# Navigating the Stratford Town Trust Grant Application Process: Your Guide to Success

Stratford Town Trust is committed to supporting organisations and work that benefit the community. This guide outlines the key steps involved in our grant application process and gives you valuable insights into how we make our funding decisions. We aim to act with integrity, transparency, and be supportive.

## Step 1: Short Expression of Interest (EOI)

- Start here: Before investing time in a full application, submit a concise EOI form. You'll find this on our website. We also encourage you to speak to us. We're happy meet virtually or chat over a cuppa about your work.

- What we assess: Briefly describe your project, its intended beneficiaries, budget needs, and alignment with our funding priorities. The more clarity you provide, the better we can understand your project's potential impact.

- Our feedback: Our grants team carefully reviews all EOIs. If we see a strong fit with our priorities and available funding, we'll invite you to proceed with a full application. If your project is unlikely to be funded, we'll provide constructive feedback at this stage.

## Step 2: Full Application

- If invited to complete an application, answer the questions clearly and concisely, focusing on the five key topics:

    - How well your work meets our grant themes. [You can find out more here](#) about 2024's themes and focus.

    - Community and user involvement. We value genuine participation from the community in work that impacts them.

    - Impact on quality of life. This includes understanding how you'll map and track impact.

    - Collaborative and partnership working.

    - Budget and financial position.

## Step 3: Assessment and Decision-Making

- Behind the scenes: Our grants team thoroughly and thoughtfully assesses each full application, scoring against our internal funding criteria. This aligns with the five topics (outlined in section two) covered in your application. We will maintain a two-way relationship with you to explore your application throughout the process.

- More than just scores: While scoring plays a role, we want to ensure a balanced distribution across our funding themes, diverse organisations, and project sizes. This approach promotes inclusivity and maximises community impact.

- Recommendation to Trustees: We wrap all this up into final funding report presented Trustees, who make the final funding decisions.

Timeline: The entire assessment process typically takes 6-8 weeks. We strive to communicate effectively throughout the process.

Remember:

- Clarity is key: The clearer and more comprehensive your EOI and full application, the better we can understand your project and its potential contribution.

- If you have videos or case studies that showcase your work and add value, we'd love to see them.

- Alignment matters: Demonstrate a strong alignment with our funding themes and community needs for a stronger chance of success.

- Feedback is valuable: Utilise any feedback we provide at the EOI stage to strengthen your full application.

We encourage you to explore our website for further information on our funding themes, eligibility criteria, and application deadlines. Additionally, feel free to contact James or Catherine if you have any questions or require clarification.

## Community consultation for grant seekers

So, you've got a fantastic project brewing, or maybe your existing work would benefit from our funding. You need to show the community is behind you. This guide's here to help, whether you're applying for a brand-new idea or showcasing your ongoing impact and applying for core funding – or not even applying to a funder for support but just looking at how you can be more impactful.

Identify your "community."

- New project? Who'll benefit most? Are you empowering young people, tackling loneliness in older people, or reviving that neglected green space? Knowing your target group is key.

- Existing work? Who's already involved? Think about users, volunteers, and anyone impacted by your efforts.

Get the conversation rolling.

- Keep it clear and friendly: No jargon, just chat about your goals and how you're making Stratford a better place.
- Listen up! This isn't a lecture. Hear their feedback on your project or existing work. What do they love? What could be improved?
- Be open-minded: Maybe your project needs a tweak, or your existing work could benefit from a fresh perspective. Embrace suggestions from your community.

Show don't just tell.

- New project? Mock-ups, sketches, or even a prototype can bring your idea to life.
- Existing work? Testimonials, photos, or impact reports showcase your achievements.
- For both: Share success stories! Let real people's voices speak for your project or work.

Bonus tips:

- Think outside the box: Host a workshop, run a survey, or hold a pop-up event. Get creative with how you gather feedback.
- Partner up: Team with other local groups or organisations. Sharing resources and ideas strengthens your application.
- Spread the word: Shout about your consultation! The more voices you hear, the better.

Remember:

- Project or existing work? The goal's the same: demonstrate community support and impact.
- We want to support projects and work that truly matter and make a positive impact. By actively involving the community, you're showing you care and that your efforts are rooted in the needs and aspirations of the community.

Good luck with your application! And if you have any questions, don't hesitate to contact James or Catherine directly. We're always happy to help.

# Keeping Track of Your Impact: A Simple Guide to Monitoring and Evaluation for Stratford Town Trust Grantees

We're excited to see your project come to life and make a positive impact on our community. To help you demonstrate that impact, this guide offers some straightforward tips on monitoring and evaluation (M&E).

Why M&E matters:

- Shows your progress: It helps you track how your project is meeting its goals and objectives.

- Informs decisions: M&E data can guide adjustments to your project for even greater effectiveness.

- Accountability to the community: It demonstrates to Stratford Town Trust and the public that your work is making a difference.

Keeping it simple:

- Start small: Don't get bogged down in complex frameworks. Choose a few key indicators that reflect your goals.

- Use everyday tools: Spreadsheets, surveys, and even photos can be valuable M&E tools. You don't always need to invest in expensive software.

- Focus on outcomes: Track the actual changes your work is making in people's lives or the community as a whole.

What to monitor:

- Activities: Are you delivering your planned activities on time and within budget?

- Outputs: Are you producing the expected deliverables, such as workshops, events, or resources?

- Outcomes: Are you achieving the intended changes in your target group or community? Examples might include improved skills, increased access to services, or positive changes in behaviour. How many Stratford upon Avon town residents are being supported or accessing your work?

Tips for evaluation:

- Set SMART goals: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound goals make evaluation easier.

- Gather baseline data: Before you start, understand the existing situation so you can measure the impact of your work.

- Collect data regularly: Don't wait until the end to gather information. Regular monitoring allows you to adjust your approach as needed.

- Use data to tell your story: Turn your M&E findings into clear and compelling reports that showcase your project's achievements. This can also help to secure funding from other sources.

Remember, we're here to support you! We offer resources and guidance on M&E throughout your project. Don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or need assistance.

Bonus tips:

- Involve beneficiaries in data collection. Their perspectives really enrich your evaluation.

- Combine quantitative data (e.g., number of participants) with qualitative data (e.g., participant feedback) to get a richer picture.

- Celebrate your successes! Share your achievements with the community and stakeholders.

We hope this simple guide helps you navigate the world of M&E with confidence. Remember, it's all about understanding and showcasing the positive changes your project is making in Stratford.