

Application for Funding 2026-27 – Guidance Notes

Overview

Please complete the application form in full and as accurately as possible. The inclusion of additional supporting documentation, such as a business or project plan, stakeholder feedback or inspection reports are required to support your application.


A full breakdown of costs will be required to accompany this application (Section 7: Expenditure Template). You may be contacted to supply additional information following completion of the application form.

Information supplied on this form will be used to check your application's eligibility for funding against local and national policy and existing cost models to achieve value for money. Information supplied will not be used for any other purpose and will not be shared with any third party. Details of our eligibility criteria are shown in these guidance notes.

Here are some frequently asked questions which will assist you in deciding on whether to apply, and how to complete this application.

Why these services are needed.

Local Authorities have a duty to provide Short Breaks. The following document explains the responsibilities that Suffolk County Council has in relation to the Children's Act 2011.

 A copy of Suffolk's Short Break Duty Statement is available on this link <https://www.suffolklocaloffer.org.uk/asset-library/scc-short-break-duty-services-statement.pdf>

Who makes the decisions?

A Grants Panel undertakes decision on the allocation of funding. The Panel consists of key AU stakeholders (for instance; parent/carer reps, Early Years Team, Sensory Team, Adult Community Services). The AU staff members attend the panel to present applications and provide additional information as required. AU team members do not vote as part of the decision-making process.

What is a 'Short Break'?

A Short Break can be anything from a couple of hours taking part in an activity or club to a few days away from home. It can be something that the child or young person does alone, with their parent or carer, or with the rest of their family. It can be anything you can think of – from a sports or arts activity to a residential adventure weekend.

👉 The best way to check your ideas is to have a look at the website: [Activities Unlimited - Suffolk SEND Local Offer \(suffolklocaloffer.org.uk\)](https://activitiesunlimited-suffolk-send-local-offer.suffolklocaloffer.org.uk). We want to ensure that we have a diverse range of activities throughout the county. If you would like to check whether your application may constitute a Short Break activity, you can contact a member of the Activities Unlimited Team on 01473 260026 or at AUpvision@suffolk.gov.uk.

What is the purpose of the funding?

Ideally, grants will be made that will contribute to the provision of regular and sustainable short breaks or to provide training and skills development to a service's workforce. This is known as an Investment Grant.

It is not intended to purchase a service in its entirety, unless there is a clear strategic aim that ensures the long-term financial sustainability of the project. This may be considered an 'Innovation Grant', although purchasing a service would typically fall under procurement and be subject to relevant procurement regulations. Therefore, applications should generally seek a contribution to costs rather than full funding.

We would expect applications to make provision for workforce development relevant to the Short Break service they are providing. Applications for services such as play schemes and holiday clubs should consider their costs for the provision of externally sourced activities. We would also expect providers of services to undertake their own marketing exercises in conjunction with Activities Unlimited and other Suffolk County Council departments.

Pricing and Income

We would expect there to be a realistic charge made to customers to access Short Breaks (i.e. a charge that is comparable to the fee for a non-disabled child to access an activity or Short Break). Therefore, applications for funding should reflect the income generated by customer admission fees. We would also expect pricing structures to reflect the current commercial trends for comparable universal services. The Panel may insist on a minimum pricing policy, they will then deduct the expected income from the total amount awarded. For some providers a tiered pricing structure is relevant, this information should be detailed on your application, in the expenditure template.

What criteria will the funding applications be checked against?

Cost Comparison: In Section 7 of the Application Form (page 7), you are asked to provide a detailed cost breakdown as to the purpose of the funding. We will review these costs to ensure they represent value for money to both Activities Unlimited and your proposed user groups.

Quality Assurance: Once The Panel has sat, and if you are successful in being awarded a grant, you will be required to complete and submit a Suffolk County Council Safeguarding Self-Assessment as part of our due diligence process. Please contact a member of our team to discuss the safeguarding self-assessment if you are unsure of your organisation's compliance.

Operational details: We ask for a detailed description of your proposed service including evidence of need, primary customer groups, implementation planning, sustainability, and continuous quality improvement. We will be reviewing applications to ensure that proposals are based upon evidenced user needs and wishes, and offer safe, high quality service delivery.

Activities Unlimited Service Strategy: Our Service Strategy is a working document based upon stakeholder feedback and performance data sourced from existing grant funded provision. It identifies gaps in service provision and details actions that could be taken to bridge these gaps. The AU Service Strategy recognises the value of specialist services equally to universal, where a need has been identified.

What we won't consider or pay for:

- Activities that are implemented or start before we confirm our grant
- Individuals applying for funding for themselves
- Activities that take place within an existing Short Break provision and therefore do not provide additional Short Breaks – e.g., as part of an educational curriculum or that simply adds activity to an already funded service. This would be deemed as double funding
- Any costs you incur when putting together your application
- Any expenditure incurred or committed before we confirm our grant (including deposits)
- Money that only builds up reserves
- Political or religious activities
- Projects or activities that the state has a legal obligation to provide
- Routine repairs and maintenance
- VAT that you can recover
- Debt repayments or deficit funding
- Equality Act compliance work
- Airfares or overseas expeditions
- Medical research
- Sponsored or fundraising events
- Start-up funding for a project that is unable to start within nine months

Completing the Application Form

Summary Section

This part of the document provides a summary of your proposed project to panel members. We will need to see:

- Locations of the proposed project
- The amount of grant sought/sessions in project/places in total project/how much a session will cost AU
- Proposed Delivery Locations
- Staffing ratios
- Customer demographics – e.g., age-groups, level of needs etc
- A 75-word max. pocket sized pitch to tell a parent what your activity is all about
- How frequently your project will run?
- What type of service will be provided?

Delivery Plan

We have included a Delivery Plan template (page 2) for completion, to provide us with specific details. The delivery plan must be fully completed wherever possible.

- The implementation detailed in your delivery plan will inform the terms of your grant agreement.
- Successful applicants will receive a grant agreement which will stipulate staged funding according to your delivery plan. We need to have a clear understanding of your proposal to maximise your chances of receiving a Grant subsidy.
- If your proposed service has fluctuating delivery hours and/or customer numbers, please can you complete individual Delivery Plans for each variation of your service delivery.
- The location address is required so The Panel can see the cover of services across the county.
- Indicate whether you are able to offer personal care and administer medication. This will be cross-referenced with your registration with relevant regulatory bodies.

Section 1:

Company Details

This section gives us the basic contact details to enable us to communicate effectively with you about your application. It also asks for alternative contact details if someone other than the person completing the form is responsible for the delivery of the service and/or the submission of data returns. The information provided in Section 1 assists us in our due diligence process when assessing applications.

Section 2:

Activity and Service Description

Sections two and three will allow us to accurately compare the application against the AU Strategy.

You will need to detail the range activities you will be providing to children/young people within your service, please describe a typical session available to attendees. Please be as specific as possible when describing the type and content of work you want to carry out. We

may not have any prior knowledge of this work, so please refer to individual activities, staff positions and services.

Demonstrating Need

This section asks how you identified the need for this service and asks for evidence of this - e.g., case studies, statistical research etc.

This section also asks you to describe how you gather, analyse, and use stakeholder feedback to shape and develop your service. Stakeholders are any individual who is affected by your service delivery; this could be children and young people (customers), parents and carers, professionals who access your service (such as Social Workers and other Care or Health Workers) and your funding organisations. In this section, consider and describe what methods you employ to gain feedback. How do you analyse your feedback to identify trends and how do you use this feedback to continuously develop your service?

We also need you to describe your current customer flow through, how waiting lists are managed, and the typical length of time a new client may be waiting for your service.

Sustainability and Development

It is important that you consider sustainability and the development of this service and how you would continue if Activities Unlimited funding ceased.

This section asks you to tell us how you intend to make your organisation more sustainable. We have included bullet point like, customer fees, volunteering, partnership working and the use of non-statutory funding. These are suggested areas within this category. Tell us your organisation own strategy within this area.

Response to Unexpected Business Interruption

This section asks you to describe how you have managed the risks in relation to service delivery disruption. Your answer needs to reflect risk assessments in relation to environmental, service delivery, the person-centred risks and financial and business continuity.

Section Three:

Delivery, Outcomes and Evaluation

Intended Outcomes

Please describe the differences your project will make to children and young people, and their families, as a result of AU funding.

Your outcomes should be:

- **Clear** – avoid overcomplicating them.
- **Measurable** – consider how you will assess the impact. Will it be possible to tell if you've succeeded?
- **Realistic** – ensure your outcomes are achievable. Even small changes in the lives of children and young people can have a significant impact. Also consider whether your outcomes can be achieved within the timeframe of this funding.

Tips for Writing Your Outcomes

- Keep them simple. Aim to write a single statement for each outcome. Avoid combining multiple ideas with words like 'and'.
- Use language that reflects change. Include words such as 'improved', 'reduced', 'increased', 'less', 'strengthened', etc.
- Make sure they are relevant to your project. Clearly show how your outcomes relate to the challenges faced by children and young people with SEND and their families. For example, if participants create something they can keep, or develop skills or understanding through the project, be sure to include that.

Formal and Informal Learning

Please describe any formal and informal learning that children, young people, and their families may gain by attending your project. Think about confidence, independence, social skills, a shared experience, or providing work or volunteering opportunities. In this section you can also tell us about workforce development if part of your funding is sort for specific training resource that will support your SEND customers.

Feedback and Improvement

This section asks you to describe how you gather, analyse, and use stakeholder feedback to shape and develop your service. Stakeholders are any individual who is affected by your service delivery; this could be children and young people (customers), parents and carers, professionals who access your service (such as Social Workers and other Care or Health Workers) and your funding organisations. In this section, consider and describe what methods you employ to gain feedback (e.g., observation, conversations, questionnaires, feedback forms, videos, etc).

Explain how you analyse your feedback to identify trends and how you use the feedback to continuously develop your service. Think about when you gather this information. Your information will be much more useful if you collect it throughout the delivery of your project, rather than just at the end of the grant year.

Customer Focus

You will need to tell us about the levels of need of the children and young people typically accessing this service. This will inform your Grant Agreement if successful and will also provide information expected at the quarterly review panels to ensure providers are delivering to agreed outcomes.

Section Four: **Social Value**

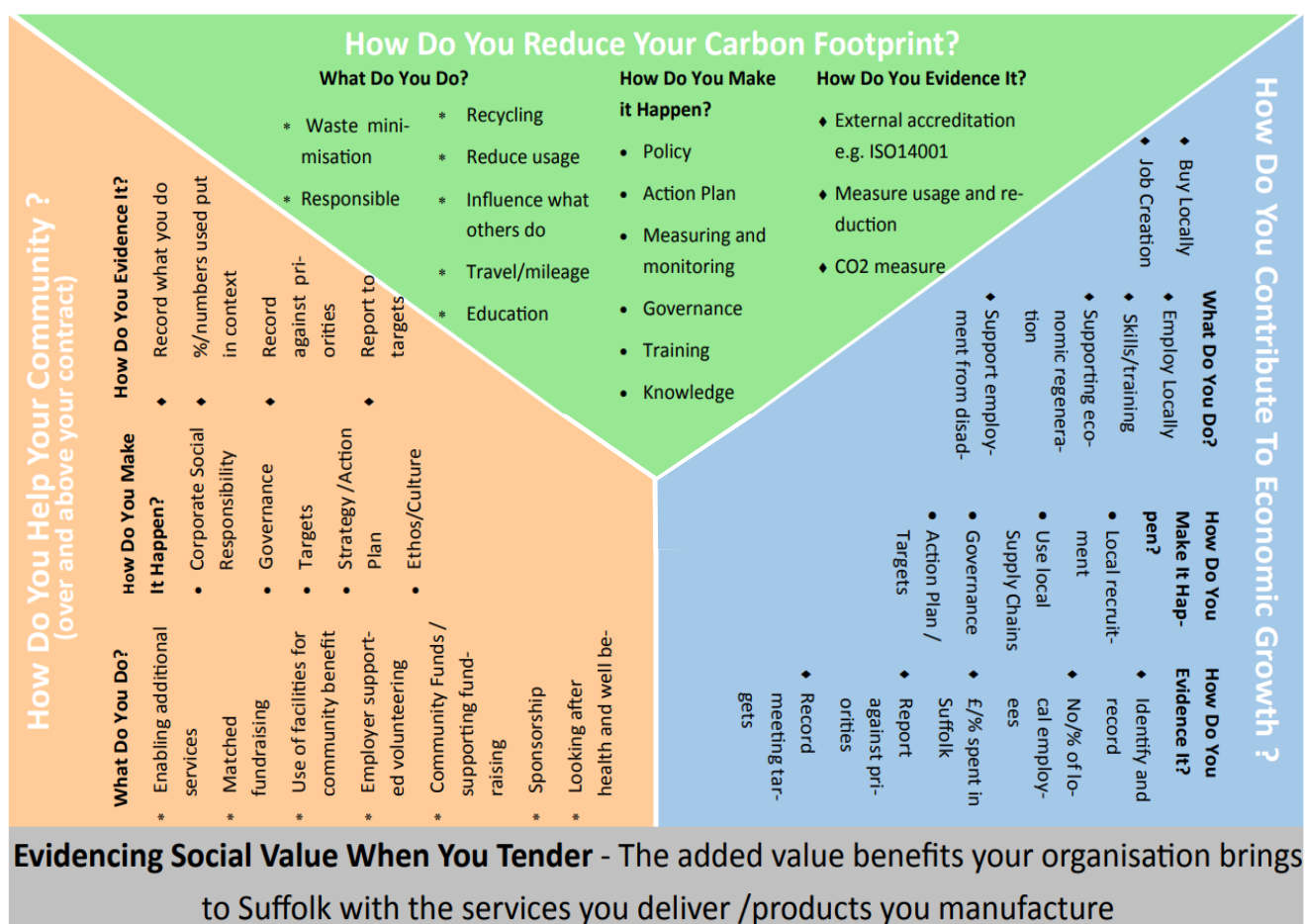
Describe how your organisation contributes to social value, including:

- Reducing environmental impact (e.g., sustainable practices, recycling, energy efficiency)
- Contributing to communities (e.g., inclusion, wellbeing, volunteering, local engagement)
- Strengthening the economy (e.g., job creation, skills development, supporting local suppliers)

For further guidance on how to measure and maximise your social value, please visit:

👉 Suffolk County Council – Social Value Guidance

<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/business/tenders-and-supplying-us/social-value>



Section Five:

Your Organisation

History

Provide a brief history of your organisation and the main services that are delivered in Suffolk.

Please use bullet points. Maximum word count: 100 words.

Voluntary Sector Organisations – Purpose and Legal Objects

For voluntary sector organisations, your governing document should state the exact wording regarding your legal purpose.

Explain how this purpose is best fit to provide a service to disabled children, young people, and their families in Suffolk.

Due Diligence overview

Within this section, we have asked you to detail staff, volunteers, and your governing board.

For you to list any quality Kite marks, or quality assurances held by the organisation. Basic information from your organisations own due diligence processes in relation to safeguarding, first aid, risk assessments, and the promotion of the project.

Successful Grant Applicants will be required to complete a full Suffolk County Council Safeguarding Self-Assessment and Quality Assurance Assessment to a required level prior to a Grant Agreement being awarded.

Section Six:

Existing Funding

Please list existing funding arrangements that you have with any part of Suffolk County Council or any other public-sector body. In the box below, we would like to know what funding you receive from other funding bodies (e.g., charities), to further support this application and if this service is dependent on receiving other matched funding.

Revenue Funding Revenue funding covers every other cost, such as staff, overheads, training, and general running costs.

Should you need any clarification about what may constitute revenue funding, please contact a member of the Activities Unlimited team.

Capital funding represents any physical items purchased or adaptations made to premises over £2,000 and with a shelf-life of 3 years. Requests for Capital Funding cannot be included in this Grant Application.

Section Seven:

Cost Breakdown Template

In this section, you will need to provide a detailed cost breakdown of how you would use the funding if awarded. We have provided a template to detail the full costs of your proposed provision. Please complete this template, using the appropriate budget fields to detail where and how AU Grant Funding will be used. After you have calculated/entered the Total Project Cost, your projected income from customer fees and/or other funding streams must be deducted. Your overall AU Grant Amount Sought is your total project costs, minus your income from customer fees and/or other funding streams.

We also need to be clear about what the real cost per place per child/young person is. Real unit costs are calculated using the Overall AU Grant Amount Sought figure, from your Expenditure Template, and the projected sessions/CYP data on your Delivery Plan.

Unit Cost per Session and per Hour

To calculate the unit cost per session, divide the Overall AU Grant Amount Sought by the total number of proposed sessions and the number of children or young people (CYP) attending each session.

Example:

If you are requesting £1,000 to deliver 5 sessions, each with 10 CYP:

$£1,000 \div 5 \text{ (sessions)} \div 10 \text{ (CYP)} = \textbf{£20 per child, per session}$

To calculate the **cost per hour**, divide the cost per child, per session by the average length of a session in hours.

If each session lasts 2 hours:

$£20 \div 2 = \textbf{£10 per child, per hour}$

Please ensure these cost breakdowns are included in the application summary on the front page.

We're happy to offer advice if needed. You should also reflect any expected income from this project in your cost breakdown.

Section Eight:**Application Submission Instructions**

Please detail any additional documents you are submitting, so we can check to make sure we have everything you have supplied. Please ensure that your application is signed and dated prior to submission. For electronic submission, your email will be proof of signature. Falsified entries in any part of the form which are made to encourage a successful application will result in the funding being withdrawn. **Applications must be submitted in Microsoft Word format.** Successful applicants will receive terms and conditions with their notification. If you have any questions about your application, please contact Activities Unlimited on 01473 260026 or email AUp provision@suffolk.gov.uk.

Finally

To help ensure that you have included everything required, we have compiled the following checklist:

- ☐ Grant Application Form (fully completed including any additional delivery plans)
- ☐ Any separate accompanying evidence that you wish to supply to support your application