

Guidance Notes for Applicants

**These notes are to be read before completing your application form and are designed to help you with your application.**

It is recommended that you discuss your project with Valencia Communities Fund prior to completing the application form.



## Postcode Check

## On the front page of our website, you are invited to check whether your project site is in an eligible area. If it is, you will be invited to register an online account with us that allows you to submit and manage applications for funding. If you are in Scotland or have a biodiversity project, you will be invited to contact the office for details on how to register for an online account.

## Your Online Account

## You can create an online account by simply registering an email address and creating a password. Once created, you can start a new application, continue a saved one or contact a member of the team. All messages and documents sent to Valencia Communities Fund should be made through this account by clicking “start a new conversation” on your application page.

## Eligible Applicant Organisations

An organisation or group which is properly constituted and is not-for-profit can apply. There are a number of exceptions, so please check with Valencia Communities Fund about eligibility before applying. The applicant organisation must declare if it is registered as an Environmental Body (England) or Approved Body (Scotland). The applicant organisation must hold the freehold of the project site or have a minimum of ten years left to run on a lease.

## Eligibility and Compliance

All applications received by Valencia Communities Fund are checked for compliance and eligibility. Valencia Communities Fund will measure applications against criteria that is in addition to published guidance from ENTRUST or SEPA. Each application is assessed on its individual merits.

## Stage 1 Application

## This short application allows us to ascertain the eligibility of your project and organisation for funding. You will be required to upload the following documents:

## Constitution or equivalent

## A copy of your environmental body registration certificate (if applicable)

## Lease or proof of ownership of the project site

## Evidence of permissions for the project to go ahead, such as a faculty or planning permission

## A copy of your membership scheme (if applicable)

## We aim to process stage 1 applications within three days of receipt. There is no set deadline by which stage 1 applications must be submitted, though they may not be processed for up to ten working days, if they are submitted near one of our four quarterly deadlines for stage 2 applications.

## Stage 2 Application

## You will be invited to complete the stage 2 application once we have processed your stage 1 and found it eligible. The stage 2 application is an in-depth look at your proposed project, and you will be required to provide further documentation:

## Annual accounts

## Insurance documents for the facility

## Maintenance and management plan for the facility

## Access statement for the facility

## Evidence of permissions for the project to go ahead, such as a faculty or planning permission

## Photographs of the proposed project site

## Evidence of secured funding

## Three comparable quotations for each element for which funding is requested

## Evidence of public support

## Stage 2 applications must be submitted in good time for each quarterly deadline. Incomplete applications may be deferred to a later quarter.

## Project Objects

Your project must fulfil one of the following objectives to be eligible for funding:

* **Object D** - The protection of the environment, the provision, maintenance or improvement of public amenities and parks, which are open and accessible to the public.
* **Object DA** - The protection of the environment, the enhancement, protection and/or promotion of biological diversity of a species or habitat.
* **Object E** - The protection of the environment, the maintenance, repair, or restoration of a building of historic or architectural interest and is open and accessible to the public.

## Project Priorities

Projects must demonstrate:

* Proof of a need and local support for the project; promotion of community participation (volunteering) and partnership approaches
* Environmental sustainability
* Value for money (minimum of three comparable quotations)
* Self-sustainability and have long-term management plans

**Scoring Criteria**

Applications to Valencia Communities Fund are submitted online, via the Valencia Communities Fund website. Once received, all applications are assessed by the Grants Officer for eligibility. Each eligible application is then assessed against our Scoring Criteria:

* Deprivation Index
* Disamenity due to landfill proximity (England only)
* Previous awards from Valencia Communities Fund
* Historical Significance – Object E applications only
* Financial Sustainability
* Other Fundraising
* Ability to Start
* Community Need
* Access – Object D applications only

Each funding round will have a benchmark score required and applications that do not achieve this benchmark score will be declined at this stage, approx. ten working days after the deadline date.

Applications that meet the benchmark score will progress for consideration by either the Funding Group or the Board of Trustees. At this stage, applications receive an on-site visit by our Project Liaison Officers. This visit takes place a few days prior to the Group or Board meeting. The Project Liaison Officers are there to gather further information, complete a compliance check and then to provide their own recommendation to the Funding Group or Board of Trustees.

## Funding from Valencia Communities Fund

Certain conditions must be met in order to qualify for funding:

* Awards will be for **capital expenditure only.**
* Applicants will have to secure a contribution from an independent Contributing Third Party, separate to any award from Valencia Communities Fund, payable within one month of any award (see below).
* Valencia Communities Fund will register for approval all projects with ENTRUST (England) or SEPA (Scotland).
* In England, funded project activities must be approved by ENTRUST before the commencement of any works. If ENTRUST approval is not given, for whatever reason, any offer of funding will be automatically withdrawn. Any works that take place prior to ENTRUST approval will not be funded. Valencia Communities Fund will only make payments to projects within ENTRUST’s approval window.
* **Environmental Bodies (England):** If the applicant organisation is an enrolled Environmental Body, Valencia Communities Fund will register any project with ENTRUST and will release funds **only** to the contractor, not to the applicant Environmental Body.
* The Funding Agreement, provided by Valencia Communities Fund, will need to be agreed by the applicant before the commencement of any works.
* If successful, projects have a strict timescale to adhere to in terms of drawing down funding.

## The Applicant must not enter into any contract or obligation that incurs expenditure against the Project prior to consideration by the Funding Group and before approval of the Project activities by ENTRUST. This may affect any offer of funding.

**Ineligible Elements**

The Landfill Communities Fund is a highly prescriptive and tightly-regulated scheme. Because of this, Valencia Communities Fund is unable to consider funding for the following elements:

* Aspects of a project that have already started
* Works to public highways; anything that may be the statutory or discretionary responsibility of the local authority
* Projects located on/in:
	+ Allotments
	+ Educational facilities
	+ Facilities primarily used for service provision or not considered a general public amenity, such as hospitals, day centres, hospices or accommodation.
* Proportional projects – where public access is restricted at certain times
* Salaried posts or revenue funding
* Contingencies, fees, and preliminaries
* Core costs of an organisation e.g., rent, energy bills, supplies
* Vehicles
* Purchase of land or buildings that are **not** at risk of closure or loss to the community, and only up to 50% of the cost of purchase
* Multimedia or CCTV equipment, events, CDs, website, or marketing materials
* New builds. Small extensions are permissible, up to 50% of the cost of the build
* Additional funding
* Projects that have already been unsuccessful

## Contributing Third Party Payments

The Contributing Third Party payment is a transaction between a third party donor and Valencia Waste Management Ltd.

The amount is equivalent to 10% of the value of the amount awarded and is the sum payable by the Contributing Third Party to Valencia Waste Management, via Valencia Communities Fund. It does not form part of your total project cost and is not refundable.

The Contributing Third Party payment must be paid within one month of funding being confirmed.

## Who Can Be a Contributing Third Party?

Anyone can be a Contributing Third Party, providing they do not gain a unique benefit from the project put forward for funding. Anyone contributing to this payment must be explicitly aware that the donation will be paid to a landfill operator and will not be a contribution to the project itself. Below is a list of examples of organisations that may be Contributing Third Parties:

* Public Sector organisations – Local Authorities, County Councils
* Charities
* Voluntary organisations
* Private donors
* Monies from fundraising
* Private companies

## Who is excluded From Being a Contributing Third Party?

* Any individual or organisation directly connected to the landfill operator, Valencia, or a contractor of the project
* Any individual or organisation who gains a unique benefit from the project
* Other Environmental bodies – see guidance issued by ENTRUST for further information visit [www.ENTRUST.org.uk](http://www.entrust.org.uk/).

**For more information on the Contributing Third Party Payment, please visit https:/**[**/w**](http://www.valenciacommunitiesfund.co.uk/apply-funding/contributing-third-party)**w**[**w.valenciacommunitiesfund.co.uk/apply-funding/contributing-third-party**](http://www.valenciacommunitiesfund.co.uk/apply-funding/contributing-third-party)

# Funding Models

## Main Grants Scheme

The Main Grants Scheme is open to all applications that are requesting funding up to £50,000 from Valencia Communities Fund.

In Scotland, grants are available from Valencia Communities Fund for 50% of the total project cost or £25,000, whichever is lower, for projects up to £100,000. An applicant may not apply for funding for the same facility within 12 months of a successful award.

Projects must be able to begin draw down of funds for completed works within **6 months** of the date of the Offer Letter and be complete within **12 months**.

Applications under this scheme will be considered by the in-house Funding Group.

## Large Grants Scheme – England only

The Large Grants Scheme is open to all applications that are requesting funding between £50,001 and £100,000 from Valencia Communities Fund. Projects must be able to begin draw down of funds for completed works within **6 months** of the date of the Offer Letter and be complete within **18 months**.

Applications under the Large Grants Scheme will be considered by the Valencia Communities Fund Board of Trustees.

# Applications to Valencia Communities Fund

## All permissions relating to the project works, such as planning permission or faculty, must be in place prior to submission of the stage 1 to Valencia Communities Fund.

All Stage 2 applications must be submitted in full by the closing date to be assessed for the next available meeting. Applications could be declined or deferred, if received incomplete.

## Any application that is not complete or that has any issues around the closing date will not be considered at the following meeting. You are strongly advised to submit your stage 2 application far in advance of the closing date to ensure that any issues with your application can be resolved before the closing date.

**Quotations**

Your stage 2 application must be accompanied by at least three comparable quotations or formal tenders, broken down into individual project elements. Quotations must be in-date and on your contractors’ formal headed paper. Valencia Communities Fund does not accept indicative quotes/costings, QS or architect’s costings or estimates. It is assumed that the quotes you submit are final, and that there is no further tendering process to be undertaken. Any project that is tendered after the award from Valencia Communities Fund will lose its award.

Valencia Communities Fund will use the lowest of the quotations as a basis for awarding funding, regardless of which of the contractors is ultimately selected by the applicant.

If your project is funded, Valencia Communities Fund will release funds against completed, agreed works up to the value of the lowest quotation for the works on production of a corresponding invoice and photos.

## VAT

VAT should be included within the total project cost of the application. Where the applicant is unable to recover the VAT, it must be included within the amount requested from Valencia Communities Fund. If the applicant is able to recover the VAT in part or in full, VAT should then be excluded from the amount requested from Valencia Communities Fund and shown as a funding shortfall. Valencia Communities Fund will not consider funding any VAT costs if any amount of it can be reclaimed.

**It is the applicant’s responsibility to be aware of their position of reclaiming VAT. If the information provided proves to be incorrect or subject to change and VAT becomes non-reclaimable, Valencia Communities Fund is unable to consider any requests for additional funding to cover the unexpected VAT cost, or pay the VAT out of the existing award.**

# Successful Applications

Successful applications will receive an email to inform them of funding decisions within five working days of the meeting. The applicant will be sent a funding Offer Letter together with a Successful Applicant’s Pack. This will detail any conditions we may attach to the award. **It is important to read these documents thoroughly.** Applicants must accept the terms of funding online within one month of being awarded funding.

## Release of Funding

Once the offer of funding has been formally accepted by the applicant, funds will be released against contractor invoices for completed works. Valencia Communities Fund **is unable to pay deposits or release funding for any upfront payments.** Valencia Communities Fund will not release funds to any applicant organisation that is registered as an environmental body with Entrust.

## Monitoring and Evaluation

As part of the standard conditions, all organisations will agree to a programme of monitoring and evaluation. This will include:

* Producing quarterly progress reports for Funding Group meetings, when requested.
* Producing an end-of-project report, when requested.
* A statement and evidence of all expenditure, when requested.
* Site visits by members of the Valencia Communities Fund team.
* A compliance inspection either one or three years following completion of the project by Valencia Communities Fund and/or Entrust.

## Publicity and Acknowledgement

All organisations will be required, as a condition of the award, to recognise the funding received from Valencia Communities Fund in any material and/or publicity associated with the project. The Grants Officer is on hand to assist you with any publicity and media releases before they are released. We will provide a plaque once the project is finished which must be displayed appropriately. Further information and guides on publicising your project award can be found at: [**www.valenciacommunitiesfund.co.uk/pr.**](http://www.valenciacommunitiesfund.co.uk/pr) **If Valencia Communities Fund** **is not properly referenced at the time of funding or in relevant future publicity, this may exclude the applicant from any further funding.**

## UK General Data Protection Regulation

Valencia Communities Fund (or 'we') is committed to protecting your personal information when you are using our websites and applications (our 'services'). Whenever you provide such information, we are legally obliged to use your information in line with all laws concerning the protection of personal information, including the General Data Protection Regulations (UK GDPR). Please visit www.valenciacommunitiesfund[.co.uk/privacy-policy](http://www.viridor-credits.co.uk/privacy-policy) for more information.

## Further Information

If you would like further information or support with your application, please contact a member of the team:

Valencia Communities Fund

PO Box 977

TAUNTON Tel: 01823 476476

TA1 2PQ Email: enquiries@valenciacommunitiesfund.co.uk