

UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) Leicester

Open Call 4 (OC4) – Creative Circuits

Invitation to bid

February 2024

This programme is funded by the UK Government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund

Introduction

The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UK SPF) is the successor programme to the previous European Structural Investment Fund (ESIF), a programme that integrates five main funding streams, each supporting economic prosperity.

UK SPF will fund interventions that build pride in place, support high quality skills training, supporting pay, employment and productivity growth and increasing life chances.

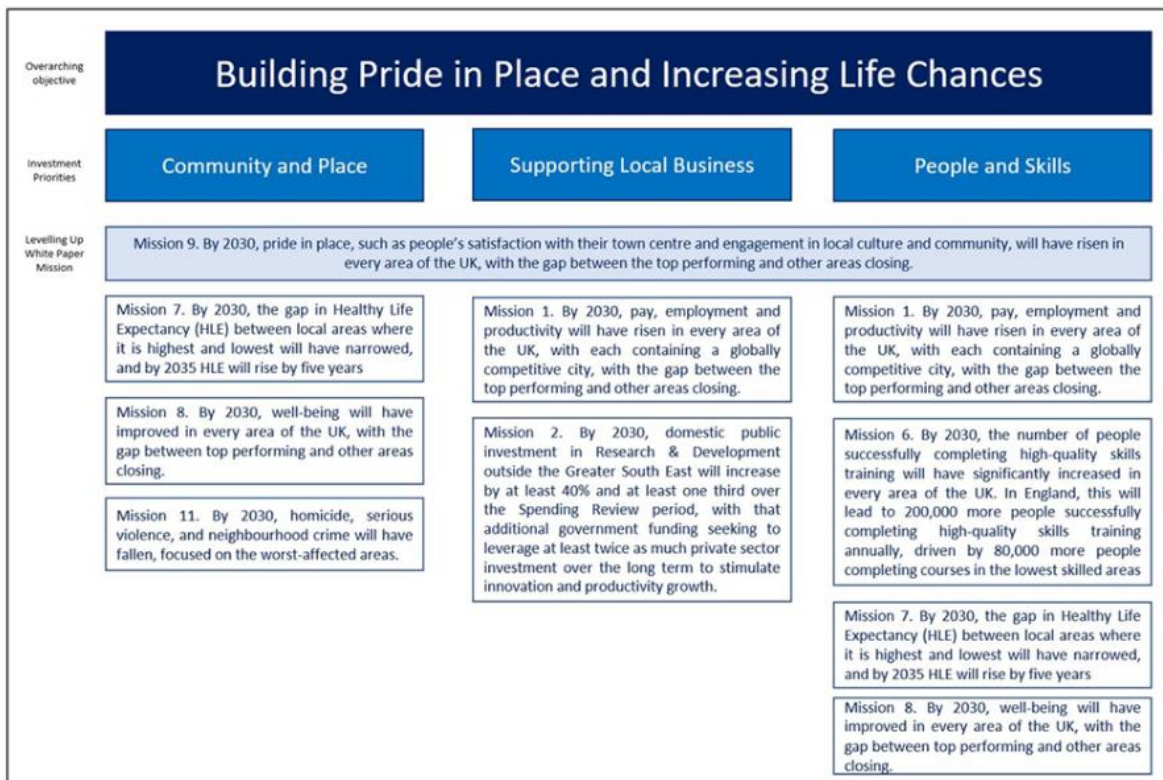
The Fund’s interventions are being planned and managed by local authorities across England, working closely with local partners.

Lead local authorities were asked to set out their approach in an evidenced led Investment Plan submitted to Government on 31st July 2022. Local Authorities are required to submit a refreshed investment plan at the end of each year. All funding subsequently described is subject to Government approval of the Investment Plan and all successive refreshed yearly plans.

Background

The UK Shared Prosperity Fund is a central pillar of the UK government’s Levelling Up agenda and provides £2.6 billion of funding for local investment by March 2025. The Fund aims to improve pride in place and increase life chances across the UK investing in communities and place, supporting local business, and people and skills. For more information, visit <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-shared-prosperity-fund-prospectus>

The UK SPF will support delivery of Government’s Levelling Up’s missions under three investment priorities: **Communities and Place; Supporting Local Business; and People and Skills.**



Leicester City Council is taking a holistic approach to UK SPF, ensuring that planned investment is evidenced based and delivers on ambitions set out within the **Key Issues and Lessons learnt document**, [UK Shared Prosperity Fund \(UKSPF\) \(leicester.gov.uk\)](https://leicester.gov.uk) which include commitments to inclusion, carbon neutrality and being an internationally renowned city of culture, creativity and innovation.

Leicester’s priorities are on Improving the economic prosperity of people and places by:

- Addressing inequalities in employment, pay, skills and productivity
- Creating a more sustainable inclusive economy, adapted for a post-Covid and digitally enabled world.

This translates into the following funding priorities under UK SPF:

	UK SPF Investment Priorities	Leicester UK SPF Funding Priorities
1.	Community and Place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improving the city centre ▪ Improving neighbourhoods ▪ Improved tourism, visitor economy and Inward investment support
2.	Supporting Local Businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Business and social enterprise support ▪ Sector support
3.	People and Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Employment and skills support

The themes of inclusion, productivity and carbon neutrality are interwoven throughout each of Leicester’s priorities.

Leicester City Council’s total funding allocation for the UK SPF core programme is:

2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	TOTAL
£1,115,665	£2,231,331	£5,846,087	£9,193,083

Grant Allocations

The funding available for this Open Call comes from the following UKSPF Investment Priorities within Leicester City Council’s UKSPF programme:

1. Support Local Businesses

The tables below show:

- The UKSPF interventions in each Investment Priority that these funds are related to.
- The total amount available in each Financial Year (April – March).
- The amount available each year to support revenue and capital costs.

Table 1: Supporting Local Businesses

The following table outlines the intended spend across the Investment Priority theme covered by Open Call 3.

Intervention	Revenue 24/25	Total
E23 Strengthening local entrepreneurial ecosystems	£160,000	£160,000
Total	£160,000	£160,000

Supporting Local Businesses

To help to determine the priorities for this call Leicester City Council commissioned an independent analysis of a number of previous EU/CRF funded projects, including the development of a set of local economic indicators.

E23: Strengthening local entrepreneurial ecosystems

This call links to the future broader Cultural and Creative industries strategy for the city which will be launched soon 2024 and this call is designed to support the development of creative business networks in the City.

Background: The national [Creative industries sector vision - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk) documents sets out the policy and background information on creative industries, including details of other programmes and initiatives.

A definition of Creative Industries can be found here [Creative Industries Policy & Evidence Centre | National Statistics on... \(pec.ac.uk\)](http://pec.ac.uk).

The 2023 Government Autumn statement identified for the first Creative Industries as a key future growth sector. “The government continues to back the growth sectors of the future and is announcing further targeted support for digital technology, green industries, life sciences, advanced manufacturing and creative industries.”

Analysis for the new Cultural and Creative Industries Strategy has analysed the extent and make up of our local Creative Industries. Although the UKSPF programme needs to necessarily focus on the city, the make-up of our Creative Industries sector is very similar across city and county areas. The “Creative Industries Workforce Analysis” document summarises what was found and will be useful background for anyone thinking about responding to this call.



Creative Industries
Workforce Analysis.pc

Within this section we are looking for applications that help to develop the creative industry sector business networks in the City. It is well known that creative industries thrive through co-operation, peer support, information and skill sharing, joint promotions, the development of engaged and effective supply chains and bespoke services and facilities. Effective networks are particularly important as so many creative practitioners are freelancers.

We are seeking applications that support networks of creative businesses up to a value of £40k. These could be music / visual arts / film and tv / or any other network of creatives with a shared identity and purpose.

To be supported applications will need to demonstrate:

- That the network represents businesses defined as Creative Industries
- The network has multiple members with a shared goal
- The significance of the network in terms of economic value and impact

- A clear plan of activities that can secure meaningful benefits for members
- A plan for attracting other resources
- Ideally, how existing match funding can extend impact of the SPF resource

- The specific UKSPF outputs/outcomes that can be delivered within the timescale
- All spend can be achieved by 31st March 2025

- The proposal is supported by network members
- Agreement about which organisation will receive the SPF resource, sign a grant agreement and be accountable for reporting on behalf of the network

Application Requirements

The total amount applied for can be max £40k per network.

Leicester City Council anticipates making 4 - 6 awards through this Open Call.

Please note - Grant funding allocations are indicative and subject to change and/or approval at the discretion of the Government and/or Leicester City Council (LCC).

UKSPF Interventions

The table below shows the outputs and outcomes associated with the UKSPF interventions and attributed funding amounts as detailed in Tables 1a.

Table 2a: Supporting Local Businesses Open Call – Creative Industry: Outputs and Outcomes

Support Local Businesses Outputs	Support Local Businesses Outcomes
No. of businesses receiving financial support other than grants	Jobs created
No. of businesses receiving non-financial support	Jobs safeguarded
No. of people attending training sessions	No. of new businesses created
No. of potential entrepreneurs provided assistance to be business ready	No. of businesses introducing new products to the firm

	No. of businesses adopting new to the firm technologies or processes
	No. of businesses with improved productivity
	No. of businesses engaged in new markets

What costs can be attributed to the grant?

The purpose of the grant is to deliver the interventions for each Investment Priority. The amount available in each Financial Year is given in Tables 1a of this document.

Revenue funds can be used to contribute to the costs of ongoing operational expenses required in the running of the project, including:

- Staff salary costs (including Employer NI and Pension contributions).
- Overheads related to employing staff involved in delivering activities funded through the grant.
- Cost of business travel.
- Marketing and publicity costs*.
- Participant costs / hardship support.
- Small items of equipment (less than £5,000).

Note: Expenditure incurred prior to the approval date will not be approved

**There is an expectation that successful applicants will work closely with Leicester City Council's Marketing and Communications/ Press Team to develop all promotional resources and events e.g. programme/project promotion, launch events, celebration events, etc.*

How will applications be assessed?

As the lead authority, Leicester City Council will assess all grant applications submitted by **Midnight on Friday, 8th March 2024**

Assessment will involve four stages; Gateway, Scoring, Moderation and Further Moderation (if required), including sign off of shortlisted applications. Questions that are to be scored have been weighted.

Further information regarding the assessment criteria can be found in Appendix A: UKSPF Leicester Assessment Criteria.

Following assessment, Leicester City Council will inform all applicants of the outcome of the assessment.

Successful applicants will enter into a grant agreement with Leicester City Council.

How to apply

To apply for grant funding, applicants must complete and submit the following documents to Leicester City Council using this email address: ukspf.programme@leicester.gov.uk

- UKSPF Leicester – OC4 – Skills Application Form
- UKSPF Leicester – OC4 – Appendix A – Creative Industry – Budget & Performance Profile
- Evidence of Economic and Financial Standing (1.3 of the application form)

Applications submitted in any other format will not be accepted.

Complete applications must be submitted by: **Midnight on Friday, 8th March 2024.**

Timeline of activities

Activities	Date
Deadline for submission of bids. Late submissions will not be accepted	Midnight on Friday, 8 th March 2024
Appraisal and shortlist process - assessments, due diligence checks and shortlisting	March / April 2024
Applicants contacted regarding outcome of assessment	May / June 2024*
Grant funding agreements issued	June 2024

**subject to change dependent upon volume of applications received*

Further information

For any technical queries please email: ukspf.programme@leicester.gov.uk

APPENDIX A: UKSPF ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Stage 1. GATEWAY CRITERIA

Criteria	Pass	Fail	Partial
Criteria 1: Application signed, fully completed and returned on time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	-
Criteria 2: Economic and Financial Standing*	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Criteria 3: Economic and Financial Risk*	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Criteria 4: Funding Status for Activities Proposed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Criteria 5: Prior Contract Performance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Criteria 6: Provision of Subsidies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Criteria 7: Policies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Criteria 8: Liability Insurance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**These will also be assessed via due diligence checks on Equifax and Spotlight.*

Applications that fail any criterion cannot progress to Stage 2. Scoring.

For the questions which have been assessed as partial, progress to Stage 2. Scoring will be allowed with justification from the Assessor.

STAGE 2. SCORING

The maximum score for each question is 5, based on the scoring framework below, but some are weighted through the multiplication of the assigned score. For example, a score of 5 weighted by a factor of 4 will equal a total score of 20. The maximum score and multiplication weightings are shown on the application form in the dark grey box to the right of each question.

SCORING FRAMEWORK

Score	Assessment	Description
0	<i>Unacceptable</i>	<i>Response to the question is unacceptable or no response received. Does not give the Fund confidence in the ability of the bidder to deliver the contract.</i>
1	<i>Poor/Weak Response</i>	<i>Inadequate detail provided or some of the answer not directly relevant to the question. Is supported by none or a weak standard of evidence in several areas giving rise to concern about the ability of the bidder to deliver the contract.</i>
2	<i>Below Expectations</i>	<i>Limited information provided, and/or a response that is inadequate or only partially addresses the question giving rise to concern about the ability of the bidder to deliver the contract.</i>
3	<i>Satisfactory Response</i>	<i>Acceptable response in terms of the level of detail, accuracy and relevance. Is supported by a satisfactory standard of evidence in most areas but a few areas lacking detail/evidence giving rise to some concerns about the ability of the bidder to deliver the contract.</i>
4	<i>Good Response</i>	<i>Comprehensive response in terms of detail and relevance to the question and supported by good standard of evidence. Gives the Fund confidence in the ability of the bidder to deliver the contract. Meets the Fund's requirements.</i>
5	<i>Very Good Response</i>	<i>As Good, but to a better degree in terms of precision and relevance. Is comprehensive and supported by a high standard of evidence. Gives the Fund a high level of confidence in the ability of the bidder to deliver the contract.</i> <i>May exceed the Fund's requirements in some respects, for example, added value such as integration/synergy with other projects.</i>

Scores will be awarded low to high based on the framework and within the scoring range for each question.

Part 2.1 Project Details on the application form will be scored out of 125 (once the weighting has been applied).

Part 3. Quality Assurance on the application form will be scored out of 50 (once the weighting has been applied).

The total score for applications for People and Skills funding will be out of 175 (= Part 2.1 score + Part 3 score).

STAGE 3. MODERATION

Funding will be awarded to the applicants with the highest score. The number of successful organisations will be dependent on the availability of funds.

Where applications tie on scores, further moderation criteria will be applied as detailed in Stage 4, or applicants may be invited to discuss/negotiate their total project values.

In selecting projects, overall caps will be applied in line with the maximum total funding available. This may result in applicants being invited to discuss/negotiate their total project values, their planned profiles of expenditure and outputs and outcomes, or the proportions of revenue and capital funding.

STAGE 4. FURTHER MODERATION (IF REQUIRED) AND SIGN OFF OF SUCCESSFUL APPLICATIONS

Based on the degree of moderation required to end up with a range of Grants which doesn't exceed the maximum funding available in each Investment Priority in each Financial Year, Leicester City Council, at its discretion, will agree an additional ranking or scoring framework (e.g. taking Unit Cost or Value for Money into consideration).

NOTIFICATION OF INVITATION TO BID OUTCOME

Once the outcome of the assessment process has been notified to all applicants, organisations can request feedback on their applications and scoring.