



Community Radio Fund

Guidance Notes

Updated: 24 May 2018
Issue 16

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Section 1

Community Radio Fund (“the Fund”)

The Fund Guidance Notes

1.1 Background

Ofcom has been tasked by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (“DCMS”) with administering the Fund. DCMS provides up to £400,000 per annum for the Fund (at present confirmed until 2019/20). For further information about Community Radio and the Fund please see our website: <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/tv-radio-and-on-demand/information-for-industry/radio-broadcasters/community-radio-fund>

1.2 What is the Fund for?

The Fund has been established to give grants to help fund the core costs of running Ofcom-licensed community radio stations. These core functions include:

- management
- fundraising to support the station (e.g. grants, commercial funding)
- administration
- financial management & reporting
- community outreach
- volunteer organisation and support

Grants will be made as a single lump sum and are to cover a one-year period only.

1.3 What does the Fund NOT support?

Grants cannot be given for the following:

- Capital expenditure/equipment (for the office, studio, transmission etc.)
- Vehicle costs
- Volunteer expenses
- Cost of building repairs, construction or maintenance
- Programming or marketing costs
- Utility bills
- Rent and/or mortgage payments
- Licence fees, copyright fees
- Retrospective grants i.e. to cover expenditure already incurred
- Funding for the repayment of loans
- Company directors’ fees
- Costs reimbursed or to be reimbursed by funding from other public authorities or from the private sector

- Interest payments (including service charge payments for finance leases)
- Statutory fines, criminal fines or penalties

1.4 How much can we apply for?

There is no limit to how much can be applied for. However, applicants should also take account of the Panel's statements on previous rounds. These include a list of previous grants, the average given in the particular round, and 'issues of note arising from the Panel meeting'. The latter includes advice for applicants on what the Panel is looking for as well as common problems with applications.

The statements are on our website under the heading 'previous award of grants' here:

<https://www.ofcom.org.uk/tv-radio-and-on-demand/information-for-industry/radio-broadcasters/community-radio-fund>

1.5 Application Eligibility Criteria

- Grants can only be made to community radio licensees ("Licensee"). (Stations licensed under The Community Radio (Guernsey) Order 2013 are **not** eligible for funding).
- There should be a minimum of fifteen months remaining on the licence from the date of the Fund decision (usually in January and June the exact date is published on the Ofcom website).
- Applications can only be submitted by, and awarded to, the licence holding company.
- There will normally be two rounds of grant awards in each financial year. Normally, if a Licensee has received a grant (or grants) in one funding round, it will not be considered for a further grant in the same financial year. Such a Licensee can apply in the next year and subsequent years. Licensees which have been awarded a grant in a previous funding round must report on the spending of that grant before submitting a new application.
- Licensees which have been awarded a grant in a previous funding round must report on the spending of that grant before they can be considered for another grant. The grant report form is on our website here <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/tv-radio-and-on-demand/information-for-industry/radio-broadcasters/community-radio-fund>
- Joint applications may be submitted by two or more Licensees, for example to co-fund a shared post. However, one Licensee should be nominated to manage the grant and it will be paid to that company (and not split between two or more).
- Payment can only be made when a station has launched (and becomes an Ofcom licensee). As a result, and to aid the administration of the Fund, applicants must be on air by the time applications are considered (usually January and June; the exact dates are published on the Ofcom website).

1.6 Community stations based in Wales

Applications may be submitted in Welsh. Any application submitted in Welsh will be treated no less favourably than an application submitted in English.

In accordance with the Compliance Notice made under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011¹, when Ofcom makes decisions about the award of a grant, it must also take in to account the following:

- a) what effects, if any (and whether positive or negative), the awarding of a grant would have on-
 - i. opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language; and
 - ii. treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language;
- b) how the decision could be taken or implemented (for example, by imposing conditions of grant) so that it would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on-
 - i. opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language; and
 - ii. treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language; and
- c) how the decision could be taken or implemented (for example, by imposing conditions of grant) so that it would not have adverse effects, or so that it would have decreased adverse effects on—
 - i. opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language; and
 - ii. treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

Accordingly, to assist the Panel's consideration of applications, any applicants on behalf of stations based in Wales will be asked to provide information in their application about the effects of a grant on the Welsh language, as set out above.

¹ For more information, please see <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/about-ofcom/how-ofcom-is-run/nations-and-regions/wales>.

Section 2

The application and award process

2.1 Application information

The deadline for receipt of applications for each funding round is published on the Ofcom website.

Applications and supporting documentation received after the deadline will **not** be considered.

2.2 How to apply

- Download the application form from Ofcom's website. You may apply in English or Welsh and application forms in both languages are available on the website. Completed applications and any appropriate supporting documentation should reach Ofcom by 5pm on the advertised closing date **preferably by email** to communityradiofund@ofcom.org.uk. The application form and supporting documentation should be in Word, RTF or Excel format, rather than PDF. Our email system cannot accept emails with attachments larger than 10 Megabytes, so in the event of all documents exceeding this value any supporting documentation can be sent by post and should be addressed to the Community Radio Fund (5th Floor), Ofcom, 2A Southwark Bridge Road, London, SE1 9HA. Please ensure that these are posted well in advance of the advertised closing date to ensure receipt by the application deadline. Please contact the Team before the day of the deadline if you have any problems.
- Be clear and concise about what the funding will be used for. Provide information on the grant purpose and objectives, and a timeline for grant spend. If the funding sought is for staff, a job description(s) and a financial breakdown between salary and employer's on costs (such as employer's national insurance, pension and management fee) should be provided. We also need station budgetary and funding information to help us understand the Licensee's needs. For stations based in Wales, please provide the additional information requested relating to the effects of a grant on the Welsh language.
- An application may be submitted for more than one purpose (details should be included on the same form). If more than one grant purpose is identified, Licensees should indicate the priority of each one by listing them in order of importance. The Panel may make a grant to an applicant to fund more than one purpose, however the relative priority that the Panel attaches to any purpose is entirely at the Panel's discretion.
- Each applicant should set out its reasons for applying for a grant and argue its case for funding under question 4.
- Additional information submitted may only include: job descriptions, person specifications, summaries of income and expenditure, and relevant Fund reports.
- If we have any queries about the information received, we will ask the Licensee for clarification. No new information can be submitted after the deadline other than that requested by Ofcom (except for a change in the Licensee contact details).
- Applications to the Fund will be treated as confidential and will not be published.

- If you have any queries, please contact us via phone: Vanessa Kudom 020 7981 3087 or Soo Williams on 020 7783 4319, or email: communityradiofund@ofcom.org.uk

2.3 Grant decisions

- All the applications will be considered by Ofcom's Community Radio Fund Panel. The Panel's decisions are final. Further information about the Panel is on our website here: <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/about-ofcom/how-ofcom-is-run/committees/community-radio-fund-panel>
- We will notify Licensees of the outcome of the application award round by email. Notification will be to the contact given on the application form. General feedback on the reasons why applications were unsuccessful will be published in a statement about the awards.
- Decisions on awards will be made public via Ofcom's website. The grant recipient, amount of award and purpose of the grant will be announced.

2.4 What happens next?

- A grant is subject to the Licensee signing a Community Radio Fund Grant Agreement ("Agreement") which will be sent to the licensee along with a form requesting bank details. The Agreement will confirm that the Licensee accepts the grant on the basis that it will be for the purpose described in the Annex to the Agreement, and in accordance with all conditions set out in the Agreement.
- If awarded a grant, the Licensee will be required to use the grant within a specified time (which is set out in the Agreement).
- After the completed Agreement and bank details form have been returned to the Team, arrangements for the grant to be transferred by BACS to the Licensee's bank account.
- Grants have to be paid in the financial year in which the award is made
- If awarded funding, the Licensee will be required to use the grant within a specified time period.
- Licensees that receive a grant will be required to report on how it has been spent. If a satisfactory report is not made, Ofcom may require repayment of the grant and will not normally consider making a further grant to a Licensee.
- If a grant has not been spent in accordance with the agreed purpose without the prior agreement of Ofcom, or if a Licensee has not complied with other conditions of funding, Ofcom may require repayment of the grant and will not normally consider making a further grant to the Licensee.

2.5 Additional information

- The Licensee will be required to report to Ofcom on how the grant has been spent. A grant report form is available on Ofcom's website at <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/tv-radio-and-on-demand/information-for-industry/radio-broadcasters/community-radio-fund>

- If a Licensee applies for a grant before a current grant has been spent, it will be expected to complete an interim grant report form, reporting on the spend to date of that grant.
- Ofcom expects Licensees to make their community aware of activities supported by the Fund, e.g. by publishing a statement on their website or via on air announcements.
- The purpose and scope of grants from the Fund may vary from year to year and these Guidance Notes may be varied accordingly. These Guidance Notes may be subject to change in future. Applicants are advised to check the Ofcom website for the latest version of the Guidance Notes and application form.

2.6 Data Protection

- We require the information requested in this form in order to carry out our licensing duties under the Broadcasting Act 1990, Broadcasting Act 1996 and Communications Act 2003. Please see Ofcom's General Privacy Statement www.ofcom.org.uk/about-ofcom/foi-dp/general-privacy-statement for further information about how Ofcom handles your personal information and your corresponding rights.

Revised May 2018 - Issue 16