

Events Industry Support Fund 2

Guidance for applicants

Background

In July 2020, the Scottish Government announced a package of support to help the events sector in Scotland recover from the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, which resulted in the Events Industry Support Fund (EISF, launched in August 2020) and Scotland's Events Recovery Fund (SERF, launched in November 2020), being established to support Scottish businesses that are facing hardship, to help keep them in business while restrictions on events are still in place, and to support them to prepare for the delivery of events in Scotland when restrictions are lifted.

As at February 2021, COVID-19 restrictions continue to be in place to the extent that events and mass gatherings are still severely limited. The impact of this is that the events sector has been almost completely unable to operate since March 2020, and despite the positive recent progress in vaccine development, it is anticipated the recommencement of events may not begin at scale until later in 2021.

Despite impact of the previous event sector funding programmes and other COVID-19 related financial support, some events businesses are yet to receive any financial support and it is evident that events businesses are at risk, and require financial support to continue operating. To respond to this situation the Events Industry Support Fund 2 ("the Fund") was announced in January 2021.

The total budget for this Fund is £3.9m, and it is being delivered on behalf of the Scottish Government by VisitScotland, with development input from the Event Industry Advisory Group (EIAG). VisitScotland is the awarding body for this Fund.

The Fund

What is the purpose of this Fund?

The purpose of this Fund is to support Scottish businesses operating across the events industry, particularly those in the industry's supply chain that are still facing hardship as a result of COVID-19, to help keep them in business while restrictions on events are still in place, so that they are able to support the delivery of events in Scotland when restrictions are lifted.

Businesses who were successful in receiving a grant award through the Event Industry Support Fund launched in August 2020 will not be eligible for this Fund.

What is the process and timeline for the Fund?

1. Businesses which meet all the eligibility criteria will be able to submit an application form from noon on 18 February 2021 until 5pm on 26 February 2021 via the form available on <https://www.visitscotland.org/events/funding/coronavirus-support-fund/apply>. Any applications received after this period will not be considered. Applications **will not** be assessed on a first come, first served basis.
2. Applications will be assessed by VisitScotland to ensure that they meet the eligibility criteria for the fund. [Applications will also be reviewed by Chiene + Tait, an accountancy firm procured by VisitScotland, who will review and assess the financial evidence submitted with the application.] If you are successful, you must sign and return the grant award letter and accept the terms and conditions before the funds will be paid into the organisation's bank account.
3. If your application is rejected, you can appeal this decision. Any appeals should be submitted in writing to eisfund2appeals@visitscotland.com together with a justification for the appeal. Appeals will be reviewed by a panel including VisitScotland staff and an independent industry representative.

Who is this Fund for?

This Fund is open to the self-employed (through limited company or as a sole trader), partnerships and incorporated businesses. Businesses must have a permanent place of business in Scotland.

A list of Eligible Events Businesses is set out below in Table 1 and for the purpose of this Fund are those organisations which are (i) directly involved in the staging, delivery of live sporting and cultural events and festivals taking place outdoors or indoors, and which are open to the public to attend, participate in or spectate safely; and/or (ii) instrumental in attracting, hosting or supporting discretionary business events, incentives and conferences.

The Fund has been established to support Eligible Events Businesses whose primary source of earnings (minimum 25% in 19/20) is derived from either (i) the direct supply to, organisation of, and/or delivery of or to events physically taking place in Scotland; and/or (ii) the exporting of Scottish event expertise. Appendix A provides more detail on the types of events which have a strong alignment to the purpose of this Fund, as well as those events which have limited alignment. All such events would generally be one-off occurrences or taking place annually in Scotland.

Only one application per business will be accepted.

The following events businesses are eligible for support from this Fund:

Events Medical Services	Accreditation Solutions
Health & Safety Provision for Events	Event Merchandise
Audio Visual and Technology	Photography
Staging and Temporary Seating	Ticketing

Event Equipment Hire	Marketing and PR
Temporary Event Utilities	Design and Print
Production Services for Events	Venue Dressing
Marquee Hire	Activity Providers
Event and Production Crew	Exhibition Services
Event Organiser / Producer / Promoter	Florists
Events Freelancers	PCO - Professional Conference Organisers
Catering	DMC - Destination Management Companies
Security	Tour Guide / Operator for Event Groups
Event Transport	Translation Services for Event Groups

The Fund is not intended to support; year-round operations such as Visitor attractions; Venues; Showgrounds and funfairs operators; The hospitality industry such as hotels, restaurants, pubs, bars, cafés, and recruitment and staffing agencies for the hospitality industry; nightclubs and mobile discos; private, social and family events (e.g. weddings, dinners, parties, graduation balls, charity dinners); community sports groups, teams or clubs; professional sports teams; artists, bands, performers and athletes; Local Authorities and/or Leisure Trusts; Theatres; Galleries; Museums; Shopping centres and/or retail outlets; Casinos; Bingo halls; Community groups; BID groups; Governing bodies; Market Operators and Wholesalers. Please note this list is not exhaustive, and we reserve the right to add further ineligible business types during the assessment process for the purposes of clarity.

Eligibility Criteria

Organisations seeking to apply for support must be able to meet and evidence the following eligibility criteria:

1. Confirm that you have a permanent place of business in Scotland.
2. Confirm that your business is an Eligible Events Business as set out in Table 1 above.
3. Confirm that either your supply to, organisation of, and/or delivery of or to events (as set out above in the section ‘Who is this Fund for?’) or your exporting of Scottish events expertise represents a minimum of 25% of your total earnings from all activities in 19/20; [Note: if you are a sole trader, please consider your total earnings for 19/20. If you are company, please refer to the business receipts for the business named on the application form when determining whether your supply to events represents a minimum of 25% of earnings in 19/20].
4. Confirm that the 25% of earnings referred to in criteria 2 is derived from an “Eligible Event Type” listed in Appendix A.
5. Confirm that your total earnings from Eligible Event Types for 19/20 as set out in the corresponding filed accounts or self-assessment return (which represent pre-COVID-19 activity) is more than £10,000.
6. Confirm that you have not received a grant award from EISF launched in August 2020.
7. The business must not have been in financial difficulty as of 31 December 2019 if you are a SME or Large organisation (please see the Subsidy Control section in the Guidance document for more information).

What if I or my business has received, or is applying for, other COVID funding schemes?

- Businesses or individuals who applied for and received funding under the Events Industry Support Fund launched in August 2020 are not eligible to apply to this Fund.
- Businesses or individuals who have applied for and received other funding under the Temporary Framework (see Subsidy Control on p7) prior to December 2020 are not excluded from applying to this fund.
- Businesses can only be successful and receive a grant award from one of the funds announced by the Scottish Government on or since 15th December 2020 to help the tourism and events industries to survive the impacts of COVID-19, regardless of the body which is administering the fund. The tourism funding announcement was made by the Scottish Government on 21st December 2020.
- This does not mean that businesses cannot apply to multiple funds if they meet the relevant eligibility requirements. However, if you have accepted a grant award from one of the funds you must withdraw your application from all other funds and reject any other grant offers.
- If it is evident that you or your business has received more in cumulative funding support throughout the COVID pandemic from March 2020 to date including all previous funds and currently active applications, than your 19/20 earnings, then we will reduce any award accordingly so that the total funding received does not exceed your 19/20 earnings.
- After 31st March 2021, some applications to this fund may be chosen at random to be audited. Any applicants which are found to have provided incorrect information or received multiple awards will be expected to return their awarded grant.

Note the UK Job Retention Scheme (furlough) is a UK Government scheme therefore businesses that have been able to access the furlough scheme are still eligible to apply for this Fund. Individuals who have received support through UK and Scottish Government self-employment support schemes (including SG newly self-employed hardship fund) are also eligible to apply.

Additional Information/Supporting Documentation

In addition to the eligibility criteria, businesses will be asked to provide the following additional information supporting documentation in their application:

- Name of applicant organisation
- Trading name if different
- Address of place of business in Scotland or registered address for tax if a sole trader
- Postcode
- Local Authority
- Size of organisation
- NACE code
- One of the following:
 - National VAT Number
 - Company Registration Number
 - Charity Registration Number
 - HMRC Unique Tax Reference Number
- Confirmation of any and all COVID-19 related aid/support already approved/received in 2020 under the Temporary Framework,

including the amount of each

- Confirmation of whether you intend to apply for or have applied for any of the other funding support schemes announced by the Scottish Government since 15th December 2020
- Name of applicant
- Position within organisation
- Email address
- Mobile contact number
- Organisation website/web presence
- Confirmation that you meet the eligibility criteria set out earlier in this guidance document
- Statement which explains the nature of the

business, type of supply to the events sector and how you believe your application meets the intent and purpose of this Fund (max 2000 characters)

- Confirmation of total earnings for your business in 19/20 (please note this should be business earnings only and **not** PAYE earnings)
- Details of the percentage of earnings derived from the supply to Events in Scotland 19/20
- Name of bank
- Name on bank account
- Sort Code
- Account Number

Required Documentation to be provided on application

- a. Published accounts for 2019/20 year which have been audited/verified by an accountant or copy of filed tax return for 2019/20 to verify the earnings figure provided above. Businesses with a year end after 31 December 2019 can submit the previous year if these are their latest set of accounts.
- b. A completed EISF2 itemised invoice proforma <https://www.visitscotland.org/events/funding/coronavirus-support-fund/EISF2-proforma>, ensuring all relevant fields are fully completed
- c. Bank statement for December 2020 to evidence payment of invoices or receipt of earnings (bank name, sort code and account number must also be clearly shown on the statement).
- d. Names and contacts details of two referees who consent to be contacted by VisitScotland in order to verify your eligible business type and supply to the events sector (those contacts could be from suppliers, event's organisers, local authorities amongst others); and
- e. Valid annual insurance document to cover third party liability and/or employee liability insurance for the year ending in 2020/21 tax year.

How much can my business expect to receive under this Fund?

The Scottish Government has allocated a set amount for this Fund and it is anticipated that demand will be high across the industry. In determining the grant support payable to each eligible applicant, regard will be given to the above criteria and the supporting information provided.

Subject to demand, Eligible Events Businesses will be eligible to receive an award of up to £10,000, plus an

additional 15% of total earnings in 2019/2020, up to a maximum award of £20,000.

Please note that any award amount indications set out in this document are for guidance only, are expressed as “up to” a certain amount and are dependent on the number of successful applications to this Fund. We reserve the right to award an amount significantly lower than the indications provided in this document if demand exceeds the total Fund amount available.

Accessibility, Terms & Conditions and Freedom of Information

If you are successful, you must sign and return the grant award letter and accept the terms and conditions before the funds will be paid into the organisation’s bank account. Successful applicants will be required to provide a report within 6 months of the grant award being made to assess the value of the grant and the impact of the funding on their organisation. If you receive grant funding from this Fund and it is subsequently determined that you have provided false or inaccurate information as part of your application, VisitScotland will seek to recover, with costs, all sums awarded to you from this Fund.

VisitScotland is subject to the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 and may be obliged to release information about your application or grant award in response to any requests received. Information on all grant awards will be published in the UK subsidy control transparency database and will be made available to other Scottish public sector bodies.

If you require the forms to be made available to you in another format for accessibility reasons, please contact eventsindustriysupportfund2@visitscotland.com.

Data protection

We will use the data provided by you in the application form and supporting documentation to assess your application for grant funding and contact you regarding your application. Your data will be shared with the Scottish Government, relevant local authorities, the EIAG, other Scottish public sector bodies and/or enterprise agencies for verification and reporting purposes and with Chiene + Tait Chartered Accountants, an accountancy firm procured by VisitScotland, to complete the finance checks, and with independent industry representatives who will form part of any appeals panel. If you want to find out more about what we do with your data, please see our [Privacy Policy](#).

Completing the digital forms

Please ensure that you have all information and supporting documentation ready so you can complete and submit the relevant form in one sitting as, once you start to complete the form, you will be unable to save it and return to it later. Supporting documentation must be submitted in pdf, word, excel, png or jpeg formats. The maximum file size for each document is 10MB.

All the mandatory fields within the form must be completed before the Application form can be submitted. Should you miss any mandatory information or enter any information incorrectly, you will not be able to submit the form. The field(s) requiring attention will be highlighted and you will be required to complete / correct these before you are able to submit. You will also be required to upload your supporting documentation to the form again.

Supported browsers for these forms are up to date versions of Chrome, Firefox, Safari, Edge, and Internet Explorer 11. We cannot guarantee successful operation / submission on older browser versions.

You may also find it easier to complete from a device with a larger screen, such as a desktop computer or laptop, rather than a mobile device. If you still have issues or require a different format for accessibility reasons, please contact eventsindustriesupportfund2@visitscotland.com.

Subsidy Control

Confirmation of subsidies received and Undertaking in Difficulty Status

Following the end of the transition period on 31 December 2020, a new Subsidy Control regime came into effect in the UK at 11pm on 31 December. The Temporary Framework under which COVID-19 related funding was issued in 2020 no longer applies. VisitScotland is currently awaiting guidance from the Scottish Government as to the basis under which the funding under this Fund will be awarded. It is intended that the award will be made under similar terms to COVID-19 schemes in operation before the 1 January 2021 and, if necessary, additional information will be provided to successful applicants in the award letter and terms and conditions.

In your application you will be asked to declare any aid already approved/received under the Temporary Framework in 2020.

You may need to declare any amount received under this Fund to any other aid awarding body who requests information from you on how much aid you have received. You must retain the award letter for four years from the date of the letter and produce it on any request from the UK public authorities or the European Commission.

A subsidy may be granted to undertakings (SME / Large undertakings) that were not in difficulty, but that faced difficulties or entered in difficulty thereafter as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak. The subsidy is in addition to any aid that you may have received under the De Minimis regulation allowing aid of up to €200,000 to any one organisation over a three fiscal year period (i.e., your current fiscal year and previous two fiscal years). If you are a micro or small undertaking you may be granted aid even if you would fall under the category of undertaking in financial difficulty on 31 December 2019, provided that you are not subject to collective insolvency procedure under national law and that you have not received rescue aid (which has not been repaid) or restructuring aid (and are still subject to a restructuring plan).

- A micro or small organisation is an undertaking that has less than 50 employees and less than 10 million euros of annual turnover and/or balance sheet.
- A SME organisation is an undertaking that has 50 or more employees and 10 million euros or more of annual turnover and/or annual balance sheet
- A large organisation is an undertaking that has 250 or more employees and 50 million euros or more of annual turnover and/or 43 million euro annual balance sheet.

Undertakings in Difficulty Assessment

In your application you will be asked to declare that on 31 December 2019, you did not meet any of the criteria to be considered an undertaking in difficulty.

‘undertaking in difficulty’ is defined for the purposes of this scheme as an undertaking in respect of which at least one of the following circumstances occurs:

(a) In the case of a limited liability company (other than an SME that has been in existence for less than three years or, for the purposes of eligibility for risk finance aid, an SME within 7 years from its first commercial sale that qualifies for risk finance investments following due diligence by the selected financial intermediary), where more than half of its subscribed share capital has disappeared as a result of accumulated losses. This is the case when deduction of accumulated losses from reserves (and all other elements generally considered as part of the own funds of the company) leads to a negative cumulative amount that exceeds half of the subscribed share capital.

or

(b) In the case of a company where at least some members have unlimited liability for the debt of the company (other than an SME that has been in existence for less than three years or, for the purposes of eligibility for risk finance aid, an SME within 7 years from its first commercial sale that qualifies for risk finance investments following due diligence by the selected financial intermediary), where more than half of its capital as shown in the company accounts has disappeared as a result of accumulated losses.
and

(c) Where the undertaking is subject to collective insolvency proceedings or fulfils the criteria under its domestic law for being placed in collective insolvency proceedings at the request of its creditors.

and

(d) Where the undertaking has received rescue aid and has not yet reimbursed the loan or terminated the guarantee or has received restructuring aid and is still subject to a restructuring plan.

Appendix A - Event Types

This table lists various types of events and aims to indicate to applicants which events align with the objectives of this Fund. Please note that businesses which do not predominantly deliver and supply directly to events which are strongly aligned to the purpose of this fund will be unlikely to be successful in their applications to the Events Industry Support Fund 2.

Strong Alignment to Events Industry Support Fund 2	Limited Alignment to Events Industry Support Fund 2
Festivals across a range of genres (film, book, poetry, literature, dance, food & drink, comedy, science, visual arts, design, nature & wildlife, fashion, wellness, maritime)	Private, social or family events such as birthdays, weddings, dinners, functions or parties
Theatre productions and Comedy gigs in event venues which are not considered recurring or regular programming	Regular or recurring programming in year-round venues including theatres, cinemas, arts centres and galleries
Music festivals, one off gigs in large event venues, one off gigs in outdoor spaces with temporary build structures	School, college or university group events including concerts, productions, proms and balls, school sports days and graduation ceremonies
	Non-discretionary business meetings; individual business travellers; business networking groups
Business Events - typically discretionary and peripatetic to include company and association conferences and conventions, incentive trips and programmes, product launches and seminars	Showgrounds and funfairs
Lighting trails and illuminations	Participative events with a principal focus on fundraising, generally these are run by the charitable organisations
Comedy gigs in large event venues	Local community gala days and fetes, coffee mornings, and jumble sales in community centres
Agricultural events and shows	Regularly scheduled sports fixtures and club championships e.g., football, hockey, rugby, golf, bowls or tennis club
Highland Games and Piping events	Live music, DJ sets and comedy gigs in clubs, pubs and smaller venues
Mass participation sporting events	Local markets including car boot sales and regularly scheduled or pop-up craft fairs, food and drink/ farmers markets
National and International Sports Championships / Competitions	Demonstrations / Marches / Parades of a political nature. Civic Events and Ceremonial Functions
Events that celebrate Scotland's National Days: St Andrews Day, Hogmanay and Burns Night	Events which provide seasonal celebrations for communities, and seasonal promotions and activation in shopping centres
Group activities and guided tours	