



**SPORT
ENGLAND**



COMMUNITY ASSET FUND GUIDE

JANUARY 2017



CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION TO OUR COMMUNITY ASSET FUND	4
WHY WE ARE DOING THINGS DIFFERENTLY	6
HOW WE ARE DOING THINGS DIFFERENTLY	8
WHAT WE WILL FUND	10
WHO WE WANT TO WORK WITH	12
WE CAN'T FUND EVERYTHING	14
HOW YOU CAN APPLY	16
HOW WE WILL MAKE DECISIONS	18
WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU'RE SUCCESSFUL	20
NEXT STEPS	22

INTRODUCTION TO OUR COMMUNITY ASSET FUND

THE PLACES WHERE PEOPLE PLAY SPORT AND GET ACTIVE REALLY MATTER

Whether it's the park you run through, the hall you do classes in or the pitch you play on, welcoming and accessible spaces have a big impact on a person's experience – and likelihood of coming back.

Traditional sports facilities where people enjoy physical activity are an important part of this, but it can be much wider too. It doesn't have to be a traditional space – or a traditional sport.

Our Community Asset Fund is a programme dedicated to enhancing the spaces in your local community that give people the opportunity to be active.

There are a number of things we want to achieve with this funding, but most importantly we want to help local organisations to create quality and financially sustainable facilities that benefit their community for years to come – which may mean providing help to get things up and running too.

While we will continue to invest in projects that retain people in sport and increase the number who are regularly taking part, we're also looking to invest in projects that look beyond this to how sport and physical activity can – and does – change lives and becomes a force for social good.

If you think the Community Asset Fund might be for you, this guide will tell you a bit more about the programme, including:

- Why and how we're doing things differently
- What we can fund
- Who we can work with
- How you can apply.

Our accompanying resource [Developing your idea](#) also has useful guidance and case studies that will help you develop your project or idea.

KEY FACTS

- **Fund:** Community Asset Fund
- **What we want to achieve from this investment:**
 - Improve and protect existing sports facilities that support the needs of local communities
 - Invest in new and different places that meet the needs of local communities, which include our target audiences
 - Ensure our capital investment reaches organisations who have not accessed our funding before
 - Create a more resilient, sustainable, less grant dependent sport sector
- **Who we want to work with:** We welcome applications from all organisations
- **Value:** £15 million per annum
- **Opening:** 30 January 2017
- **Anticipated size of bids:** £1,000 to £150,000
- **Timeframe:** No deadline
- **Awards made from:** February 2017.

WHY WE ARE DOING THINGS DIFFERENTLY

OUR NEW COMMUNITY ASSET FUND MARKS A CHANGE FROM THE WAY WE'VE PREVIOUSLY INVESTED IN FACILITIES FOR SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

The change in approach is in response to our new strategy *Towards an Active Nation* and our contribution to delivering the five outcomes:

- Physical wellbeing
- Mental wellbeing
- Individual development
- Social and community development
- Economic development

We've looked critically at what we do and importantly asked for feedback from those that have previously applied for funding – as well as organisations we've never worked with before.

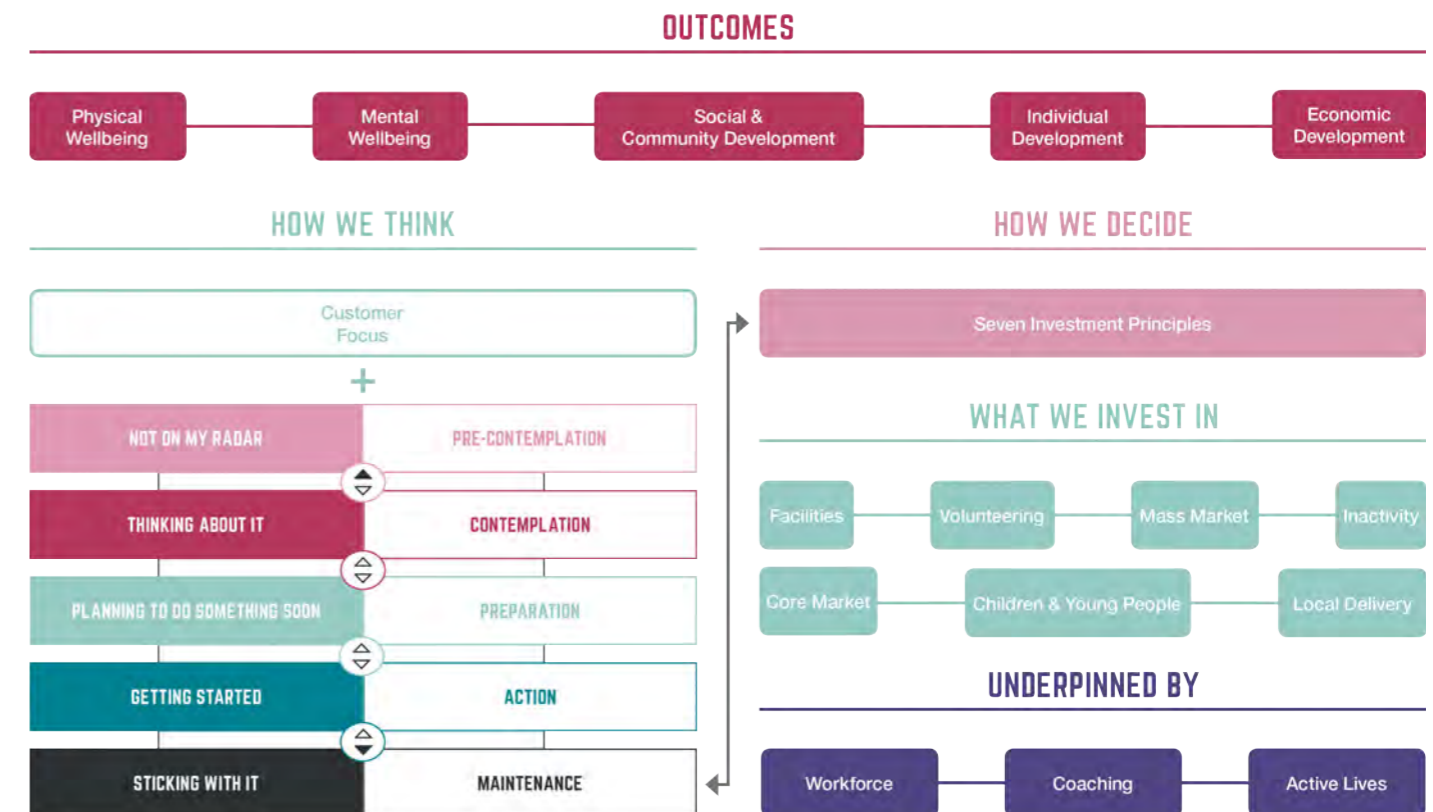
The programme will build on the experience we've gained from the delivery of our previous funding programmes: Inspired Facilities and Protecting Playing Fields.

Through our Community Asset Fund, we want to continue to invest in the local infrastructure that gives people the opportunity to get active. But we need to do more. For example we need to consider how to:

- > Work with new and different organisations that can reach new and different audiences – particularly hard to reach groups and communities
- > Develop new ideas that really respond to customer needs in their local communities
- > Reduce grant dependency across the sector
- > Create more resilient and sustainable places to be active

That means we need to spend more time working with projects and organisations and we need to maximise the impact and reach of our resources.

SPORT ENGLAND STRATEGY: TOWARDS AN ACTIVE NATION



HOW WE ARE DOING THINGS DIFFERENTLY

WE WANT OUR COMMUNITY ASSET FUND TO HAVE THE MAXIMUM IMPACT ON OUR OUTCOMES AND DELIVER A BETTER EXPERIENCE FOR THE ORGANISATION APPLYING – NO MATTER WHAT THE OUTCOME

To achieve this, we've taken a radically different approach to how we run the programme.

OUR NEW APPROACH

- **Open all the time.** There will be no deadlines, so you can apply whenever your project or idea is ready
- **Regular and quick decision-making.** We know that when an application is made to us, the sooner you can have a decision the better. We will commit to making regular decisions as soon as possible on all applications
- **Short and simple application.** We want to keep the information you have to provide in the first instance to a minimum. We don't want you to spend a lot of time or incur costs if we can't support you – but we also want to know enough to make a good decision
- **No supporting information initially.** We will only ask for supporting information when we have made an in-principle decision after the assessment of your application. We don't want to waste your time asking for information that we only need if we are able to offer you funding
- **It's just about your project.** The information we will ask for is the information you know – the details of your organisation, your project and the community and people you work with. We don't expect you to interpret our strategy
- **More flexibility.** We want to be able to treat each project and organisation on an individual basis and ensure information we request or the approach we take is reasonable and proportionate. This might mean agreeing timeframes, supporting information or offering additional support
- **More developmental.** We want to work with you and can add value beyond any grant funding. For the projects we work with, depending on the nature of what you want to do, we will support and help you where we can
- **Continuous improvement.** We want to continuously learn about how our investment makes a difference while providing the best experience for you, so we'll seek your feedback and make changes as appropriate.



WHAT WE WILL FUND

WE WANT TO TALK TO AND HEAR FROM LOTS OF DIFFERENT ORGANISATIONS WITH GREAT IDEAS TO CREATE, OR IMPROVE, OPPORTUNITIES TO PLAY SPORT AND GET PHYSICALLY ACTIVE

We know every project will be different as every community is different. It doesn't have to be a traditional space – or a traditional sport. For instance, there are thousands of outdoor spaces up and down the country – like canal towpaths, woodlands and open spaces – all with potential to be used and enjoyed as part of an active lifestyle.

Any organisation with a great idea can apply for our support. You might be:

- > **Looking to take over an underused sports facility or one under threat of closure.** You might need support to bring a building back into use or need improvements to a recreational space
- > **Wanting to expand or improve the sporting experience you offer your customers.** You could be looking to improve a changing room or installing new toilets, heating system or social space

> **Responding to an emergency or unexpected event that is stopping people from being active.** You might need to fix a roof that's been damaged or repair an area after flood damage

> **Or simply have a great idea for a project.** You might want to make improvements to a building or open space that's clearly needed in the local community.

If your project is still at an early stage and you're not completely sure what you want, please read our accompanying resource [Developing your idea](#), which has useful tips and case studies about projects that have been delivered. Get in touch either by email funding@sportengland.org or give us a call on 03458 508 508.

HOW MUCH YOU CAN APPLY FOR

We'll review every project individually but it is up to you and your organisation to shape your project and the funding request that you make to us. Based on our experience, we know that small- and medium-scale awards can make a significant difference to an organisation and the community it serves. Therefore we expect our typical awards to be either:

Small-scale investments typically ranging from £1,000 to £15,000

These will address emergency works due to something like storm or flood damage, or something totally unexpected that is stopping people from being able to stay active right now.

Medium-scale investments typically ranging from between £15,000 to £50,000

These will address more substantial changes. This might be an upgrade to an existing facility or developing a new space in the community.

By exception, we will consider larger investments ranging from £50,000 to £150,000. This will be when organisations can demonstrate a considerable impact or are targeting under-represented groups. They are also unlikely to have received funding from Sport England previously.

THINGS WE CAN'T FUND

There are some things that we're not able to fund through this programme. Below is a list of some of the typical ones we get asked about – but if you're not sure please call us or [email](#).

- Revenue-only projects
- Routine maintenance and repairs resulting from wear and tear
- Children's playgrounds and play equipment
- Projects intended for private gain
- Retrospective funding (this is paying for works you have already completed)
- Projects we've funded in the past
- Football-only projects
- Small-scale cricket projects

SMALL-SCALE CRICKET PROJECTS

Sport England directly funds the English Cricket Board (ECB) and their [Get the Game On](#) programme, which provides small-scale capital funding to cricket clubs across the country.

ECB is open for small grants applications annually between November and January. Themes for the ECB small grants funding are:

- Pitch covers
- Kitchen and social area
- Energy/water consumption
- Flood defence measures

If you have a small scale project which is not covered by the themes listed above, it is eligible for Sport England Community Asset Fund.

FOOTBALL-ONLY PROJECTS

Sport England directly funds the [Football Foundation](#), which provides funding to a range of football projects. If you have a football-only project, we suggest you contact your [FA County Association](#) for more information.

We can fund multi-sport projects that include football – but football must not be the majority activity that is being funded. Please see further information on page 15.

WHO WE WANT TO WORK WITH

ANY ORGANISATION WITH A GREAT IDEA CAN APPLY FOR OUR SUPPORT. PUT SIMPLY, IT'S WHAT YOU CAN DO THAT COUNTS, NOT WHO YOU ARE

The Government's strategy for sport [Sporting Future](#) sets out that any decision on organisations that receive public funding should be based on what it can contribute to its five outcomes, as set out on page 6.

You may be a community organisation or club that currently:

- > Owns or leases existing local facilities that offer the community the chance to play sport and be active
- > Is considering taking over an existing local facility that might not be a traditional space for sport
- > Haven't accessed our funding before but that want to create great spaces for people to be active.

We want to work with sports clubs and community groups that really respond to the people in their local community. We're looking to work with different groups and organisations that ensure everyone has the opportunity to choose to take part in sport and physical activity as part of their lives.

Organisations we offer funding to will be committed to provide a sustainable place to be active in their community for the long term.

We especially want to help organisations who have not received a lottery award greater than £10,000

before. For example, the programme will support groups to get a foot on the ladder and become a formal organisation, such as a 'Friends of' group.

WE WON'T RULE OUT A GOOD PROJECT IF THERE ARE PRACTICAL AREAS THAT CAN BE SOLVED WITH SOME ADVICE OR SUPPORT.

If you are successful and receive investment through our Community Asset Fund, you will need to be eligible to receive public funding – but we won't start with eligibility. We won't rule out a good project if there are practical areas that can be solved with some advice or support.

WHAT WE MEAN BY ELIGIBILITY

Sport England has certain eligibility criteria that ensures public funding is properly managed. In the past, we have automatically rejected applications due to eligibility and may have not funded organisations that need our support.

With the Community Asset Fund, the onus is on what you can do. We know most organisations will be eligible but we also know some will not be. This won't be a problem in the first instance.

Only by the time an award is made will an organisation need to demonstrate they are eligible. This means they will need to meet the appropriate tier of our [Code for Sports Governance](#) and provide the relevant evidence.

One element we take very seriously is the protection of children, young people and adults at risk. Organisations we fund must have up to date, fit for purpose, safeguarding policies and practices in place. Simple, practical and independent advice on safeguarding is available from the [Child Protection in Sport Unit's website](#).

YOUR SPACE OR FACILITY

Our Community Asset Fund is a facility based development programme – so it's focused around a specific place or space. Appropriate ownership of

the facility or space is an eligibility requirement.

If you are planning to change a space, for example, adding signage or a more substantial redevelopment of a building, it is likely you will need permission to make any changes legal. As well as being assured of permission, we need to ensure a long term benefit for our investment that is proportionate to the investment we're making. Applicants will, therefore, need to own the space or facility through freehold or leasehold for a minimum period of time.

If you are working towards having appropriate ownership, please apply and tell us where you're up to.

If you don't own the facility or space but want to discuss your situation, please give us a call on 03458 508 508 or email: funding@sportengland.org

STATUTORY BODIES AND ALL EDUCATION ESTABLISHMENTS

Statutory bodies like local authorities and all education establishments provide important community sports facilities at a local level. Our Community Asset Fund is open to applications from all bodies but an annual budget will be ring-fenced for these organisations. Although we will always look objectively at each project, statutory bodies and education establishments are different to community organisations and so we will reflect that when considering your application.

Statutory bodies and education establishments will specifically need to:

- Provide a minimum of pound-for-pound partnership funding
- Demonstrate the strategic need for their project proportionate to the scale of investment requested
- Limit requests to a maximum of £150,000 within any 12 month period

Please note; we understand Statutory bodies and education establishments are more likely to need to access to higher levels of investment of up to £150,000 however, awards over £100,000 will be the exception rather than the norm.

For local authorities considering Community Asset Transfer or applications across multiple sites, we strongly recommend contacting us via [email](#) or phone 03458 508 508 to discuss any queries.

WE CAN'T FUND EVERYTHING

ONE OF THE KEY OBJECTIVES OF OUR COMMUNITY ASSET FUND IS TO HELP CREATE A MORE SUSTAINABLE AND LESS GRANT-DEPENDANT SECTOR FOR COMMUNITY SPORT

We know from experience that all our capital funding programmes are oversubscribed, which means we have to make some really tough choices.

Every project we see is developed in good faith, backed by a group of enthusiastic people that have identified a need in their community. Unfortunately we can't fund every project, but we would like to fund as many as we can. We want our investment to have the greatest impact, which means prioritising those projects and places that most need our support. We'll work hard with the organisations we support – but it also means we're keen to see organisations consider and seek other funding options first.

We call this partnership funding as it can involve getting local partners onside to support a project financially and it makes the case for investment stronger. While we would prefer all projects to have some partnership funding or value in kind, it isn't a requirement. We recognise that for some it may not be possible to secure it. If you are unable to do so, we will not rule out your application.

Sport England is, however, a funder of last resort, so the more you can contribute or plan to contribute to your project, the better.

HOW CAN WE HELP OURSELVES

There are many ways to raise funding for your organisation now. From cake sales to boot fairs and crowdfunding to social sector investment, fundraising could be a good way to get started. Examples of raising finance include:

- Donations and fundraising
- Crowdfunding
- Gift Aid
- Loans
- Community Shares
- Social Investment Tax reliefs (SITR)
- Social investment

We've developed advice covering a range of potential funding sources available on our [website](#). Our [Developing your idea](#) resource also contains a case study which outlines how a project generated alternative sources of funding.

IT'S IMPORTANT WHEN YOU CONSIDER MAKING AN APPLICATION FOR INVESTMENT THAT YOU HAVE TRIED TO SECURE SOME LOCAL FUNDS OR FINANCE FIRST.

WHAT ABOUT FUNDING FROM OTHER SPORT ORGANISATIONS?

Other sports organisations such as national governing bodies (NGBs) can be a source of partnership funding. There are occasions where funding may have originated from Sport England and, in this situation, partnership funding would not be valid. But we can provide advice on this as can the NGB in question.

FROM CAKE SALES TO BOOT FAIRS AND CROWDFUNDING TO SOCIAL SECTOR INVESTMENT, FUNDRAISING COULD BE A GOOD WAY TO GET STARTED.

FOOTBALL FOUNDATION FUNDING

As stated earlier, though football-only projects are not eligible, multi-sport projects that include football can be funded. This may lead to situations where the Football Foundation funding is offered as part of the total project cost. Given Sport England's relationship with the Football Foundation, this is allowed but only when at least one other significant partner is investing a third or more of the funding.

In this circumstance, funding from the Football Foundation would be used towards the football element of the project and Sport England's investment would be used towards facilities dedicated to the other sport and community activities being offered. For example, a two team changing pavilion with social/coach education space which is further enhanced by additional community facilities. These facilities would provide dedicated activity space for at least one other sport or activity and/or office/meeting room space for other community organisations, enabling it to act as a hub for the local community.

HOW YOU CAN APPLY

YOU CAN APPLY TO OUR COMMUNITY ASSET FUND THROUGH A SIMPLE ONLINE APPLICATION FORM FROM 30 JANUARY 2017

We have made some big changes to improve the experience when applying to our Community Asset Fund programme. These changes are in response to feedback we received from those that have previously applied for funding and from speaking to organisations we've never worked with before.

We want the process to be as easy as possible. Every organisation that applies to our Community Asset Fund will complete a single online application form. This provides us with the basic information we need about your project, your organisation and the people who will benefit.

The application form will be:

- > **Just about your project.** The information we will ask for is the information you know – the details of your organisation, your project and the people you work with
- > **Short and simple.** The application form will be kept to the minimum we need to make a decision on your application
- > **Requires no supporting information initially.** We'll only ask for supporting information when we have made an in-principle decision after the assessment of your application. We don't want to waste your time asking for information that we only need if we are able to offer you an award.

We will assess all applications as they come in on a rolling basis. A member of our dedicated grants team will review your submission to understand your project. We'll also consider other information about your area and any insight we have on the people you are working with.

If the decision is positive then the next steps will be to supply reasonable and proportionate information. Find out more on page 18 of this guide.

We aren't able to fund every project – but we will provide feedback where possible. If we cannot support your project, we will explain why and offer any relevant support and advice available.



HOW WE WILL MAKE DECISIONS

**WE THINK IT IS OUR JOB TO UNDERSTAND YOUR PROJECT AND CONSIDER
HOW IT CAN CONTRIBUTE TO OUR STRATEGY**

For you, it should just be about your organisation, the people you are working with and what you want to do.

We don't want you to worry about or waste time interpreting our strategy. We're just going to ask you the questions that will help us understand your situation and allow us to make a good decision. We will ask you about:

- > Your organisation – who you are, what you do
- > What your project is – what you want to do
- > Where it is – where the facility or space is
- > Why your project is needed – what's the rationale
- > Who will benefit – so who are the people and customers
- > How you will make it happen
- > How much money do you have or need to make it happen

We will then consider your application and the extent to which it delivers against one or more of the five outcomes set out in the government's strategy for sport [Sporting Future](#).

Taking the lead from the Government's strategy, we will then draw on the seven investment principles we outlined in our strategy [Towards an Active Nation](#) to make a decision.

SEVEN INVESTMENT PRINCIPLES:

- A clear line of sight to the objectives in *Sporting Future*
- Ensure investment benefits underrepresented groups
- Use behaviour change to make investment choices
- Get maximum value from all our resources, not just our cash
- Strike a balance between 'bankers' and 'innovators'
- Review our investment portfolio regularly and remove funding if an investment is failing and cannot be rescued
- Encouraging increased efficiency.

There are no additional criteria, so it really is just about you telling us about your project – which is the information you know best.



WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU'RE SUCCESSFUL

APPLYING FOR OUR COMMUNITY ASSET FUND WILL BE A BESPOKE EXPERIENCE CENTRED ON YOUR PROJECT AND YOUR CIRCUMSTANCES

After your submission, we will give you a decision as soon as possible. If this decision is positive, then the next steps will be reasonable, proportionate and based on various factors, including:

- The nature of your project
- The amount of money you've requested
- The context of your request
- Who your project will benefit.

If you have asked for a small-scale investment in response to an emergency or unexpected event, we know time is of the essence. If we can support you, we will look to make a quick award.

If you have asked for a medium-scale investment, we will work with you to agree on any further information required. This might be specific information about your organisation, the nature of the works you want to undertake, the people who will benefit or how you plan to operate in the future.

As well as bespoke requirements, there is also some standard information we will require.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

We'll ensure that there is a clear line of sight between the investments we make and the contribution they make to our overarching outcomes, as set out in our strategy [Towards an Active Nation](#).

All our investment is directed towards more people from every background being able to regularly and meaningfully take part in sport and physical activity. We'll therefore evaluate and continue to monitor our investments so that we understand the impact it is having in the local community.

Sports clubs and community groups that receive funding from us will play an important part in helping us by sharing key information. We will look to minimise any reporting requirements by taking a proportionate approach related to the scale and type of projects that are funded.

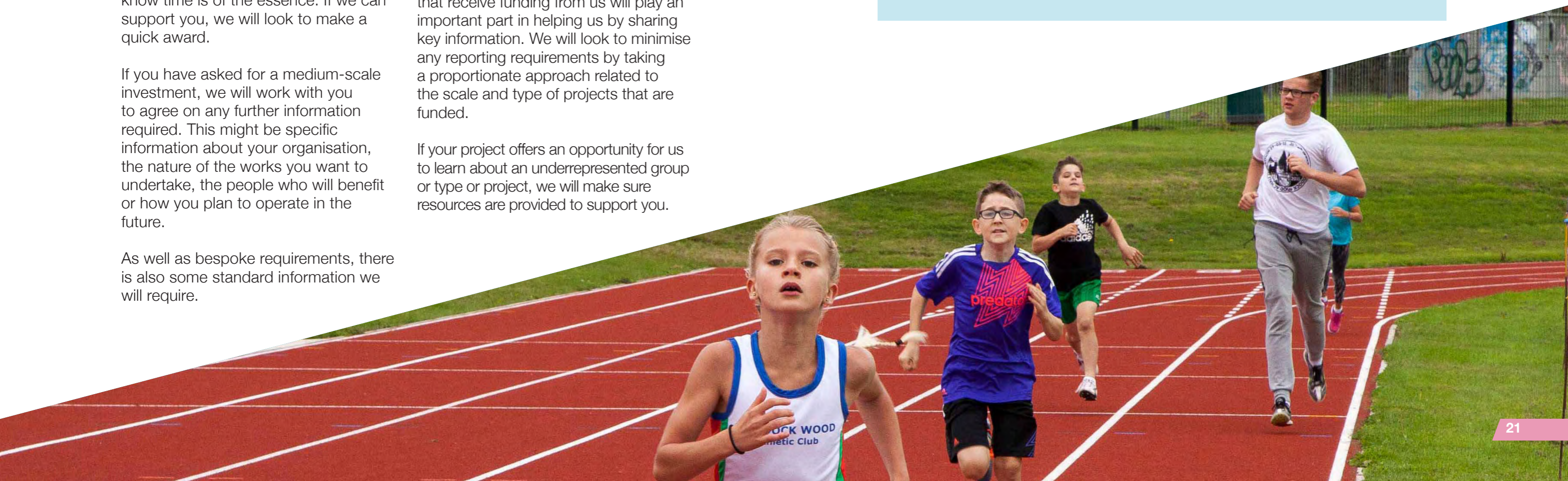
If your project offers an opportunity for us to learn about an underrepresented group or type or project, we will make sure resources are provided to support you.

INFORMATION YOU WILL NEED TO PROVIDE

The standard information we require is based on the minimum we would need to make an award and report good management of public funds.

- Evidence of your organisations governance arrangements
- Evidence of financial management
- Evidence of an organisational bank account
- Evidence of ownership of facility or space
- Evidence of appropriate Child Protection and Adults at risk policy and procedures

Please note: For statutory bodies requirements are reduced due to the nature of your organisation.



NEXT STEPS

OUR COMMUNITY ASSET FUND WILL BE OPEN TO APPLICATIONS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

Having read this guide and our supporting resource [Developing your idea](#), we hope you now have a good understanding of the Community Asset Fund and what we are trying to achieve from the programme.

We strongly recommend that you don't rush making an application as we know projects and ideas take time to develop – so come to us when it works for you.

This is not a 'dash for cash' – we will remain open throughout the year.

Our *Developing your idea* resource provides useful tips and things to think about for if you're developing a project. It's worth taking a few minutes to read as there might be some things you can adopt to develop your thinking.

You can also give us a call if you'd like to discuss your idea. We can't offer any advice on the success of your application but we can chat it through and point you in the direction of available resources which might help.

If you'd like to get in touch, please do not hesitate either via [email](#) or call us on our helpline number: 03458 508 508.





Sport England
21 Bloomsbury Street
London WC1B 3HF

sportengland.org

January 2017