the long run.

A number of the outcome indicators highlighted by Government are particularly relevant to this theme, including:

- Employment increase in supported businesses as a result of support
- Jobs safeguarded as a result of support
- Number of new businesses created as a result of support
- Estimated Carbon dioxide equivalent reductions as a result of support
- Innovation plans developed as a result of support

1.3 Links

North of Tyne Economic Vision: https://www.northoftyne-ca.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/NorthofTyne_EconomicVision_webfinal.pdf

Details of our tourism, culture and creative and digital strategies are available at:

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5bbf08bdc2ff616708156a58/t/5e25d1fd5dfafe47d3a23102/1579536894238/NTCA+Cabinet+28+January+2020%2C+Agenda+Pack+.pdf>

Our Healthy Ageing Economy Strategy is available at: <https://www.northoftyne-ca.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Supplemental-Agenda-Pack-1-NTCA-Cabinet-23-March-2021.pdf>

2. Investment in Communities and Place

2.1 Local Priorities

The UK Community Renewal Fund provides an opportunity for short but impactful interventions which will support the Combined Authority's vision to support communities that inspire and places where people want to live. The Combined Authority's Economic Vision highlights the priority to create communities of inspiring places, homes and spaces that support more sustainable, low carbon futures, set within an environment where people want to live, work or visit.

- **Energy, Green Growth and Climate Change**

The Energy, Green Growth and Climate change blueprint agreed by NTCA last year makes the case for investment to address climate change and also highlights the economic opportunity around clean growth. The blueprint aligns with the North East Energy for Growth Strategy and the local authority net zero plans.

NTCA would welcome bids which support the delivery of net-zero and local energy projects.

- **Culture, Creative and Tourism**

NTCA's approach for a Culture and Creative programme includes plans to establish Culture and Creative Zones which will test and showcase a range of incentives targeted at supporting the growth of culture and creative businesses. In addition the North of Tyne Tourism and Events Strategy sets out an approach to secure benefits to the area by expanding the scale and impact of the North of Tyne visitor economy - giving people more reasons to visit, stay longer, do more and spend more.

NTCA would welcome projects which are aligned to our sector strategies and which find new ways to expand benefits in our communities

- **The future role of places**

In line with our Economic Vision, the North of Tyne Recovery Deal which was submitted to government highlights the need for rapid place and high street renewal with a focus on recovery of businesses and places through targeted support and innovation. NTCA priorities are focused on adaptation of places and spaces.

NTCA would welcome proposals which would accelerate post-COVID-19 recovery of town and city centres, including support for interim uses to help with transition as well as developing a sustainable, long-term and transformative approach for our places.

- **Rural connectivity and productivity**

NTCA recognises the role of connectivity to support business growth, remote working, and public service connectivity in our rural communities as well as the role of innovation in supporting sustainable growth of our rural economy.

We would welcome bids which increase existing capacity to meet demand and which find novel ways to build on opportunities in our rural communities.

2.2 Outcomes

The NTCA's key objectives are to create more and good quality jobs, support communities that inspire and create places where people want to live, work and visit.

A number of the outcome indicators highlighted by the UK Government would be relevant, including:

- Investment attracted as a result of support
- Estimated Carbon dioxide equivalent reductions as a result of support
- Decarbonisation plans developed as a result of support
- Total surface area of green/ blue infrastructure added or improved as a result of support
- Increase in footfall as a result of support
- Increase in visitor numbers as a result of support
- Buildings built or renovated as a result of support
- Premises with improved digital connectivity as a result of support

2.3 Key Links to Local Documentation/Plans

North of Tyne Economic Vision: https://www.northoftyne-ca.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/NorthofTyne_EconomicVision_webfinal.pdf

Details of our tourism, culture and creative strategies are available at:

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5bbf08bdc2ff616708156a58/t/5e25d1fd5dfafe47d3a23102/1579536894238/NTCA+Cabinet+28+January+2020%2C+Agenda+Pack+.pdf>

Details of the North of Tyne Energy, Green Growth and Climate Change blueprint
<https://www.northoftyne-ca.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/20200401-InvestmentB-report.pdf>

North East Energy for Growth Strategy
<https://www.nelep.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/exec-summary-energy-for-growth.pdf>

North of Tyne Recovery Deal
<https://www.northoftyne-ca.gov.uk/news/a-bold-economic-recovery-deal/>

3. Investment in Skills

The UK Community Renewal Fund provides an opportunity for short but impactful interventions which will support the Combined Authority's vision of a more social and inclusive economy. Our region requires skills interventions that are fully informed by and responsive to sectors with labour and skills shortages and planned growth in our economy, both current and projected.

3.1 Local Priorities

We are interested in proposals for innovative projects that equip people with the skills they need to capitalise on opportunities in our area and meet the needs of an increasingly green and digital economy. Proposals should be clearly distinct from the wider funding landscape and opportunities aimed at supporting skills acquisition (such as the Adult Education Budget, Apprenticeships, the Strategic Development Fund and Skills Bootcamps).

1. Secure better outcomes for young people

The CRF provides an opportunity to ensure our young people are fully aware of the careers in demand locally, and that they are equipped with the skills and qualifications that match labour market demand. NTCA would welcome projects that support 16 – 24-year olds to gain valuable technical skills and on the job training which provide entry to employment opportunities in our area.

2. Investment in skills to support the local economy

NTCA's key growth and recovery sectors have the potential to offer employment and significant GVA growth, these include a fast-growing tech and digital sector, green growth and energy, a strong pharmaceuticals and life sciences sector; major employment in financial and professional business services; and key assets in the cultural, creative and tourism sectors.

We would welcome innovative proposals that demonstrate collaboration between employers and skills providers to address skills shortages in our key growth and recovery sectors. Projects may support retraining, upskilling or reskilling members of the workforce

to meet the needs of a local employer or sector. Provision may also be designed to identify skills gaps, meet the growing demand for digital skills in the workforce and/or support transition to a green economy.

3. Help people progress into work

A key priority for NTCA is to provide opportunities for people to acquire the skills to get a good job, progress in work and that employers have people with the right skills they need to support a strong and inclusive local economy.

The CRF provides an opportunity to extend the reach of learning opportunities to a broader range of underrepresented groups in our region and we are interested in proposals that address barriers to employment or progression in employment, this includes the development of digital skills for digitally excluded individuals.

3.3 Key Links to Local Documentation/Plans

[North of Tyne Economic Vision](#)

[North of Tyne Inclusive Economy Statement](#)

[Working-for-you-recover-redesign-reimagine.pdf \(northoftyne-ca.gov.uk\)](#)

[Opportunity for all: North of Tyne Strategic Skills Plan 2021-2023](#)

4. Supporting People into Employment

The UK Community Renewal Fund provides an opportunity for short but impactful interventions which will support the North of Tyne Combined Authority's vision of a more social and inclusive economy. To achieve this, we need to drive the better coordination of education, skills, employment, and health services to increase the number of residents moving into work and progressing in work.

4.1 Local priorities

We are interested in proposals for innovative projects that will close the unemployment gap by removing barriers which make it difficult for people to take up employment and training opportunities.

1. Labour market transition

Supporting people to find new employment opportunities or retain employment where they have been displaced due to COVID 19, including re-skilling, boosting confidence and local networks. We would like to receive projects which support individuals, post- furlough, to gain the new skills they need require to move into new labour market sectors.

2. In work support

The North of Tyne Combined Authority has been working with employers and other key stakeholders to understand what ‘Good Work’ is and how we as a Combined Authority can promote and reward employers that are offering the main elements of ‘Good Work’. We would welcome projects which help support people to remain in employment if they are at risk of losing it due to age, health conditions, automation, or other barriers to retention. Providing in-work progression support, with a focus on moving people on and up.

3. Addressing Barriers

Supporting those groups who are proportionally under-represented in the labour market, such as: women, people who are disabled or have a health condition, people aged over 50, those from ethnic minority groups, carers, and people with multiple complex issues to move nearer to the labour market is a priority for NTCA. Place-based pilot projects supporting these groups would be welcomed which will test ways of working collaboratively at a local level, taking a multi-agency approach, working with a range of stakeholders.

4. Health/Inequalities

COVID-19 pandemic has hit the country unevenly with a disproportionate effect on the North of England, specifically the unequal health and economic impacts. We are looking for projects providing local, tailored, wrap-around support to individuals with health-related conditions to support them to gain employment or moving closer to the labour market

4.2 Outcomes

The NTCA’s key objectives are to create more and good quality jobs, and to help businesses be economically and environmentally sustainable in the long run. Several of the outcome indicators highlighted by Government would be relevant, including:

- People engaged in job search following support
- People engaged in life skills support following interventions
- Economically inactive individuals engaging with benefits system following support.

4.3 Key Links to Local Documentation/Plans

- [North of Tyne Economic Vision](#)

- [North of Tyne Inclusive Economy Statement](#)
- <https://www.northoftyne-ca.gov.uk/projects/good-work-pledge/>
- Opportunity for all: North of Tyne Strategic Skills Plan 2021-2023 ([Public Pack](#))[Agenda Document for North of Tyne Combined Authority, Cabinet, 23/03/2021 14:00 \(northoftyne-ca.gov.uk\)](#) – See pages 75-112 of the Cabinet Report. The Strategic Skills Plan is due to be published separately on the NTCA website.

North of Tyne Combined Authority Outputs and Indicators Guidance

In addition to the Government guidance, we also kindly ask applicants to refer to the [NTCA Outputs Guidance](#) and include any additional outputs you feel would be relevant to your project.

North of Tyne Combined Authority Policies

North of Tyne Combined Authority is committed to fair employment practices and have developed a good work pledge. We have a zero-tolerance approach to modern slavery and a robust social value policy. We have also declared a climate emergency, with our expectations including an emphasis on reducing carbon emissions. We are committed to acting ethically and with integrity in all our business dealings and relationships and expect the same of our partners and supply chains too.

- [25012021-Environment-Policy-v1.1.pdf \(northoftyne-ca.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Equalities-and-Diversity-2020v1.0.pdf \(northoftyne-ca.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Modern-Slavery-2020v1.0.pdf \(northoftyne-ca.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Social-Value-2020.pdf \(northoftyne-ca.gov.uk\)](#)

Geographic Coverage - projects should benefit the following places:

- Newcastle upon Tyne, Northumberland and North Tyneside

Please note that Newcastle upon Tyne and Northumberland are classed 'priority areas' for the purposes of the UK Community Renewal Fund and North Tyneside classed as a 'non-priority' place. See [List of 100 priority places \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#). Our understanding of Government guidance is that all NTCA bids will be classified as being in a "priority area", except for ones where over half of activity is in North Tyneside.

How Bids Will be Assessed

As the lead authority North of Tyne Combined Authority 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 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, the North of Tyne Combined Authority 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.

The North of Tyne Combined Authority will enter into a funding agreement with successful bidders.

Submitting a Bid

Bids must be submitted using the UK Community Renewal Fund Application Form, which is available [here](#). Bids submitted in any other format will not be accepted.

Bids must be submitted to the North of Tyne Combined Authority using this email address: CRF@northoftyne-ca.gov.uk

Bids must be submitted by **midnight on Friday, 7th May 2021**. Late submissions will not be accepted.

The UK Community Renewal Fund is a competitive process and the NTCA's bid assessment team and the UK Government will not be able to enter into discussions with bidders.