**LNER Customer & Community Investment Fund Guidance Form**

**Pre application**

* An application **must** align with one of the three priorities the fund supports
  + Better for People
  + Better for Places
  + Better for Planet

Please see ‘Type of Project’ for further information.

* Our preference would be to support small and medium-sized charities or voluntary organisations. An industry-wide definition would be.
  + small organisations (those with an income between £10,000 and £100,000)
  + medium-sized organisations (those with an income between £100,000 and £1m).
* The minimum amount that can be requested is £1000 and the maximum amount is £10,000.
* We would prefer to be the sole funder, or one of two funders for an application.
  + We would not want to fund an application where we are one of several funders.
* The project and charity do not need to be located within the immediate proximity of an LNER station; instead, the fund is open to those located within 15 miles of the LNER route, in England and Scotland. Please see the [LNER Route Map](https://www.lner.co.uk/our-destinations/) .
* Only online applications will be accepted.
  + Which will be accessible via the [LNER Website](https://www.lner.co.uk/about-us/customer-and-community-investment-fund/#Howtoapply) when it goes live.
* For details on what we will and will not support, please see the LNER Charitable Giving Policy - [click here](https://www.lner.co.uk/about-us/customer-and-community-investment-fund/#Howtoapply)

**Completing the Application**

* Please [click here](https://www.lner.co.uk/about-us/customer-and-community-investment-fund/#Howtoapply) to access an application template, that includes questions to consider when completing each section within the application.
* Once you start completing the CCIF application form, please do not leave the application as you will lose any information that has been added.
* Once completed and the application has been submitted, you will receive a confirmation message on the screen. To advise the application has been received. **You will not receive and email confirmation.**
* A letter count applies to the following areas
  + Brief Project Summary – 1000 letters
  + Please outline how the scheme will address the theme – 3000 letters
  + Project Scope – 6000 letters
  + Org aims and activities - 3000 letters

**Who can apply**  
We welcome applications from registered charities, community groups and other types of not-for-profit organisations including community rail partnerships, business partnerships, town councils, parish councils and schools. However, with regards to schools, we can only fund activity which is extracurricular and outside the usual statutory remit.

**Type of Projects**

The fund is expected to support a wide range of applications that will bring improvements and benefits where there is an identified social need.

There are three priorities the fund supports: Better for People, Better for Places and Better for Planet

**Better for People – Fostering a culture of equality, that champions diversity and inclusivity.**

* Supporting diverse and inclusive community projects, creating opportunities for learning and the social mobility of vulnerable groups.
* Creating a culture of positive mental health, bringing people and communities together.

**Better for Places – Creating skilled and inclusive communities along our networks that can thrive.**

* A focus on building skills, promoting employability and education amongst marginalised groups by investing in the skills requirements of now and in the future.

**Better for Planet – Conserve resources, reduce waste and reuse where possible**

Supporting environmental projects and encouraging sustainable mobility within communities. There are three areas we would like applications to focus on:

* Biodiversity – projects on rewilding areas, creating new or extending existing wildlife corridors and regeneration of urban spaces
* Sustainable Travel – projects that encourage communities to travel more sustainably, to and from LNER trains stations.
* Waste Reduction and the Circular Economy – we would be open to projects that would help LNER to reduce or convert waste into a reusable asset.

Examples have been included, but if you have any questions, please contact [CCIF@lner.co.uk](mailto:CCIF@lner.co.uk).

For information on the types of projects previously supported please visit the [LNER Website](http://www.lner.co.uk/CCIF).

**Total cost of project. Inc a breakdown of costs**

The minimum amount that can be requested is £1000 and the maximum amount is £10,000.

**Requests over £10,000 will not be considered and will be removed from the application process.**

For all requests, the following will be required.

* High-level Breakdown of project costs
  + Which needs to include the total cost of the project, even if you are not applying to LNER CCIF for the full amount. It should set out how the costs have been reached.

Will need to show how the CCIF amount sits within the project costs, and which parts of the project this funding will deliver / support.

**Confirmed match funding and source of match funding**

Although funding is available for 100% of project costs, applicants should be aware that the panel will consider applicants that are offering some contribution to the project costs. This could be financially through their own fundraising efforts or ‘in kind’ through the support of volunteers getting involved and giving their time.

*We would prefer to be the sole funder, or one of two funders for an application. We would not want to fund an application where we are one of several funders.*

**Timescales**

A high-level breakdown of the project will need to be included in this section, that covers month by month the key activities and timescales over the 12 months of the funding period.

* We hope to confirm project funding by the April / May of each year.
* Funding **must** be spent or fully committed by the March of each financial year.

**Additional information**

* Please advise what funding has been secured by the charity in the last 2 years. How this has been spent and what has been delivered.
* The scheme and charity do not need to be located within the immediate proximity of an LNER station; instead, the fund is open to those located within 15 miles of the LNER route, in England and Scotland. Please see the [LNER Route Map](https://www.lner.co.uk/our-destinations/) for further details.
* Staff Costs will be considered, but they must relate to the application submitted. And cannot be for core costs for a charity, such as salaries, general running costs etc. ***These costs should not equal more than 25% of the overall funding amount requested.*** 
  + CCI funding cannot be used to fill gaps in budgets for a charity, organisation etc.
* If you want to involve LNER in a project i.e., staff training, access to stations etc. You will need to contact the Community Investment Manager to discuss if this is feasible via CCIF@lner.co.uk.
* **We do not want to fund capital projects. We would define a capital project as a project to construct either new facilities or make significant, long-term renewal improvements to existing facilities.**

**Additional documents**

Only one additional document can be uploaded with the application. This must include the high-level budget breakdown of project costs, and other information if appropriate.

Uploaded documents should be limited to either two worksheets for Excel, or two pages for Word and a PDF document. If any additional worksheets or pages are included, they will not be considered as part of the application.

**Assessment and Award**

All eligible applications will be assessed. We may contact you to obtain further information, and this may be over the telephone or via email.

Our decisions are final and cannot be changed, although we will provide feedback if requested.