



# UK Community Renewal Fund

## Invitation to Submit Project Bids

## Introduction

Liverpool City Region Combined Authority 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](#).

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. This funding is separate and different from the Combined Authority's existing Strategic Investment 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.

Liverpool City Region Combined Authority has been designated as a lead authority by the UK Government. As a lead authority, Liverpool City Region 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

This invitation covers the four investment priorities set out above in line with local priorities (see **Local Priorities** section below).

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 Liverpool City Region Combined Authority will prioritise the bids that have the greatest potential to deliver against key local growth priorities.

- Investment in skills
  - Development of technical skills required by businesses which can clearly evidence need, and for which no other funding is available
  - Development of skills required for major investments or innovations
  - Development of work-ready skills amongst targeted or under-represented groups which this does not duplicate with existing provision
- Investment for local business
  - Applications which provide support to new and existing businesses to develop and deliver new, higher-level opportunities for existing staff and/or employment opportunities for unemployed local people,

especially where such businesses are developing new products and/or services and/or entering new markets and/or link with R&D/innovation expertise and innovation centres. Note that all applications under this theme will need to link with the Local Growth Hub

- Investment in communities and place
  - Applications which are focused on community-led improvements and/or development of local green spaces, create and/or enhance natural assets in town centres, neighbourhoods and housing estates
  - Applications to support community-based, culture-led regeneration. The preferred option is for delivery of projects, which include opportunities for unemployed people to develop skills and access employment
  - Feasibility studies on the community-led regeneration funds, especially related to revolving funds to support environmental improvements, sustain and enhance natural capital and local food supply
- Supporting people into employment
  - Evidenced-based interventions to support people into work, particularly those who have been most affected by the COVID crisis (e.g. young people, women, people from an ethnic minority background)
  - Innovative approaches to outreach and engagement for under-represented groups (e.g. people from an ethnic minority background, people with disabilities) to engage them in employment pathways

Projects covering employment and skills should refer to the Local Skills Action Plan 2021/22 – [Appendix One Local Skills Action Plan 202122.pdf \(merseytravel.gov.uk\)](#) – and ensure there is alignment with existing initiatives and that duplication is avoided.

Background materials:

- [Local Industrial Strategy](#)
- [Build Back Better \(post-Covid City Region recovery plan\)](#)

## **Geographic Coverage**

The invitation to bid covers the whole of the City Region, but applicants should note that government has given priority to St Helens only.

We are keen to see projects which are scalable across the city region; collaborate to deliver additional impact for the target beneficiary group; projects which can evidence links to and with local stakeholders and partners to avoid duplication. We also welcome applications which deliver against several investment priorities. We will be issuing an Expression of Interest form and will hold a Q&A session for interested bidders in late April/early May.

All bids will be assessed by the same criteria, but applicants should note that government will provide different weighting to projects in priority and non-priority places and you should familiarise yourself with this.

## How Bids Will be Assessed

As the lead authority Liverpool City Region 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 Liverpool City Region 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.

Liverpool City Region 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 Liverpool City Region Combined Authority using this email address: [community\\_renewal\\_fund@liverpoolcityregion-ca.gov.uk](mailto:community_renewal_fund@liverpoolcityregion-ca.gov.uk)

Bids must be submitted by **noon** on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2021

The UK Community Renewal Fund is a competitive process and Liverpool City Region Combined Authority and the UK Government will not enter into discussions with bidders.