DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

Guidance

INTRODUCTION

Some digital software and products are eligible for funding under our Open Grants Programme. Like other capital items including buildings, equipment and vehicles, digital infrastructure can help organisations improve their delivery and/or reach and/or sustainability. This document shares some specific guidance for organisations considering an application for digital infrastructure support.

As with any application to our Open Grants Programme, we need a reasonable idea of the digital infrastructure that you want to develop and how you want to do it. Projects that are still at the initial 'brainstorming' stage will not be funded: this means you need to have developed the rationale for the project, a plan to develop, implement, and embed the infrastructure, and have secured the quotations that will have allowed you to set a realistic budget. Below we include a checklist of things to consider when planning a digital infrastructure project.

We understand that the salaries of employees and other core costs will be part of this total budget for many digital infrastructure projects. However, our funding will not cover these and you can find a list of all the ineligible costs relating to our Open Grants Programmes on our website. The only exception to this list is that the initial costs of training staff, volunteers and users to use the new digital infrastructure are eligible. Please note that you are welcome to apply for projects that *include* some ineligible costs but keep in mind that any grant awarded would not cover them.

NOT ALL DIGITAL PROJECTS ARE ELIGIBLE. WE WILL CONSIDER ONE-OFF COSTS TOWARDS:

- Moving your paper-based processes online so that you can make better use of digital technology. This is sometimes described as 'digitising processes' and can include technical infrastructure and devices e.g. cloud storage and tablets for data collection.
- Developing or updating the digital tools that you use to communicate, such as your website, apps or messaging platforms.
- Adding new digital features to services that you already deliver to make them easier for people to use and access.

EXAMPLES OF ELIGIBLE PROJECTS AND COSTS (THIS LIST IS NOT EXHAUSTIVE):

- Development of a new website or the upgrade of an existing one.
- Development of a new CRM/database or the upgrade of an existing one. This can include consultancy, initial training and support costs.
- Integration of a CRM/database and other digital software used.
- Making a service that you already offer accessible online, for example, via a specialised app, software or website function.

EXAMPLES OF INELIGIBLE PROJECTS AND COSTS:

- The design of a new service (e.g. something that differs to what you offer already, rather than adding digital features to an existing service).
- A project or costs relating specifically to rebranding.
- A project that is still in the initial 'brainstorming' stage. We will need a clear idea of the digital infrastructure that you want to develop and how you want to do it. The checklist below provides some guidance on questions you should have answered by the time you apply to us.
- Core costs including the wages or salaries of employees.
- The cost of a software license/licenses beyond the initial set up or upgrade period, defined as up to 12 months for a first-time subscription.
- Website hosting costs beyond the initial set up or upgrade period, as defined above.

In December 2023, we hosted a webinar to provide more information about our digital infrastructure funding. You can watch the recorded webinar here.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss making a digital application further, please email Foundation@Clothworkers.co.uk.

DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS CHECKLIST:

*Please note that we do **not** ask questions relating to all these points in our application forms. However, they are important parts of planning any digital infrastructure project, and organisations may like to use this list to support their project planning.*

Are the goals of the project clear, and do they align with your organisation's mission, strategy, and business plan?

What impacts will the project deliver? How will they be measured and monitored?

Do you have a detailed breakdown of the projects costs? Depending on the specific project, this will include:

- Design
- Development
- Project management
- Content migration
- Testing
- Training
- Hosting (if included)
- Ongoing maintenance/support costs (and how will these be met)?

How have you identified potential suppliers, and secured quotes?

How will you ensure the project is well-implemented and used (including staff training and support)

Who is accountable for ensuring the project is accessible to all its users, GDPR compliant and secure?

USEFUL SOURCES OF INFORMATION / RESOURCES

Charity Digital – discounted software for registered charities
https://www.charitydigitalexchange.org/

Café analogy
https://www.thecatalyst.org.uk/what-we-mean-by-digital

Catalyst Service Recipes
https://www.shareddigitalguides.org.uk/

7 steps database blog
https://datawise.london/resources/choosing-a-database/

NCVO digital and technology guides
https://www.ncvo.org.uk/help-and-guidance/digital-technology/#/

Design hops training from CAST
https://www.wearecast.org.uk/programmes/design-hops