

Kingston First Town Centre Community Fund

Application Guidelines

About the fund

Kingston First, the town centre's Business Improvement District (BID), recognises the important role local and community organisations play in creating a vibrant town centre.

We established the Kingston First Town Centre Community Fund to encourage and support ideas and projects that have a positive impact on the town centre, support local businesses and promote positive community engagement.

This year is a pilot which will open from the end of October 2023 to 12th January 2024. Following evaluation, including feedback from applicants, we hope to continue to provide funding and support to local community and voluntary organisations in future years.

The fund for this year consists of £15,000 and an organisation can bid for all, or some of, this amount as long as they can also outline how they meet the criteria for applicants.

We want to help local and community focused organisations develop and grow with a fund primarily for not for profit, charity or voluntary organisations and we will be as flexible as we can be to accommodate different needs. We will offer successful applicants access to our training and learning opportunities until the end of 2024 and support with promoting and marketing the project.

To apply we ask you to complete an application form by 12/01/2024 demonstrating how you meet the criteria. In a nutshell we're open to projects and activities that can be delivered in the town centre by the end of 2024 that encourage people to visit the town and raise the profile of Kingston. This could be an event, a trail, artwork, performances, a service or operational support or something else. We welcome diverse and creative ideas and are happy to have an informal conversation with you before you apply.

About Kingston First

Kingston First Business Improvement District is a not-for-profit organisation, funded by and representing businesses in Kingston Town Centre, dedicated to creating a town where businesses can thrive and people want to be. We are democratically elected every 5 years, and have a Board, comprised of representatives from different sectors in London.

We listen to and work in partnership with Kingston's businesses

- Representing them at a local and national level, and providing services which save them money and give them insight into the town centre
- Working to create an attractive and welcoming town centre through events and investment and improvements to public spaces
- Managing a strong consumer facing brand - Kingston Upon Thames - that positions Kingston as a destination and promotes local businesses and what's on offer in the town centre

What you can expect from us

- Ongoing support from the Kingston First team throughout the project lifecycle
- Access to Kingston First training and learning opportunities, and networking events
- Online, social media and PR promotion for your project through Kingston First's consumer marketing channels (Website, @InKingston social media channels, newsletter & media networks).

What we expect from you

- Ongoing communication throughout the project lifecycle should you be successful
- To acknowledge Kingston First as partners in project communications
- To provide a full and transparent evaluation of the project upon completion
- To be willing to be part of any marketing, PR and promotional opportunities to promote the project

What we won't fund?

- Projects run for solely for commercial benefit
- Projects that have a religious or political focus (however this does not necessarily stop religious/political organisations applying)
- Ongoing projects and associated organisational costs (however if it is an annual event/project run by the organisation, this is fine)
- Projects that don't take place or have primary impact in the town centre (roughly defined [here](#))

The application process and timings

To apply for the fund, you will need to fill in the application form to the best of your knowledge. Each section will contain explanations of exactly what we need you to address for that section.

Applications open on 30/10/23 and will close on 12/01/24. Please email your completed application form to funding@kingstonfirst.co.uk.

We will assess all applications and shortlist applicants by 05/02/24. We will inform all applicants of the outcome at this stage.

All shortlisted applicants will be invited to an interview w/c 26/02/24 . The committee will then make their decision and announce the outcome on 01/03/24.

If you have any questions regarding the application process, the fund, or whether you are eligible please get in touch with us. We are also happy to have an informal conversation ahead of any application should you wish. You can contact us at funding@kingstonfirst.co.uk or 020 8547 1221.

We will also be happy to make accommodations or provide the application in an alternative format where we can.

We are happy to take applications from those under 18, but this must be supported by a guardian or organisation who will be responsible for receiving the funds on behalf of the applicant.

How we will assess applications

We accept applicants from all types of groups and for all types of projects. We seek to assess these in a fair and transparent manner.

All applications will be assessed on specific criteria by the fund committee, using a scoring methodology. These are detailed below.

This will be used to shortlist applicants.

Criteria

You will be scored on the below criteria, and each section has been assigned a weighting (shown in brackets).

Criteria		Weighting
1. Project Goals	a) Have a positive impact on the town centre	20%
	b) Support local businesses	20%
	c) Promote positive community engagement	20%
	Total	60%
2. The project will take place in 2024, with funds being allocated before then (i.e by 30th March 2024). Please provide a high level delivery plan of how this will be met.		20%
3. You must demonstrate that you have the capacity and resources to deliver the project effectively		20%

The committee

The committee is made up of Kingston First team members, as well as a member of the Kingston First board of directors and a representative from the Kingston business community.