

# Return to Play: Active Together - Sport England's Extra Funding Scheme during the COVID-19 crisis

## Introduction

This funding aims to help community sport and physical activity organisations who are experiencing short term financial hardship or the ceasing of operations due to the ongoing coronavirus crisis. As we ease out of lockdown measures and [return to play](#), there's a lot for sport and physical activity providers to consider as lockdown restrictions evolve, so campaigns to enable this will also be considered.

As the country deals with coronavirus we know sport and physical activity organisations are facing a very difficult period of time.

Our match funding, of up to £10,000, aims to help organisations start to help themselves on the road to recovery. It's specifically targeted at organisations who have a role in supporting the nation to be active but who are experiencing short term financial hardship or the ceasing of operations due to the ongoing crisis.

The types of organisations eligible include local sports clubs forced to close at short notice but who are facing ongoing costs around maintenance and utility bills as well as voluntary and community sector organisations who deliver or enable sport and physical activity.

This match funding of National Lottery money is designed to complement other sources of investment from the government, such as funds targeted at small businesses. Please [click here](#) to see the funding support that the government has available.

## Eligibility Criteria

This match funding is designed to help grassroots sport and physical activity providers.

**To be eligible to apply, organisations must be:**

- Local sports clubs,
- Charities, community, voluntary and social enterprise sector organisations that deliver sport and/or physical activity in their community, including organisations that are not solely or primarily sports organisations,
- Town or parish councils delivering activity within their community,
- For the benefit of people residing in England.

### **The following are not eligible for funding:**

- Individuals or sole traders,
- For profit businesses or partnerships,
- Local authorities, with the exception of town and parish councils,
- Schools, colleges and universities,
- Commercial sport and physical activity providers, e.g. private gyms,
- Leisure operators.

Priority will be given to projects that are in the most deprived communities to ensure that our match funding reaches those most in need. This will be organisations that do one or both of the following:

- Deliver activity in areas experiencing social and economic deprivation, including rural communities
- Work with one or more of the following groups as a main focus:
  - disabled people,
  - lower socio-economic groups,
  - Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups

We will still support projects which do not meet these priorities, however we may reduce the level of match funding offered. Match funding will usually be in the range of 30-50% of the project target.

### **Exclusions**

There are some things that we're not able to match invest against, these primarily being:

- Projects which do not benefit people living in England
- Projects which have been funded directly by Sport England, for the same expenditure
- Organisations without a trustee board/management committee (with 3 people minimum)
- Applications from individuals, or which are for the benefit of one individual
- Applications from private, profit making businesses
- Projects promoting religion
- Organisations seeking to distribute grants on our behalf
- Projects intended for private gain
- Campaigns that focus only on existing members and/or supporters, including campaigns offering prize draws as Rewards
- Campaigns only offering Rewards in the form of membership fees or subscriptions
- Closed or Always On campaigns on Crowdfunder

## **Pledge Criteria**

If your application is approved, you'll be offered match funding of up to 50% towards your initial crowdfunding target, up to a maximum of £10,000. This offer will be valid for 4 weeks after the date of notification, if you do not launch your crowdfunding campaign within 4 weeks of notification the offer will be rescinded.

Following approval for funding, if you wish to make any changes to your campaign target, or any significant changes to your rewards or other page content you must notify us.

To receive a pledge, you will need to do two things (the 'pledge conditions'):

- 1) **raise at least 25% of your initial target,**
- 2) **raise this from a minimum number of unique Supporters.** To verify whether Supporters are unique we will take account of information including, but not limited to: name, address, email addresses and payment card used.

The minimum number of unique Supporters required is:

- **25 Supporters** if your target is up to **£5,000**
- **50 Supporters** if your target is between **£5,001 and £10,000**
- **75 Supporters** if your target is between **£10,001 and £15,000**
- **100 Supporters** if your target is between **£15,001 and £20,000**

If either of these conditions are not met, the pledge will be withheld until both have been met.

If these two conditions are met, Sport England will pledge up to 50% of the target (unless your target is over £20,000), which means in most cases the campaign will then be at 75%. You must then raise the remaining 25% from your crowd, to achieve 100% of your funding target and receive the Sport England funds.

**If the project fails to reach 100% of the target the Sport England pledge will be cancelled.** The Project owner will be encouraged to review what went wrong and, if appropriate, to attempt to crowdfund again.

**Sport England reserves the right to vary these pledge criteria; projects will be notified if their pledge criteria will vary from the stated terms above.**

## Additional requirements

You will be ineligible for funding from Sport England if, at Sport England's sole discretion, it is not satisfied that all the Supporter pledges on your project are genuine pledges.

Where projects or pledges are identified as fraudulent, potentially fraudulent, or demonstrative of manipulating the pledging on a project in order to obtain match funding, this is taken very seriously. Where appropriate, the police or other relevant authorities will be informed. In addition:

- Your application for funding will be refused and any existing commitment for funding will be withdrawn.
- Your Crowdfunding project may be cancelled and you will be ineligible for future applications or projects.
- Action will be taken to recover funding which has been paid out.

All funded projects are required to agree to the [Return to Play: Active Together Grant Conditions](#)

You should download and retain a copy of this document and the Grant Conditions.