



Club Sustainability Fund

Major Capital Investment

Guidance Notes Season 2025/26



Executive Summary

As part of its ongoing commitment to invest significantly in helping member clubs become more sustainable and thrive, Scottish Rugby will continue to deliver the Major Capital Investment, as part of the Club Sustainability Fund (CSF).

Major Capital Investment may be available to clubs with a successful track record of working/investing in their community to increase the quantity and quality of rugby participation amongst boys, girls, men and women. Member clubs can apply for up to £250,000 through the Major Capital Investment programme. This strand seeks to engage club environments proposing projects which offer an enhancement to existing activities which demonstrate exceptional impact on rugby development in their local community.

The CSF programme asks clubs to demonstrate minimum commitment to the total project cost. Clubs should familiarise themselves with this as well as the full requirements and criteria outlined in the document. This should be done in conjunction with a formal meeting with the club's regional team.

The first stage of the Major Capital investment application is an “expression of interest”. If progressed beyond this stage, a second more detailed process will follow to assess applications. Applicants should take time to read over this and the related Application Form before deciding to submit an expression of interest application and should, in the first instance, contact their respective Scottish Rugby Regional Manager, or Regional Lead Manager for guidance, consideration and inputs prior to making an application.



SUMMARY TABLE

WHAT IS THE FUNDING FOR?

Investment projects that have regional and national impacts and benefits for example:

- The provision of new playing, training facilities, or changing accommodation.
- Extension or upgrading of existing playing, training facilities, or changing accommodation
- Meeting rooms with a sport-related and/or community workforce development use

HOW MUCH FUNDING CAN YOU APPLY FOR?

Up to £250,000

HOW MUCH OF AN 'APPLICANT CONTRIBUTION' IS REQUIRED?

Scottish Rugby will contribute up to a maximum of 50% of the total project cost, up to £250,000. The difference between the funding amount provided by Scottish Rugby and the total project costs should be sourced by the applicant. Of the additional funding 10% of the total project costs may be sourced as in-kind contribution e.g. club members providing labour or relevant skilled services free of charge, donation of materials or equipment etc.

WHAT ARE THE TIMELINES?

- Applications Close – 31 January 2026
- Decision on progress to Stage 2 - March 2026
- Feedback window - April 2026
- Stage 2 Presentations – August 2026
- Stage 2 Award Decision – September 2026
- Funds Drawn Down by - September 2031 (or 5-years from Award Offer)

ELIGIBILITY

WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO APPLY FOR FUNDING?

- Rugby clubs who own their facility.
- A rugby club can apply on behalf of a public body such as local authorities where the public body owns and operates the rugby club facility, and a long-term agreement is in place.

Provided that:

a) The organisation's governing documents clearly indicate a primary purpose of providing rugby playing and training opportunities.

Where membership of the applicant organisation is required, membership is open to all sections of the community and the applicant's constitution incorporates an appropriate "Open to all clause".

Example: Membership is open to all and no application for membership will be refused on other than reasonable grounds. There will be no discrimination on grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, political or other opinion.

b) The organisation does not distribute profits to the proprietors, directors and/or shareholders but re-invests all surpluses in the project or facility. For club projects, the applicant's constitution must incorporate an appropriate "Dissolution clause."

Example: If, upon the winding up or dissolution of the club there remains after the satisfaction of all the club's debts and liabilities any property whatsoever, the same shall be given or transferred to some other organisation or organisations having objects (that is, aims and activities) similar to the objects of the club, such organisation or organisations to be determined by the members of the club by resolution passed at a General meeting at or before the time of the dissolution, and in so far as effect cannot be given to such provision then to some charitable objects.

WHAT KIND OF PROJECT IS ELIGIBLE TO APPLY FOR FUNDING?

The following examples illustrate the types of projects which are eligible for funding, however this list is not exhaustive;

- The provision of new playing or training facilities
- The provision of new changing accommodation
- Extension or upgrading of existing playing or training facilities
- Extension or upgrading of existing changing accommodation
- Meeting rooms with a sport-related and/or community workforce development use
- Projects that contain elements of social areas, storage facilities for playing equipment, administration spaces and spectator areas will only be considered for funding if they are part of a bigger project encompassing changing and playing/training facilities.

WHAT KIND OF PROJECT IS NOT ELIGIBLE TO APPLY FOR FUNDING?

- Projects requiring investment of £400k or less including VAT;
- General repairs, renewals, replacement, and maintenance
- Purchases of minibuses or vans
- Bedroom/residential accommodation
- Personal equipment
- General sports equipment not having a life expectancy of more than 7 years
- Buildings with a life expectancy of less than 20 years
- Works undertaken solely to comply with the requirements of the duty to make adjustments under the Equality Act 2010. Please note that Scottish Rugby may be able to provide additional support for projects that improve accessibility through our charity partner Hearts and Balls.
- Feasibility studies and design competitions
- Speculative purchase of land and/or facilities for utilisation/ development in the long-term
- Purchases of land and/or facilities as a means of saving on payment of rent
- Any projects which, in the reasonable opinion of Scottish Rugby, have been started prior to an application being made or a funding approval decision being taken. Letting of a construction contract constitutes a project start.
- Engaging design consultants does not constitute a project start. Funding will not be provided retrospectively.

REQUIREMENTS

WHAT REQUIREMENTS WILL A PROJECT HAVE TO MEET?

- The project must not already be underway.
- Focus on supporting inclusion and diversity.
- Clubs can apply for this fund if they have already applied for one of the funds within the Growing the Game element of the Growth and Participation Fund.
- Project must have regional and national impacts/benefits.
- The project needs to be delivered within a maximum of 5 years from the funding being awarded.
- If successful, this precludes the club from applying for the Club Sustainability Fund, Capital and Revenue streams, for the next 3 financial years.

APPLICATION PROCESS

ASSESSMENT PROCESS AND GUIDANCE

Stage 1

Expression of interest submitted online no later than 31 January 2026 with the supporting documents emailed to rugbydevelopmentadmin@sru.org.uk. Any applications submitted after this time or via any other means, will not be processed. **Club must engage with their Regional Manager prior to submitting.**

Stage 2

If successful from Stage 1, your club will be invited to present the project to our panel in August 2026.

WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL OUTCOMES FOR MY APPLICATION

Stage 1 Adjudication

- Not progressed to Stage 2
- Additional information requested
- Progressed to Stage 2

Stage 2 Adjudication

- Approve an award, either in full, part or conditionally
- Defer a decision until further information is provided by the applicant
- Make no award

PAYMENT OF AWARDS

Payment of successful awards will be made on evidence of expenditure through a staged drawn down process linked to a clear delivery of milestones in the programme plan and agreed as part of the Project Launch Meeting.

WHAT INFORMATION WILL I NEED TO SUBMIT ALONGSIDE MY APPLICATION FORM?

Stage 1

- Memorandum and Articles of Association/ Constitution Evidence of security of tenure of project site
- Owned sites require copy of title deed documentation and solicitor's letter confirming ownership
- Leased sites require copy of fully signed lease, rental or access agreement
- Outline specification of works
- Current bank statements
- High-level detail on how this project fits into your club plans and priorities
- Management or access agreements

Stage 2

- Dimensioned design drawings
- Photos of existing site
- Site plan or location plan
- Planning Permission in Principle or Full Planning Permission and stamped approved drawings
- Quotation or estimates
- Detailed specification of works
- Detailed project / programme plan aligned to your club development and workforce plans and priorities
- A detailed business plan

AREAS OF DEPRIVATION

The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) identifies small area concentrations of multiple deprivation across all of Scotland. An applicant's minimum contribution from those within these areas is reduced to 37.5% of the eligible project cost.

Example: To meet the minimum £400k project value a contribution of £150k would be required.

In order to qualify for the reduced applicant contribution an applicant must be able to demonstrate that at least 70% of the members and/or users are residents of the deprived area.

This rule will also cover applications for facilities that are geographically out with the boundary of a priority area but are within ten minutes walking distance of the area it serves/will serve.

Value Added Tax

If the club is not registered for VAT or is not in a position to have the project zero-rated for VAT purposes (as is sometimes the case for charities approved by HMRC) it is essential that the VAT burden is included in the project costs. Scottish Rugby recommends that each club consults with their local VAT office on the scope to obtain exemption or partial exemption from VAT for the relevant project.

Contracts / Appointments

1. Final project costs (excluding VAT and professional fees) must be the result of competition with a minimum of three tenders/quotations having been sought.
2. It is recommended that each club carry out the work using a suitable version of a Standard Form of Building contract.

They will also need to be satisfied, that the contract price is obtained as the result of competitive tendering in accordance with industry contract tender.

Valuation of Property/Land

Any land being purchased as part of the project, or land gifted to the applicant (where the cost of the land is to be classed as an in-kind contribution) will, where eligible, be subject to a District Valuer (DV) valuation. The latter's decision will be final. The cost of the fees for the DV service can be considered part of the eligible project cost. Should an applicant decide not to progress an application, Scottish Rugby and sportscotland reserve the right to reclaim the full cost of the DV's fee.

LINK TO APPLICATION FORM

APPLICATION FORM

DATA PROTECTION

To the extent that any information provided as part of this application constitutes 'personal data' Scottish Rugby will use and process that information in accordance with its privacy policy, which can be found at scottishrugby.org/privacy-policy. If intending to submit information about an made aware of that fact, the purpose for which it is being provided and has consented to you doing so. The information you provide us will be held on file, which may be paper and/or electronic. We will use this information to process applications and grants, to prepare statistics and to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of grants made.

Additional Terms and Conditions

- i. Scottish Rugby accepts no liability for any consequences, whether direct or indirect, that may arise from the use of a grant, from any requested repayment of a grant, or from any application for a grant being declined.
- ii. In the event that Scottish Rugby is made aware of any inconsistencies or misrepresentations on an application form which lead to the provision of a grant to a club, Scottish Rugby reserves the right to request that such sums are repaid within timescales determined by Scottish Rugby (whether or not the club has already spent such a grant). In the event that such timescales are not met, Scottish Rugby reserves the right to deduct any sums owed from any future funding offered by Scottish Rugby, including without limitation the Club Sustainability Fund.

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