

The National Lottery Heritage Fund



A Brief Introduction

The National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF), formerly the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), was set up in 1994 with the purpose of giving grants to projects that “sustain and transform a wide range of heritage for present and future generations to take part in, learn from and enjoy”. The Fund has changed a great deal since then; at one time there were separate grants programmes for different types of heritage including landscapes, collections and Places of Worship.

Historic England were used as consultants in the previous Grants for Places of Worship Scheme (GPOW) which has led to some confusion that the NLHF and Historic England are one and the same. The NLHF is not part of Historic England.

The NLHF is administered by the National Heritage Memorial Fund (NHMF) which was given the responsibility of distributing a share of money raised through the National Lottery for Good Causes, to heritage across the UK. The NHMF is a non-departmental public body accountable to Parliament via the Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport.

The New Framework

The NLHF launched a new strategic framework in 2019 which streamlined all their grants into one single programme, separated into three tiers according to grant size.

Grants from £3000 to £10,000

- There are no deadlines, so you can apply whenever you are ready.
- Your application will be assessed and a decision made within 8 weeks.
- Projects can last up to one year.

Grants from £10,000 to £250,000

- Submit a project enquiry form before you apply to receive free advice to help you develop your idea.
- One stage application – no development phase.
- Projects can last up to five years.
- No deadlines so you can apply whenever you are ready. A decision is made within 8 weeks.*
- Grants from £100,000 to £250,000 - you must contribute at least 5% of your project costs.

**Prior to March 2020 grants between £100,000 - £250,000 were subject to quarterly deadlines with a 12-week decision period.*

Grants over £250,000

- Submit an Expression of Interest (this is mandatory). You should get a response within 20 working days. If you are invited to apply, you will be contacted to discuss the next steps. If you are not invited to apply, the reasons for this will be explained.
- Your project proposal will include a development phase and a delivery phase.
- A development phase may take up to two years, depending on the complexity of your project.

- Your application will be in competition with other projects at the development and delivery phase. A development phase grant award does not guarantee that you will receive a delivery phase grant award.
- The delivery phase can last up to five years
- Deadlines for first stage (development phase) applications are quarterly usually in March, June, September and November. Applications will be assessed in 12 weeks and assigned for a decision at the next quarterly committee meeting.
- You must contribute at least 5% of your project costs for grants up to £1million and at least 10% for grants of £1m or more.

What projects will the NLHF support?

The Fund has always sought to support projects that make a lasting difference for heritage, people and communities. Over time, the focus on engaging people and communities has become stronger and is now the priority area. They support:

“projects that connect people and communities to the national, regional and local heritage of the UK”

Heritage can be anything from the past that you value and want to pass on to future generations, including:

Nature - works to improve habitats, biodiversity or conserve species, as well as helping people to connect to nature in their daily lives.

Designed landscapes - improving and conserving historic landscapes such as public parks, historic gardens and botanical gardens.

Landscapes and the countryside - large-scale rural projects that help improve landscapes for people and nature, by for example, restoring habitats and celebrating the cultural traditions of the land.

Oral history - recordings of people's stories, memories and songs, as a way of communicating and revealing the past.

Cultural traditions - exploring the history of different cultures through storytelling, or things that you do as part of your community. This could be anything from dance and theatre, to food or clothing, it could also include the heritage of languages and dialects.

Community archaeology - involves the active participation of volunteers in archaeological activities, everything from investigating, photographing, surveying to finds processing. Can occasionally include excavation. Sometimes called public archaeology.

Historic buildings, monuments and the historic environment - from houses and mills, to theatres and churches. Also built areas that have a distinctive historic character.

Museums, libraries and archives - making the collections that museums, libraries and archives hold more accessible through new displays, improving public buildings and galleries, digitisation or engaging people with interpreting new and existing collections.

Acquiring new objects - help towards the cost of acquiring one-off objects or collections as part of a collections development policy

Commemorations and celebrations - telling the stories and histories of people, communities, places or events related to specific times and dates.

Industrial, maritime and transport - this might be places and objects linked to our industrial, maritime and transport history.

What can you spend the money on?

The money you get for your project can be used for:

Activities to engage the wider community in your heritage. They might include guided heritage walks, sharing oral histories, or workshops. Your activities should link to the heritage focus of your project and be tailored to the needs of the audiences you want to work with.

Repairs and conservation

Digital outputs - this could be digital images, sound files or data, a website with heritage material, an app, or a film made using digital technology.

New staff posts - this could be to employ someone for a defined period to help deliver the project, and could include part of a current employee's role, if they were dedicating a specific amount of time to the project and were being replaced in their usual role.

Paid training placements - this could also include training for existing staff, to support the aims of the project.

Professional fees - includes anyone related to your project in a professional capacity, from architects and heritage professionals to teaching staff.

Outcomes Versus Outputs

The NLHF has an outcomes-based approach. All projects must achieve one or more outcomes including the mandatory one.

“Project outcomes are really important to us because we want to back projects that make a difference, rather than projects that just make some stuff. This is so important to us that we've decided that we'll only support projects that clearly explain what their outcomes are. Some funded projects will only achieve the mandatory outcome, others might achieve four or five. There is no obligation to name more than one, and we strongly encourage you not to claim more outcomes than you really think you can deliver.”

The nine outcomes are:

- A wider range of people will be involved in heritage (mandatory outcome).
- Heritage will be in better condition.
- Heritage will be identified and better explained.
- People will have developed skills.
- People will have learnt about heritage, leading to change in ideas and actions.
- People will have greater wellbeing (new outcome).
- The funded organisation will be more resilient.
- The local area will be a better place to live, work or visit.
- The local economy will be boosted.

Many projects fail because they focus on the creation of outputs rather than on the delivery of outcomes.

An outcome is a result of what your project does; it's a change that happens, rather than something you provide. For instance, the output of a teacher is a certain number of lessons delivered in a year, but the outcome is happier, wiser students who are more able to succeed. When you are designing your proposal, it is very important that you separate out the output (for example, 'building an events space'), from the outcome (for example, 'ensuring that twice as many people from the local community engage with their own stories')."

Can We Get a Grant to Repair our Church?

Repairs to listed church buildings are supported by the Fund. New works such as toilets and kitchens and internal reordering may be supported if they are part of a larger repairs and heritage engagement project. The focus, however, is always on how you engage people in the heritage of the building, this is essentially what determines your success. The Fund will not support a project that is 100% building works with no engagement activities – don't be tempted to try, your application will simply be rejected. As a guide, at least 15% of the total cost of your project should be dedicated to delivering heritage engagement activities. It can be more than 15%, after all the Fund will happily support a project that is 100% heritage engagement activities.

What Do You Mean by Heritage Engagement Activities?

These are activities that help people to connect with, participate in, learn from and enjoy their local, national and/or regional heritage. The possibilities are almost endless, but here are some general ideas:

Hard-hat tours during the building works

Demonstrations from stonemasons and other heritage crafts people who are working on the repairs to your building

Using **apprentices** as part of the project

Training – particularly volunteers, in areas that will benefit the future management and enjoyment of the church heritage e.g. business skills, venue management, building maintenance, conservation cleaning, marketing, website design, interpretive writing, photography, tour guiding, working with children, writing trails etc...

Surveys, investigation and research carried out by local people - this can include surveys of your church building and the natural and built features of your churchyard, historical research, collection of oral histories, collection and storage of documents, photos and objects etc...

Workshops – inspired by features in your church, traditional heritage skills or the skills and interests of local people such as calligraphy, bell ringing, flower arranging, Christmas wreaths, wood carving, willow weaving, stained glass making, organ playing, singing etc...

Events and open days including family fun days. You can also take part in national events and campaigns such as Museums at Night, National Science Week, Environment Day, Volunteering Week, The Big Butterfly Count, Love Your Burial Ground Week, National Gutters Day, Heritage Open Day etc...

Talks, tours and lectures

Children's craft activities especially during the school holidays

School visits - think beyond churches just being used for services or to teach RE and history. There are many other curriculum areas that a church building can be used to help teach such as maths, speech and debate, literacy, and even a heritage themed careers day. The best thing to do is to ask a teacher at your local school, don't make assumptions but do remember that the cost of any equipment and materials, associated staff costs, coaches, porta-loos – whatever is needed to get the school on site - will be supported by the NLHF. Try not to forget home schooled groups and traveller communities. Secondary schools often find field trips more difficult but may be looking for opportunities for smaller groups e.g. children with additional learning needs, gifted and talented pupils, sixth form classes, enrichment activities and the Duke of Edinburgh Awards Scheme; they might also have pupils looking for inspiration for a piece of coursework. Also check the curriculum of any local colleges to see if they offer construction, architecture, design or media courses as your project could provide an opportunity for a 'real-life' case study and practical experience.

Youth group activities – remember Scouts, Guides and other youth groups including support groups for young carers, those excluded from school and children experiencing social isolation.

Outreach – not all activities have to take place in the church or churchyard. Some people feel excluded from heritage buildings and/or churches with the belief that its 'not meant for them'. Going out into the community to deliver talks or activities or having a display/stall at local events can be a valuable part of heritage engagement. The NLHF also like partnerships with other organisations including other churches; consider trails or activities that link your church to other places.

Outputs – you can create 'things' such as guidebooks and displays but try to build engagement into the process, for example:

- Volunteers are trained by a professional to design and create the content for a guidebook which is then professionally produced
- School children work with a professional to design and produce a trail for other children
- A new interpretive display is tried and tested (evaluated) by local people before being produced and is then launched at a special event.

This way the output or 'thing' becomes the vehicle to deliver outcomes, but still retains the professional quality which the NLHF prefer.

Where do we start? We are a church, not a museum, how can we be expected to deliver the activities?

It is true that the NLHF is aimed at organisations whose primary purpose is heritage conservation and interpretation. Whilst this should very much be part of the mission of any parish that is a custodian of an historic building, it is not the primary purpose of a church. Unfortunately, activities that are seen to support or promote religion cannot be supported by the NLHF. This presents a challenge to many churches and more work, but it can be an absolute blessing not a burden if approached in the right way. It is also a fantastic opportunity to engage with the wider community, challenge some misconceptions, gather support and bring new people into your church.

1) Know your church

To start a heritage focused project, you must first understand the history of your church and how it relates to the wider parish and any local, regional and national events through time. Make sure information is fact

checked in guidebooks etc... Don't worry if you haven't got this information, research and investigation could form part of your project. You might find you have far too much to research in just one project and that you need to focus on a particular time period or theme; use step 2 to help you decide.

2) Know your audience (the congregation and wider community)

Ask your congregation what they value most about the church building, it could be wall paintings, carvings, the amount of light, a particular window, an association with an important person, how the building sits in the landscape, personal memories attached to the building etc... Then think about visitors to your church (tourists, history enthusiasts, families) what might they value? What expectations will they have on visiting the building? What will they want to see, experience, find out more about? From this you will start to find some sort of commonality, a spirit of place that can help shape your project. For more tips on Sense of Place see *Interpreting and Celebrating your Building*.

3) Consult with the Wider Community

Almost all grant funders expect to see evidence of community consultation in your project. There are many ways to do this from paper surveys and social media interactions, to open days or just informal discussions. You need to find out what your community is like, what people value about the church and how they view it (don't be afraid to address misconceptions that will arise relating to who owns and manages the church and how much money the Church of England has).

Talk about the reality of the situation but focus on the opportunities a NLHF project presents. Ask how individuals and groups might like to get involved and what would or would not be of interest to them. Look at what issues your community is facing and see if your project could help, for instance, isolation and loneliness could be supported by regular activities, or the setting up of a group or community café. Cafes, foodbanks, drop-in centres etc... are unlikely to be seen as heritage engagement activities by the NLHF but they will be supported if they are part of a wider programme of activities and if there is evidence of need in the area.

The NLHF want projects to be more inclusive and where possible, should be more targeted at specific groups and audiences. Wellbeing is a new outcome in the scheme, in particular the wellbeing of people categorised as NEET (Not in Employment, Education or Training), and people with long-life conditions and disabilities. Churchyard clearance, low-level maintenance, conservation cleaning could all be appropriate to such groups. You might even be able to engage teenagers in some hands-on practical heritage skills or even help to create a wildlife haven and mindfulness corner in the churchyard.

See a Quick Guide to Community Consultation for more advice.

4) Look for Easy Wins

Successful projects and sustainability are important to the NLHF, but they have no desire to burden people with more work and unrealistic expectations. See what skills you already have in your community such as photographers, website designers, maybe a calligrapher, you could even find a bid writer! Many of these people will be happy to help a project when they know they are only committing for a limited time eg. 12 months or to deliver 2 workshops. They don't have to do this voluntarily; using local skills, whether it is voluntary or paid is important to the NLHF.

Look at what activities you already do - can you develop your summer fete to draw in more people and showcase local crafts? Could you theme the displays in your flower festival on something to do with the heritage and maybe include a flower arranging workshop? Could you provide outreach sessions to local groups or care homes - take the church to them by providing talks, reminiscence mornings, music sessions etc...?

5) Bring in Support

Cost in the support of professional staff where you need it. The NLHF are more comfortable if projects, particularly those over £100,000, are not solely reliant on volunteers. There is a much greater emphasis on professionalism in the new scheme and projects over £10,000 are expected to be evaluated by a professional.

Professional support can range from short-term contracts such as the delivery of a workshop or the design and creation of a website, to staff members that are with you for the duration of your project such as a Project Manager to oversee the whole project, a Heritage Project Officer to deliver your programme of activities, or an Administration Officer to process invoices and complete NLHF reporting. Larger projects may require more than one staff post. All these roles can be offered on a freelance basis, but you must make sure the salary reflects that expected in the industry and covers additional costs to the employee such as insurance and equipment. For examples of jobs look at the adverts on heritage specific websites such as:

<https://gem.org.uk/>

<https://www.museumsassociation.org/home>

6) Be Realistic and Generous with Costs

Charities are very good at saving money, but this can work against you with an NLHF project. The Fund want to ensure that projects are delivered to a high standard and that there are contingencies in place to cover unforeseen events. So put a cost against everything you will need to deliver the engagement activities and costs you might need to cover the unexpected. Include refreshments at training sessions, coaches to get school children on site, tea urns, port-a-loos, marketing and publicity, cover time to release a teacher from a class to help you develop and deliver school activities, equipment and materials etc... You will find reaching that 15% of project costs is no problem (professional fees and staff costs that relate to the engagement activities are included in this).

Two New Expectations

The Environment

Applicants to the NLHF are now expected to consider how they can make their project more sustainable by increasing positive environmental impacts and reducing negative environmental impacts. This can include the use of recyclable materials, locally sourced food and local trades or on larger projects the installation of solar panels. All projects must support wildlife and nature in some way.

Thank Players of the National Lottery

A new question on the application forms asks you to briefly describe how you will acknowledge National Lottery players' contribution to your project through NLHF funding.

Contrary to some rumours, you do not have to sell lottery tickets in your church. The NLHF simply want to make the connection between their grants and players of the National Lottery much clearer. This is a new area so examples of how to meet this expectation are regularly appearing on the NLHF's website. Current suggestions include:

- Free or reduced entry to events, activities or concerts with a valid lottery ticket.
- A sticker or stamp if you come to your project's event with a valid lottery ticket.
- A special National Lottery players' event or evening. Perhaps an early private view of an exhibition, or a chance to see behind-the-scenes of the project (a hard-hat tour).

- Advertise your volunteering opportunities and events in places where people buy lottery tickets – get to know your local newsagent and see if you can move the leaflet stand next to the Lottery ticket stand.
- If you use social media make regular use of #NationalLottery, thanking the people that fund Britain's diverse heritage.
- Make cakes iced with the Lottery logo available free to all at events, or as a special treat at a 'Lottery ticket holders only' activity.
- Do something crafty with old lottery tickets and display at an event.
- Staff members or volunteers who play the lottery regularly could speak in public about the link between a £2 ticket and the project they are part of.

Ensure that you acknowledge your grant as much as possible! The NLHF have banners, plaques and downloads for your website, but you don't have to use these. You might have an artist or heritage craftsman involved in your project who could create a bespoke acknowledgement plaque, subject to approval from the NLHF. It would be a bonus if this could be created on site so people could watch it take shape.

A project supported by the NLHF is a great opportunity to celebrate the history and heritage of your church and parish. It's a chance to highlight the stories, features, myths and legends, to learn skills, test ideas and enjoy a fantastic building that should be a blessing not a burden.

Contact for NLHF

East of England

Monday to Friday, 9am–5pm

Email: MidlandsandEast@heritagefund.org.uk Telephone: 01223 645 938

CBI Business Centre, 20 Station Road, Cambridge, CB1 2JD

Links

All information relating to the NLHF can be found on the website: <https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/>

Please do not hesitate to contact Sue Dickinson or Holly Isted from the Church Buildings and Pastoral Department for more advice on making an application.

Key Questions - *These questions were answered by NLHF staff at the launch of their new strategic framework in 2019.*

What options are there for projects between £100,000 - £250,000 now that the development phase has been removed?

Build any development activities and costs into your application making sure you have a robust contingency plan.

Would this not increase the potential risks on a project and thus make it less competitive when compared to others?

No. In essence, as long as you have a good project and a robust contingency there will be little perceived risk. “For places of worship we have never seen a contingency that was too high!”

What makes a good project?

A good project is essentially based upon how the specified outcomes are met, and whether it is realistic, achievable and sustainable.

What do we do if we are not invited to make a full application after submitting an Expression of Interest?

The new Expression of Interest (EOI) form for large grants will help to ensure time is not wasted on completing unsuitable applications; if you are not invited to apply as a result of an EOI it doesn't exclude you from trying again with a new EOI as long as you take on board the advice given.