

Tackling Inequalities Fund

Guidance for Partners

January 2021

Purpose of this document

This document provides guidance about the Tackling Inequalities Fund. It brings together and replaces previous guidance that has been issued for Active Partnerships and National Partners. All previous guidance has been archived but can still be accessed through the Teams Channel.

This document should be used with the accompanying FAQ document which is regularly updated.¹

General Principles of the fund

1. The focus of this programme of work is to help reduce the negative impact of COVID-19 and the widening of the inequalities in sport and physical activity.
2. Data from the Sport England commissioned Physical Activity attitudes and behaviours survey during COVID-19 is highlighting widening gaps in the activity levels across our existing priority audiences. Wider sector intelligence clearly shows that some of these priority audiences are suffering more from the impact of the disease than is the case with the wider population. These groups are people from Lower Socio-Economic Groups, Black Asian or Minority Ethnic Communities, Disabled People and People with Long-Term Health Conditions (LTC).

¹ Phase 3 is used to denote the funding phase that opened for applications in December 2020. There have been multiple phases of TIF Funding, but not all partners have received funding in all phases.

3. The insight around these four priority audiences shows that COVID-19 is having a significant impact on their ability to be physically active which has the potential to further widen the gaps that already exist with these groups. They are likely to have higher mortality rates from COVID-19 which can create a culture of fear where people are choosing to stay indoors to keep safe. Additionally, we know there is a greater impact upon their financial status which is the single greatest determinant of activity levels. Other emerging insight that underpins our reasoning for focusing on these audiences includes:
 - a. **People on Low Incomes** - making an existing problem worse. This has the potential to be exacerbated further by a potential slow return to 'normality' and a contraction in the economy and what this will do to the number of people with significantly reduced income or falling into a low-income category.
 - b. **Disabled people or people with long term health conditions** - we know that this group are likely to be self-isolating because of increased risk.
 - c. **Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic Communities** - people from this group are more likely to be working in key roles either through health and social care settings or in wider sector roles, in particular: Black Caribbean men & women, Indian men & women and Black African men.
4. The intersectionality of many of our priority groups exacerbates the issues that they are currently facing. Crossover exists to some of our other priority groups for example, the gender gap continues to widen and is exacerbated further when overlaid with the four target demographic characteristics for this fund. A similar picture exists for those people from older age groups. This emphasises the need for a holistic view and a collaborative approach to this work.
5. National funding programmes such as the Community Emergency Fund and the Return to Play Funds have reached many sector partners who are struggling as a result of the impact of lockdown and COVID-19 so far but we need to get even deeper and further widen the reach to these key under-represented audiences.
6. Additionally, we wish to address the likely reduction in the capacity in more marginalised communities to drive sport and physical activity forwards

through the loss of fragile dependent community bodies, coaches and volunteers. We know that the sector partners we most want to reach with this funding may have one or more of the following characteristics:

- a. Emerging evidence suggests that they may have a lack of capacity and confidence to make applications for grants. They may need a more personal approach.
 - b. May not trust 'Government' funding and national sources. Equally, they have no affinity with Sport England and what we do. They are much more likely to trust local organisations, networks and people that they know.
 - c. Are very busy now dealing with the immediate emergency requirements around COVID-19 so are not thinking strategically about their future funding and survival.
 - d. Require very little funding, just small amounts and quickly to address immediate issues.
 - e. Are eligible for other sources of funding so it may be part of our role to understand the bigger picture and to support this through a contribution from sport and physical activity.
 - f. May need support to reimagine the offer they can make to their communities.
7. We know that there is no single solution to reaching this audience therefore we need a multi-faceted approach.
8. Our approach to date has been iterative and developed in partnership with you, based on the following:
- a. Our need to move at pace in our response and get resource moving quickly
 - b. Flexibility to build on the immediate and respond to changing restrictions
 - c. Not being prescriptive with solutions but letting the voice of the community come through in determining what is needed, working at their pace
 - d. It's not all about the money but it can help, some need help and advice too.

Partnership working

9. Partnership working has been central to the success of the Tackling Inequalities Fund so far. Working with all Active Partnerships across England and National Partners means we have a comprehensive range of partners with local networks, contacts and knowledge and specific expertise and reach to priority audiences.
10. It is important for National Partners and Active Partnerships to continue to join up to avoid duplication of effort and to maximise our connection to the audience we seek to support. We will continue to work with National Partners and the Active Partnership network to understand how we might best connect around this work as it will vary depending on existing relationships and geography.
11. In line with our collective approach to date, we all need to continue to be comfortable working in an environment that is slightly undefined and continues to evolve with our intelligence.
12. Some National Partners will have a role in distributing funding, others will play a supporting role helping us to connect to the priority audiences and sector partners that engage with them. We will notify you of any new partners through the Teams Channel.

Use of funding

13. This fund is designed to deal with 'here and now' issues that our sector organisations are facing as a result of the impact of COVID-19. It is about supporting organisations in the community now so that they have a future to plan for and minimising the impact of COVID-19 on activity levels in underrepresented groups.
14. This funding is intended to be distributed through funded sector partners to community organisations to support the following activities:
 - a. Providing financial support where the community organisations that connect to our priority audiences are facing financial hardship,
 - b. Helping community organisations to provide opportunities for our priority audiences to be active at this time.

- c. For phase 3, we have included an additional purpose for TIF: Supporting bodies to strengthen coming out of COVID through developing their governance, business planning and resilience.
15. We don't want to be prescriptive and trust that partners will be responding to what they know from their relationships with networks and organisations. We want to work collaboratively with partners to ensure the investment meets the immediate needs. That said, this funding is not intended to be used by National Partners and Active Partnerships to directly deliver activities themselves or for their own services or capacity. Where opportunities to address immediate need within your own organisation arise that fall outside this principle, you should discuss with Sport England before proceeding.
16. Before bringing forward recommendations for funding, you should consider the following questions that will determine whether a proposal meets the objectives and principles of the Tackling Inequalities Fund.
17. Can you answer yes to each of the following?
 - a. Will this investment impact upon at least one of the four priority audiences?
 - b. Is there a real 'here and now' requirement to support this audience?
 - c. Has the requirement arisen as a direct result of this community group or audience being adversely affected as a result of COVID-19?
 - d. Will this investment help a community group that focusses on one of our four priority audiences that needs funding to continue to survive and/or connect to one or more of our priority audiences at this time to keep them active?
 - e. Is there a clear 'line of sight' from this investment to physical activity taking place either now or in the immediate future?
 - f. Will the funding to be used to support a trusted community organisation rather than be directly delivered by a National Partner or Active Partnership?
18. Many of the organisations that we seek to support through this will have a much wider remit than just sport and physical activity and many may not be able to currently deliver this due to the situation around COVID-19. Where this is the case, we are still able to support such organisations however we would want there to be a clear 'line of sight' through this funding to sport

and physical activity either through what they have previously delivered or what they have the ability to deliver to this audience in future.

Changes to Restrictions

19. While the purpose of the Tackling Inequalities Fund remains twofold; enabling priority audiences to remain active and supporting the community organisations that serve them, as restrictions have continued to change, we continue to take an iterative and flexible approach to this fund.

20. Whilst Sport England cannot provide direct advice to individual projects about what is permitted at this time, we advise that partners make sound judgement calls using the national guidance, that of local public health colleagues where possible and your own local knowledge. **At all times consider the risk and stay within Government guidelines.** Please continue to check our [Coronavirus webpages](#) to keep up to date with what has been issued by Government including FAQs that have been developed with DCMS to guide your thinking and approach.

21. **Repurposing a project:** where projects have been approved but need to change to meet new rules, the following guidance applies:
 - a. It may be necessary for projects to re-design their approach in order to retain contact with audiences at this time. Where this is the case, we want partners to be able to take a judgement call locally without needing additional permission from Sport England in as many cases as possible. For all projects on the approvals tab of the Smartsheet, partners have Sport England approval for these awards to deliver in line with Lottery Guidelines.
 - b. As set out in our award agreement with you, partners retain the strategic overview, direction and lead responsibility for the programme, so where a project needs to repurpose at this time it can do so without any additional Sport England permission if it can answer yes to the following questions:

- i. Is the intent of the project still the same i.e. is it the same community organisation, the same audience, same overall cost?
 - ii. Is all spend proposed for the re-purposed activity eligible under lottery guidance?
- c. Examples of permitted changes include:
 - i. moving activity from face to face to online and the associated cost of doing which includes the purchase of an online platform for delivery and home-based equipment that can be loaned to participants.
 - ii. A change in activity i.e. that might include 1 to 1 support that fits within the government guidelines with the same audience.
 - iii. Repurpose the time of a coach to focus on continued engagement with participants as opposed to delivering planned physical activity/sport sessions

22. If a project wishes to repurpose it's spend and this requires an increase in their overall award or a change that is outside of the above guidance, Active Partnerships and National Partners should contact us directly for advice using tackling.inequalities@sportengland.org

23. **Pausing a project:** If a project cannot go ahead due to the impact of COVID-19, it can pause without approval necessary from Sport England. We would expect the project to resume within six weeks of restrictions easing to allow delivery.

24. **Changes to timeframes for project spend:** following the national restrictions that came into effect January 2021, timeframes around submitting projects to the Smartsheet for approval have been updated. For Active Partnerships and National Partners distributing funding for Phase 3 of the Tackling Inequalities Fund, delivery of all projects should be completed by the end of March 2022 and reconciliation concluded a month after project completion. This supersedes all previous guidance on timeframes (including the requirement to deliver a project within 6 months of delivery starting) and includes any outstanding Phase 2 investment, which can be rolled into your Phase 3 allocation. Please see Phase 3 funding guidance for further information.

25. For partners who are not distributing Phase 3 investment, all projects should have been submitted to the Smartsheets for approval by the 30 June 2021.

Active Partnerships and National Partners devolving funding

26. You may want to either directly contact known/targeted groups or operate a small grants type scheme inviting applications. In either of these routes, having a clear rationale and decision-making process is critical. Clause 19 in your award agreement provides further information on the processes that need to be followed for devolving funding.

27. We would encourage you to be mindful that application processes can put many organisations off seeking funding and where you can, do keep things as simple as possible.

28. It is the responsibility of National Partners and Active Partnerships to ensure that any funding that is passed on to third parties contains necessary provisions which enable them to comply with the terms of the funding agreement with Sport England e.g. monitoring and evaluation, clawback etc. You may wish to put in place a service level agreement or heads of agreement with the organisations that you fund. We ask that you ensure that this is proportionate and takes into account the capacity and capability of the organisations you are distributing funding to as we know many of those we seek to target with this funding will be put off by too much paperwork and difficult processes. If you have any questions around this or would like any examples, please speak to us.

29. Sport England is placing its trust in the sector organisations that it seeks to work through to connect this fund to those who need it most. All organisations receiving investment through this fund are accountable for how this money is used locally and for making sound judgements as to how it is allocated. This includes ensuring that the organisations in receipt of monies are eligible to accept lottery funding, that the purpose they wish to use it for is appropriate and that you have evidence of adequate safeguarding standards.

30. We need to balance the need to respond quickly and flexibly locally with the responsibility of Sport England as a public funding body. We need to comply with the rules that the National Lottery Act sets out for distributors regarding delegating functions to third parties.

31. Working in partnership with another body is permissible where Sport England retains the final say of the funding decision. This is currently the case with how we work with Active Partnerships on the Satellite Clubs programme.
32. All communications with partners should state that funding is subject to Sport England's approval.
33. Recipients of grants should acknowledge the National Lottery and Sport England where possible when the grant is publicised. Information on this is available in the Tackling Inequalities Fund Teams Channel and on the Sport England website.
34. Criteria need to be set for any open application process you are considering and agreed with Sport England.

Decision making process

35. The process for identifying where you wish to support local organisations with funding is as follows:
 - a) Identify where the funding is needed, what it is needed for and assess eligibility against the criteria set
 - b) Where the requirement meets eligibility, submit recommendations to Sport England for approval via the Smartsheet. Written guidance and a video for using the Smartsheets is available in the Tackling Inequalities Fund Teams files.
 - c) Sport England will consider the portfolio to be funded and where all criteria is met will confirm approval to award.
36. If you wish to devolve the funding available for your geographical area to another organisation to administer on your behalf (i.e. a partner such as a CVS) and the funding they distribute is below £25k, you should develop an appropriate partnership agreement. If the investment will exceed £25k you must use a Delivery Partner Agreement which can be supplied by Sport England on request. In either event you should consult with Sport England before going down this route.

Eligibility criteria for funding

37. In addition to demonstrating alignment against the six questions outlined in section 17, which will help to you decide whether a proposal is a good fit for the Tackling Inequalities Fund, any application must meet the following eligibility.
38. Sport England funding requires recipient bodies of small grants to have a recognised constitution in place.
39. The application must not duplicate funding already received from the Sport England including the Community Emergency Fund or the Return to Play Fund (N.B additional funding is acceptable if a further financial need is evident).
40. There are certain items that are not eligible for lottery funding. The list below is not exhaustive, but outlines significant items that we cannot fund:
 - a. Activities or costs which are already covered by other government funding including rates
 - b. Capital works
 - c. Activities promoting religious or political beliefs
 - d. Where there is personal benefit to an individual
41. In supporting community organisations, you might receive requests to support the following which are eligible items of expenditure for this fund at this time:
 - a. Staff costs
 - b. Training costs
 - c. Rent / Facility hire
 - d. Utility costs
 - e. IT costs
 - f. Insurance

Funding caps and multiple funding

42. Community group applicants (i.e. community bodies) that have previously received funding through the Tackling Inequalities Fund can receive further funding, subject to the guidance laid out in point 43.

43. We recognise that the longer-term nature of the fund may mean that some community bodies will need more than the current maximum of £10,000 therefore the following guidance applies here:

- a. The maximum amount of funding for a community body in any single phase of TIF is £10,000
- b. Where a community body is being supported over more than one phase of the funding, we will consider a £20,000 total award cap across the full TIF programme
- c. This doesn't mean requests in phase 3 alone can be £20,000 but the accumulation if £10,000 has already been awarded in phases 1 and 2 could be up to £20,000 across the programme
- d. For example, a sector partner has received £3,000 in phase 1 or 2, the maximum amount they can receive overall would be £13,000 (if they were to receive the maximum amount available for phase 3)

44. The above applies to the community organisation, not the sector partner through which they receive the funding i.e. the figures refer to the total amount awarded to an organisation through one or more TIF sector partners.

45. The above said, we expect that the vast majority of awards will continue to sit below £5,000 given the majority approved (80%) to date have been under this level with the average award being just £3,400. We want to reach as many individual organisations as possible.

46. If you feel there are exceptional circumstances that sit outside of the above i.e. where a community organisation has significant scale of reach into an audience and you would like to discuss this further, please speak with Sport England in the first instance. Enquiries should come through tackling.inequalities@sportengland.org

Unconstituted groups

47. We acknowledge that in some cases the ideas that you generate from within the community might come from individuals and/or un-constituted informal groups. Where this is the case the following options should be considered:

- a. Can you help fast-track the organisation to become constituted (with support from you or your local Active Partnership?)

- b. Could it use another Accountable Body such as a VCS to support it and act as the applicant/manage the funds for them?
- c. Will this investment support the organisation to become more sustainable, such as providing governance support?

Governance

48. When doing Governance checks of the organisation, please ensure that the correct official name of the applicant organisation is presented in the Smartsheet tool that is submitted to Sport England. This should match with the governing document and Companies House / the Charity Commission where appropriate. These can be searched here: [Companies House](#) or [the Charity Commission](#). Where appropriate, we will ask partners to provide the company or charity number.

Sole Traders

49. We understand how important Sole Traders are to the sport and physical landscape, and we have been working to update our guidance on supporting Sole Traders. If you wish to distribute funding to a Sole Trader, please contact us to discuss.

Commercial or For-Profit Organisations

50. We cannot fund commercial or for-profit organisations. In limited circumstances, if a private business is set up for non-commercial gain, it may be possible for Sport England to fund this organisation. If you are unsure, please contact us to discuss this before submitting the proposal.

Evaluation and learning

51. Partner engagement with the evaluation and learning process is set out in the project's conditions of a partner's award agreement.

52. There are two key elements to the evaluation and learning process that fulfil the award conditions for the Tackling Inequalities Fund:

- a. Smartsheet entries
- b. Regular engagement with the learning approach

53. **Smartsheet entries:** The majority of Active Partnerships and National Partners in receipt of awards through Tackling Inequalities fund have been asked to use the Smartsheet tool to upload details of the organisations and projects that they wish to support.
54. This purpose of the smartsheet is twofold:
- a. To comply with Lottery Act regulations that requires Sport England to have final say in any funding decisions
 - b. To capture intelligence
55. There is a broad range of intelligence that Active Partnerships and National partners provide through the Smartsheet including:
- a. The specific audiences that are receiving support
 - b. The postcode location of activities
 - c. The level of investment
 - d. The nature of the need
 - e. The activity that is being supported
 - f. The types of organisations being reached
56. By providing this information in a real time format, those Active Partnerships and National Partners using the Smartsheet are meeting the award condition to report to Sport England on achievement of purpose and will therefore not be required to provide any further reporting as to what the funding has been used for.
57. For those partners who are directly delivering activity and/or are not engaging with the smartsheet process, there will be a requirement for those partners to report to Sport England on achievement of purpose, within one month of project completion.
58. **The Learning Approach:** Together we have developed a learning approach for the Tackling Inequalities Fund, that has been facilitated by the Active Partnership extended workforce colleagues. This ongoing learning process is part of the formal evaluation of the Tackling Inequalities Fund. Therefore, award recipients are required to engage with it as part of their award conditions and will be notified of the opportunities to engage.
59. Throughout the Tackling Inequalities Fund the sharing of case studies, examples and best practice stories has helped us to understand the

impact the funding is having, as well as enabling collaboration and learning, so we encourage you to keep sharing these stories through the Teams channel, learning calls and inbox.

60. **Project close financial reconciliation:** Whilst not strictly part of the learning and evaluation of the project it is worth noting that financial reconciliation of the Tackling Inequalities Fund will also be required by all funded partners. This will be expected at project close, or at an appropriate time as requested by Sport England i.e. as part of the Phase 3 award process.
61. Details of these reporting processes will be communicated with partners at an appropriate time i.e. as part of any further phase awards and reporting could also focus on other aspects of delivery such as the distribution process or data sharing and management.

Data sharing

62. You will notice within the award letter that we have put in place an agreement with you to allow us to share data regarding our Community Emergency Fund application process. This will include details of successful and unsuccessful applications and personal data including contact details for these applicants. You will need to ensure that the personal data is processed in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018.

Communications regarding this fund

63. We have published information about this fund on our website. We have not listed each National Partner that is involved in this work as this is a targeted fund and we want to ensure you are not inundated with requests. We will ensure the Active Partnership network and any National Partners that we are already working with are notified as new partners come on board.

Further support

64. We very much want to work in the spirit of collaboration and shared ownership in this work and the approach. A number of the team in Sport England are supporting this work. We are really keen to hear what types of support you would find helpful in this period. Please do share these through the tackling.inequalities@sportengland.org address.