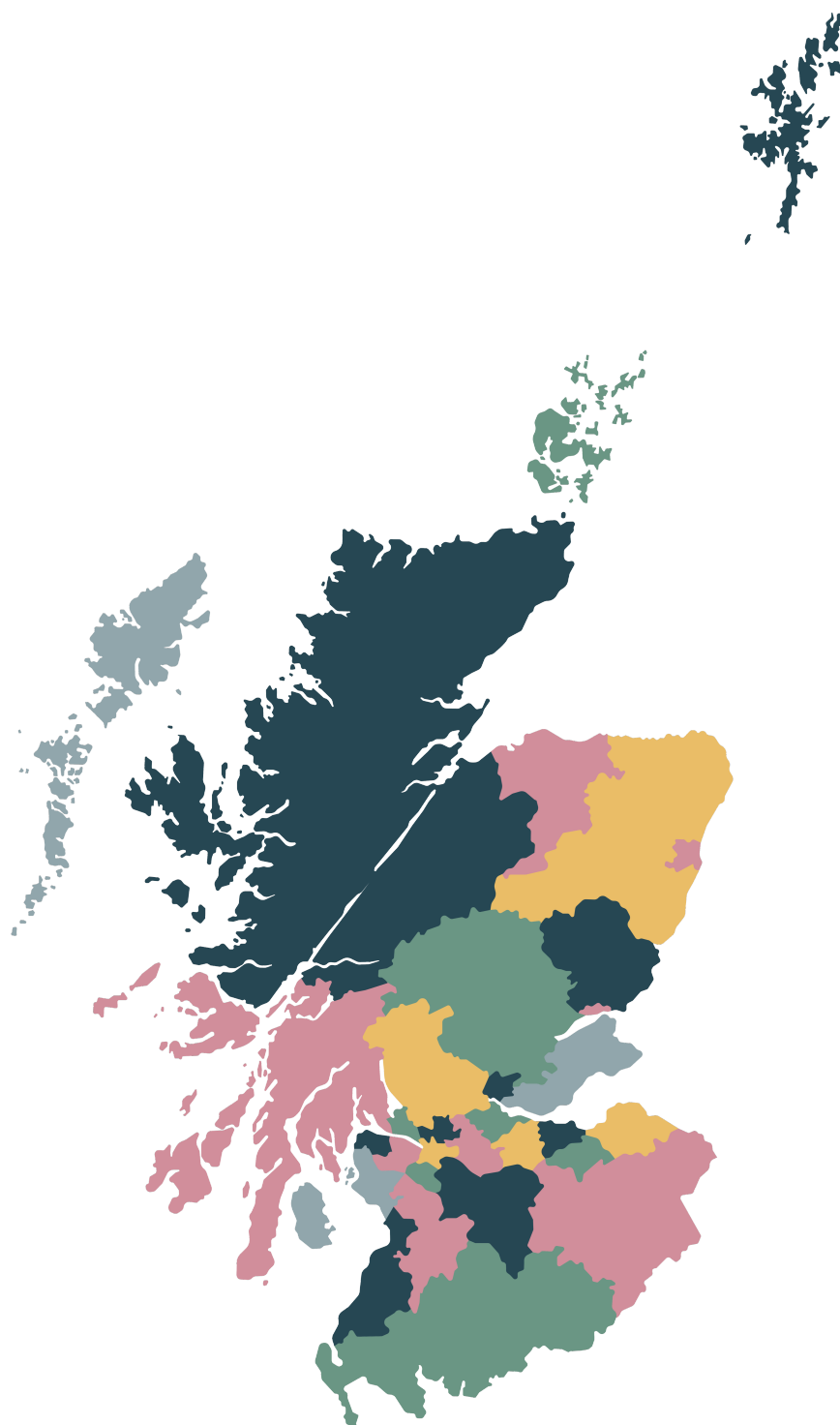




Development Trusts Association Scotland Recovery and Resilience Programme

Full Guidance

Key Facts

Who can apply

Only DTAS full and provisional members can apply to the programme.

Associate and aspiring members, and groups supported only by DTAS Community Ownership Support Service and Democratic Finance and who are not full or provisional DTAS members are not eligible to apply.

When

The programme is open for applications 27 October 2025 to 31 Dec 2027.

All grants awarded must be spent by 31 December 2028.

Support and funding available

Direct support such as training, mentoring, 1-2-1 advice, expert help.

Up to £100,000 which can be applied for over a maximum of three separate grant awards for support with revenue, capital or mixed costs.

Eligible projects - must fit at least one of these resilience areas

1. **Purpose** – strategy, restructuring
2. **Governance** – training, succession
3. **Finance** – diversification, consultancy
4. **People** – policies, systems, wellbeing
5. **Comms** – plans, evaluation tools
6. **Assets** – planning, capital works

The programme will not fund

- Routine organisational costs, for example, utilities or audits.
- Retrospective costs.
- Statutory costs, for example, reclaimable VAT or debt repayments.
- Salaries below the Real Living Wage.
- Political and/or religious activities.

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Introduction

The Recovery and Resilience Programme is a new initiative from Development Trusts Association Scotland (DTAS).

Thanks to funding from Foundation Scotland, we are delighted to offer this opportunity to full and provisional members to help improve organisational recovery and resilience.

What are the aims of the programme?

The aims of the programme are to:

1. Proactively support the long-term resilience of DTAS members.
2. Help DTAS members recover by gaining stability and building capacity.
3. Prevent DTAS members from escalating into crisis.

What do we mean by recovery and resilience?

Recovery is the time following an adverse incident or period of decline where you are putting in place the measures needed to improve your organisation. For Development Trusts, this is often about examining short term needs and priorities to prevent the organisation from slipping into crisis, and then taking the steps required to build towards a place of greater stability.

Resilience is the ability and capacity to withstand difficulty. For Development Trusts this often means improving your organisation to make it stronger and more flexible. A resilient Development Trust can consistently deliver a greater impact for its community by being well equipped to adapt to change and adversity. We have identified six pillars which make for a resilient Development Trust.

What are the six pillars of resilience?

Working with DTAS members, we developed these six areas of resilience which contribute to a resilient Development Trust:

1.	Purpose
2.	Governance and Leadership
3.	Finance, Funding and Enterprise
4.	People and Operations
5.	Communications, Engagement and Impact
6.	Assets

What are the outcomes of the programme?

Programme participants must deliver at least one of the following six outcomes for your organisation.

Purpose: Board and staff demonstrate improved clarity and confidence in articulating and implementing the organisation's purpose and strategic direction.

Governance and Leadership: Organisations show strengthened leadership capacity, more effective governance practices, and enhanced decision-making processes.

Finance, Funding and Enterprise: Organisations demonstrate income diversification, increased confidence in financial management, and a more enterprising approach.

People and Operations: Staff and volunteers have improved skills, knowledge and wellbeing, internal procedures are better defined and utilised.

Communications, Engagement and Impact: Organisations demonstrate stronger communication, improved community engagement and clearer articulation of impact through effective evaluation.

Assets: Organisations exhibit increased knowledge, confidence, and control in the effective management and development of their physical assets.

What does the programme include?

Following consultation and feedback from our members, we recognise that for the Recovery and Resilience Programme to best achieve its aims and have the biggest impact, it should provide access to direct support and grant funding.

A staged approach

Before you apply to the programme, it is important to understand that it is not a one-step funding application. The programme is designed to help build long-term resilience in your organisation. This means that you may need to start with smaller, focussed pieces of work, support or training before applying for grants.

What direct support is available?

When you participate in the programme, DTAS will work with you to identify what support, training and resources would best help you to become a more resilient organisation and achieve the outcome(s) of the programme. This support may be offered alongside or instead of grant funding, depending on your needs.

The direct support available to you when you participate in the programme is based around DTAS' existing support services, including:

- 1-2-1 advice and support
- Strategic planning sessions and organisational reviews
- Governance training sessions
- Finance support
- Specialist support on workplace wellbeing
- Specialist support on facilities management
- Specialist support on community ownership and asset transfer
- Specialist support on democratic finance including community shares, community bonds, grassroots legal giving, local philanthropy and one-off community lotteries

- Referral to professional service providers including HR, legal, finance and Communications

What grant funding is available?

This programme offers restricted grant funding. The funding is flexible and may be used for a wide range of purposes. It is up to you to tell us what would make your organisation more resilient.

- You can apply for grants of up to a combined total of £100,000 over the full programme which is two years.
- You can apply for funding up to three times over the lifetime of the programme. As noted above, the total combined amount of funding applied for across multiple applications must not exceed £100,000.
- There is no minimum level of grant applied for.
- The application process is the same regardless of how much you apply for. You should, however, be aware that there is a different assessment process for large grants of more than £25,000 and small grants of under £25,000.
- You can apply for revenue or capital costs, or a combination of the two.
- Projects can be for up to a maximum of two years - all grant funding awarded must be spent by December 2028.

What types of projects can we apply for?

You can apply for projects that strengthen your organisation's resilience. Funding must focus on recovery and resilience and align with at least one of the six pillars.

Below are examples of some of the activities that could be carried out under each resilience heading. These are examples only to help guide your thinking. An application does not need to include all these areas or examples.

We have included “enterprising examples” to reflect some ideas of what longer-term resilience may look like in an organisation.

Purpose

Capacity-building	Mission, vision and values training for staff and Board
Planning/strategy	Updating or creating a strategic or operational plan
Practical investment	Support to restructure activities with local community needs
Enterprising example	Exploring collaboration with another local trust to reduce duplication and strengthen services

Governance & Leadership

Capacity-building	Roles, responsibilities and leadership training for staff and Board
Planning/strategy	Developing succession plans or risk management frameworks
Practical investment	External facilitation or consultancy to improve governance practice
Enterprising example	Piloting co-leadership or shared governance with another community organisation

Finance, Funding & Enterprise

Capacity-building	Financial literacy or enterprise development training for staff and Board
Planning/strategy	Creating a funding diversification or enterprise plan
Practical investment	Upgrading to digital financial systems or commissioning expert consultancy
Enterprising example	Strategic planning for a new community venture to help increase income

People & Operations

Capacity-building	Developing Learning and Wellbeing programmes for staff and volunteers
Planning/strategy	Updating HR policies and volunteer management systems
Practical investment	Investing in IT and/or new equipment
Enterprising example	Piloting flexible or hybrid working practices to better support staff wellbeing and retention

Communications, Engagement & Impact

Capacity-building	Communications, digital skills or community engagement training for staff and board
Planning/strategy	Developing a communications and engagement strategy
Practical investment	Creating tools to help evaluate, measure and share impact
Enterprising example	Launching a digital engagement platform, podcast or online hub to reach new audiences

Assets

Capacity-building	Community asset management and ownership training for staff and board
Planning/strategy	Developing or updating an asset management plan
Practical investment	Building reviews (energy, safety, compliance) or capital works to help cut costs and/or increase income
Enterprising example	Strategic development of a community building to help create new income

These examples provided are not exhaustive.

Whatever you apply for must clearly show how it will strengthen your organisation's resilience.

What will the programme not fund?

This programme is to help build your organisation's resilience. Funding will not cover day-to-day running costs, or activities that are outside the scope of recovery and resilience.

Costs for a new staffing post can be included in a grant application, but the purpose of the new role must focus on recovery and building organisational resilience, not on a staff member undertaking day-to-day activities and service provision.

Examples of what the programme will not fund

Day-to-day running costs

- Annual audit or accountancy fees
- Utilities and routine administration
- Core costs or projects that do not achieve at least one of the six programme outcomes

Retrospective or statutory costs

- Costs already incurred before a grant award
- VAT you can reclaim
- Loan repayments, debt or interest payments
- Activities that are the statutory responsibility of another body

Activities outside scope

- Feasibility studies not linked to programme outcomes
- Place Plans
- Community Action Plans
- Salary costs below the Real Living Wage
- Political or religious activities
- Activities likely to bring DTAS, its partners, or funders into disrepute

When is the programme open?

- The programme will be open from 27 October 2025 to 31 December 2027
- All grant funding must be committed to be spent by December 2028

Who is eligible to participate in the programme?

The programme is open to all DTAS full and provisional members whose fees have been paid.

The following are **not** eligible to participate in the programme:

- DTAS associate members
- DTAS aspiring members
- Organisations that are working solely with DTAS through the Democratic Finance programme or the Community Ownership Support Service and are not full or provisional members

New members must wait until they have officially become a full or provisional member before they can participate in the Recovery and Resilience Programme. Please note that the application process to join DTAS typically takes around three months to complete, and you must meet the membership criteria.

Steps of the programme

Step 1: Complete an online self-assessment form

This helps to identify your organisation's current strengths and areas for development for each of the six pillars of resilience.

Step 2: Self-assessment review

Following completion of your self-assessment, you will receive ratings for each of the areas of resilience. It is important to review and reflect on the self-assessment as an application for support and/or grant funding must match and be aligned with your self-assessment scoring.

Step 3: Tailored direct support

Based on your self-assessment review, you may be offered direct support or advice to strengthen your foundations. This support may be offered alongside or instead of grant funding, depending on your self-assessment results.

Step 4: Complete an online application for grant funding

Based on your self-assessment review, you may be invited to submit an online application. The application will ask you to provide more detail on your proposal and how this will improve your organisation's resilience.

Step 5: Application assessment

Your application will be reviewed by a panel. You may be asked for additional supporting information.

Step 6: Notification

You will be notified of the panel's decision. If successful, you will receive a grant award. If you are not successful, you will receive feedback and may be offered support to reapply.

Further information on the self-assessment and review (steps 1&2)

How do we complete the self-assessment form?

The self-assessment form is a mandatory part of the application process, and you will not be able to access the Recovery and Resilience Programme without completing it.

Why is the self-assessment form required?

The purpose of the self-assessment form is to give both you and DTAS a snapshot of your organisation's current resilience. It is designed to help identify your strengths and areas for development.

What does the self-assessment cover?

The self-assessment is based around the six pillars of resilience:

1. Purpose
2. Governance and Leadership
3. Finance, Funding and Enterprise
4. People and Operations
5. Communications, Engagement and Impact
6. Assets

There are three questions under each pillar, a total of 18 questions.

Each question has five statements. You will be asked to select the statement that most closely reflects your organisation's current situation. You can only select one statement per question.

How is the self-assessment scored?

Each statement will be scored from 1-5. The statement with the lowest resilience rating will be scored 1; the statement with the highest resilience rating will be scored

5. Using this scoring, an average score will be applied to each pillar, which will generate a priority ranking for each pillar and suggested areas for development.

Will we be penalised for low scores?

Absolutely not! You should be honest when completing the self-assessment form. The focus of the programme is to help organisations improve their resilience. It is expected that the self-assessment will show areas for development. These are the areas the programme aims to help.

Who should complete the self-assessment form?

The self-assessment form should be completed on behalf of the overall organisation. We expect you to seek input from both board members and staff members (if applicable).

You should only submit one self-assessment form per organisation, but the form should reflect a collective view. You could choose to hold a facilitated session to complete the form together, for example during a board meeting. Or you could choose to gather individual responses from board and staff and calculate an average score. Both approaches are valid.

What other information is required at the self-assessment stage?

There is a free text box at the end of the self-assessment form where you can add additional information and reflections about your self-assessment. This may include the approach you took to complete it, and insights into the support your organisation needs.

Do we have to apply online?

Yes, you must apply using our online self-assessment form. There is a PDF version available for you to use to help you to think about and collate your answers before completing the online version. You cannot submit the PDF document.

Can we save our self-assessment from and return to it later?

Yes, you can save your online form and return to it later. Please note that you do not require a **JotForm** account to access and save the form. Once you have clicked "Save", then click "*Skip Create an Account*".

How long is my self-assessment valid for?

Your self-assessment is valid for six months from the date you submit it. If you are invited to complete a full application for grant funding, you must complete the full application within this six-month period. If you do not, you will be required to complete and submit a new self-assessment, starting the whole process again.

Further information on tailored direct support (step 3)

Following completion of your self-assessment and even as part of a successful full application, your organisation may still be offered direct support through DTAS, as appropriate.

Direct support can include:

- Advice, guidance or training from the DTAS Membership Support Team, particularly on governance, operations, or strategic planning.
- Democratic Finance support, delivered through the Development Framework, and including help with community shares, investment readiness, or financial modelling.
- Access to the Community Ownership Support Service offering specialist help with asset transfer, ownership models, or community-led property projects.
- Referrals to external consultants and expert help, where specialist expertise is required. This may be in areas such as HR, legal, finance or Communications. Where specialist expertise is identified and accessed by a programme participant, the costs for this will count as an indirect award. This means that payment to experts will come from the participant's award, where grant funding has been awarded, or deducted from the participant's maximum

amount of funding accessible through the programme (i.e. deducted from the maximum grant amount of up to £100,000.)

DTAS will make the payments directly to the specialist. A participant who has a grant award will be able to adjust their grant budget as appropriate to account for these costs. The Recovery and Resilience team can discuss budget adjustments with you.

- Tailored mentoring, advice or facilitated sessions delivered by DTAS or trusted partners, with or without associated costs.

Further information on the grant fund application (steps 4 & 5)

When can we complete the application form for grant funding?

The Recovery and Resilience Programme is rolling. This means that there is not a set deadline to submit your funding application.

However, when you are invited to make a full application, you will need to submit that within six months of the date you completed your self-assessment, or you will have to start the process again. This means that if you do not make a full application within that time, you will be required to complete a new self-assessment and be invited to apply again.

Applications will be accepted throughout the two years lifespan of the programme. The decision panels for the small and large grant applications meet at different times throughout the year and this will have a bearing on when you will receive a decision for any application submitted.

Will grant funding still be available if we apply later?

We are staggering the allocation of grant funding which means that it will **not** be allocated on a first-come-first-served basis. However, we expect that demand for grant funding will be high, and we cannot guarantee that sufficient funds will be available for your proposal towards the end of the lifetime of the programme.

What is the assessment process for grant funding?

There is a two-tier assessment process

Small Grants - under £25,000

These applications are assessed by an internal DTAS panel meeting **monthly**.
Members of the panel will be DTAS staff.

We recommend that organisations think about taking a phased approach to applying for funding. We recognise each organisation will have different needs and these will be reflected in the types of applications the programme receives; however, focussing on applying for small grants could provide greater flexibility for an organisation and is likely to mean receiving decisions more quickly.

The formal outcome will be confirmed to the applicant within two weeks of the internal panel meeting and assessing the application.

Large Grants - £25,000 and over

These applications are assessed by an external panel meeting **quarterly**.
Members of the panel will be DTAS staff and external stakeholders.

Assessment of large grants is a longer process. The formal outcome will be confirmed to the applicant within two weeks of the external panel assessing the application.

Criteria the panels will use to assess applications

Each application will be scored, and the internal and external panels will use the following criteria to make their decision about your application.

1.	Level of organisational need
2.	Contribution of the proposal towards the six resilience pillars
3.	Deliverability of the proposal and the level of risk
4.	Value for money

If there is a high volume of applications, we may have to defer to the next scheduled panel meeting. Priority will be given to urgent applications.

Application Limits

You can apply for funding a maximum of 3 times during the programme's lifetime. The total amount of funding awarded to an organisation across all applications will not exceed £100,000.

How do we complete the application form for grant funding?

Information required in Section 1: Organisational Details

This section is for you to provide details of your organisation.

You must include:

- The **organisational ID code** provided in the email you will receive inviting you to submit a full application. This enables us to easily find and track your application.
- Details of your organisation's main contact. This should be someone we can contact easily if we have questions about your application form.

Information required in Section 2: Proposal

This section is for you to provide details of how you will use the grant funding.

You must tell us:

- What you want to do with the funding.
- Why this funding is needed now.
- How you will deliver your proposal.
- How your proposal links with your self-assessment results.
- Your proposed start and end date.
- If you plan to engage with expert consultants and if so, provide a brief explanation why you are planning to do this and how this input will improve your organisation's resilience.

The word limit for this section is 200 words per question.

Information required in Section 3: How does your proposal help to improve your resilience?

This section is for you to provide details of how the grant funding will improve your organisation's resilience.

You must describe:

- Which of the six resilience pillars your proposal will aim to strengthen and how you will achieve the programme outcome(s). You must align your proposal to at least one of the outcomes.
- The change the project will make to your organisation.
- What success will look like for your organisation.
- How you will measure progress towards outcomes.

The word limit for this section is 500 words per question.

Information required in Section 4: Budget and financial plan?

This section is for you to tell us how much your proposal will cost.

You must tell us:

- Total project costs.
- Amount requested for the Recovery and Resilience Programme.
- How much, if anything, you have secured or intend to secure in match funding.
Please note that match funding is not a requirement to apply to the programme and we are able to fund 100% of a proposal.
- Budget details.

There is an optional free text box to provide additional information, explain any assumptions, detail in-kind contributions, for examples.

Information is required in Section 5: Support

This section is for you to tell us about any other support from DTAS that you require to help you become more resilient. This may have been identified in your self-assessment review.

What information is required in Section 6: Risks

This section is for you to describe the main risks you have identified in delivering your proposal. You should tell us about these risks, what the potential impact could be and how you will manage them.

Other information required at the application stage

You will be asked to provide other relevant information about your organisation. This will include:

- Most recent published accounts.
- Most recent financial report shared with the Board.
- A copy of your organisation's strategic plan, if you have one.
- Any quotes for proposed work.
- Any other relevant documents that support your proposal.

You will also be able to upload photographs if these support your application.

You can upload a max of 5 files.

All uploaded documents must be less than 10MB

Next steps

When a grant application is successful

- You will be sent a grant award letter which must be signed and returned to DTAS.
- The grant award letter may include additional grant conditions, for example, providing confirmation of match funding or key delivery milestones.
- The grant award letter will include a payment schedule.
- You may be asked to provide additional information.
- The grant award letter will describe the monitoring and reporting requirements. You will be provided with reporting templates.
- Your first payment will be made when your grant award letter is signed and returned, and any required conditions are met.

When a grant application is unsuccessful

- You will receive feedback explaining the reason for the decision.
- We may offer support to help you improve your application if you wish to reapply in the future.
- If you do wish to reapply, you will have to submit a new application within three months or start the process again by completing a new self-assessment.

Monitoring and reporting requirements

All participants in the programme will be required to complete proportionate monitoring and reporting. This will help us to understand what you have achieved and how your organisation has been supported.

For both small and large grants:

- Quarterly spend report.
- Quarterly 'light touch', bullet points progress report.
- A self-assessment at the end of your project.
- If you are receiving a grant for a project that will take longer than six months to complete, you will be required to complete a 'midway' self-assessment.
- A final written report at the end of your project detailing:
 - Activities carried out
 - Outcomes achieved
 - How your organisation has improved its resilience
 - Outcomes that have not been achieved – why?

Reporting templates will be provided.

Support available for applicants

We want to ensure that all eligible organisations can access and apply to the Recovery and Resilience Programme with confidence.

If you need support with any stage of the application process, your DTAS Development Officer is available to provide one-to-one advice and support. This may include help to:

- Understand the programme aims and process
- Talk through your organisation's resilience needs
- Talk through your proposal for addressing your needs
- Complete the self-assessment form
- Complete the grant application form
- Gather the documents you need

We will be offering online information sessions and workshops during the lifetime of the fund. Details of these will be shared through DTAS communications and updates.

Application materials can be made available in alternative formats, including large print or PDF documents. If you require this guidance, self-assessment form or application form in a different format or language, or need any other accessibility support, please contact rrp@dtascot.org.uk for assistance.