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# PUBLIC LIBRARY IMPROVEMENT FUND

## GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS 2023/24

This guidance is intended to assist public library members of the Scottish Library and Information Council (SLIC) to apply for grants from the Public Library Improvement Fund (PLIF). It introduces the PLIF Grant Award programme for 2023/24, including outlining the key priorities, eligibility criteria and conditions of grant.

### 1 Introduction

SLIC’s work across the Scottish library and information sector covers a wide range of activities including leadership support, training, advocacy, undertaking research, monitoring standards, facilitating partnerships, and supporting innovation.

PLIF aims to fund innovative projects that support the Strategic Aims of, [Forward: Scotland’s Public Library Strategy 2021-25](https://scottishlibraries.org/advice-guidance/national-strategies/forward-scotlands-public-library-strategy/).

### 2 Priorities for Grant Awards

PLIF projects need to have a direct link to one or more of the strategic aims of [Forward: Scotland’s Public Library Strategy 2021-2025.](https://scottishlibraries.org/advice-guidance/national-strategies/forward-scotlands-public-library-strategy/) This year, priority will be given to projects which also support the following:

* Bridging the digital divide
* Tackling the cost-of-living crisis (economic wellbeing)
* Closing the attainment gap
* Sustainability

Applications will be considered for a range of activities including research, impact analysis, service development, project specific staff training, partnership working, the creation of new resources or services, case studies, preparation of good practice guides, or promotion of standards.

However, please note projects similar to those which have been funded in the past are unlikely to be successful.

### 3 Eligibility for Grant Awards

Projects for which a grant award is sought will be of demonstrable value and have an impact on the development of library and information services in Scotland. Public libraries may also submit bids in partnership with other organisations which are not in SLIC membership.

Library services and any partners will observe the Scottish Government’s [**F**](https://www.gov.scot/publications/fair-work-first-guidance-2/pages/9/)**air Work First scheme. Please refer to the Application Guidance for more information.**

### 4 Timetable for applications

Applications will be accepted from **Wednesday 6th September 2023 and close 12 noon on Wednesday 11th October 2023.**

**Please note** up to two applications per library service can be submitted.

* SLIC welcomes and appreciates applications submitted earlier than the closing date. Applications submitted after the closing date will not be considered.
* All applications are required to be submitted by the closing date using the online application form and sent by the Head of Library Service or equivalent.
* If you have any issue with submitting the form, please contact us at [info@scottishlibraries.org](mailto:info@scottishlibraries.org)

### 5 Level of Grant Awards

There is no minimum or maximum amount for applications. Grant awards are normally for 12 months.

### 6 Assessment Process

Applications are assessed by the SLIC Funding Sub-Committee. The Sub-Committee's decision is final.

The SLIC Funding Sub-Committee may take into consideration previous PLIF funding awards when making their final decision.

SLIC will notify all applicants of decisions in due course.

### 7 Offer of Grant Award

Where an award has been approved, a formal offer will be made to the applicant stating the amount of the award and any conditions attached to it.

* Successful applicants are required to sign a **Conditions of Grant Form**. Formal acceptance of the award is required in writing within one week of receipt, providing details of the organisational bank account to allow funds to be transferred.
* If formal acceptance of the offer is not received within one week, the offer may be withdrawn.
* The schedule of payments will be set out in the **Letter of Award**. They will be made in two stages: 70% on acceptance of the award, and 30% on acceptance by SLIC of the **Interim Report**. Payment is conditional upon satisfactory progress of milestones and deliverables.
* All projects are required to nominate a **Project Leader** who will be in overall control of the project and act as main contact with SLIC.
* The Project Leader will submit an **Interim Report** to the CEO of SLIC confirming satisfactory progress, as well as a **Final Report** and **Financial Report**, listing all relevant expenditure with receipts. Where proof of expenditure is not submitted, the item may be deducted from the claim.
* All reports are required to be submitted by the dates outlined in the letter of award. Non-compliance with these dates may affect future award decisions.
* Any photographs or videos highlighting your project are welcomed as part of your report submission.

### 8 Help with your application

If you have any questions about the process or wish to discuss your PLIF project in advance of submission, please contact us at [info@scottishlibraries.org](mailto:info@scottishlibraries.org)

**Please note:**

* The award cannot not be used for any purpose other than that stated in the grant award notification letter, unless SLIC agrees to a variance in the project.
* SLIC support is required to be acknowledged in any publicity or promotional material involved in the project with the following statement, **“This project is supported by the Scottish Government Public Library Improvement Fund which is administered through SLIC”.** The SLIC logo can be supplied for this purpose.
* Summary information on projects will be added to a SLIC project database to be made available on the SLIC website, and final reports may also be published on the SLIC website.
* SLIC is required to provide the Scottish Government with an evaluation of the funded projects.

## Contact Details

For further information, please contact:

[info@scottishlibraries.org](mailto:info@scottishlibraries.org)