

Small Grants – Capital Costs 2025
Further guidance & FAQs

1. [FAQs](#)
2. [Further guidance on what we mean by ‘Capital Costs’](#)
3. [Eligibility Criteria](#)
4. [Shortlisting Criteria](#)

FAQs

1. *What do you mean by ‘free legal advice agency’?*

Your organisation provides legal advice to people at no charge. You may provide other services too, but you are providing Social Welfare Legal Advice (SWLA). This refers to the provision of free, independent, quality-assured advice on social welfare issues relating to civil law including: debt, welfare benefits, housing, employment, education, discrimination, immigration, community care and consumer rights.

2. *Will organisations have to hold the Advice Quality Standard (AQS) to apply?*

No, this is not a requirement. However, the quality of advice will be an important consideration when assessing applications. We expect organisations and staff to have the relevant qualifications and accreditation required for the delivery of their services. This may include, but is not limited to, AQS, SQM, Lexcel, and IAA (OISC).

3. *When does the money need to be spent by?*

You need to be in a position to spend all grant funding before the end of May 2025, and provide evidence for this if requested.

4. *Is there any size restriction?*

There is no minimum or maximum organisation size, as long as you meet the [eligibility criteria](#).

5. *Is there a reserves limit?*

There is no reserves limit, but our [shortlisting criteria](#) outlines our priority for organisations with under six months of reserves.

6. *Is there a maximum upper limit?*

We are expecting typical grant amounts of up to £5,000. We may consider requests beyond this if there is a strong justification for it.

Small Grants – Capital Costs 2025
Further guidance & FAQs

7. *When is the deadline?*

Sunday 9th March, 11pm.

8. *When will I hear about the outcome?*

We hope to make decisions and update all applicants by the 9th of April 2025.

9. *Can we use this funding for anything other than Capital Costs?*

No. This funding is for Capital Costs only. Please check out the full '[what can funding be used for](#)' guidance for details, and do [get in touch](#) if you are still unsure.

10. *Can we apply for continuity funding under this grants round?*

This is dependent on the specific item. Your request must be for building or improving on something, not just maintaining. Funding should not be used for routine maintenance of standard equipment. See the full '[what can funding be used for](#)' guidance for details, and do [get in touch](#) if you are still unsure.

What can the funding be used for?

Capital Costs. The intention is that funding will be spent on, or in connection with; safeguarding life or property, preventing suffering or severe inconvenience, or reducing the risk of further disorder in the future. To be considered Capital grant, spending needs to meet these criteria:

- 1) There must be a **probable future economic benefit**** – this is the positive impact and advantages that the asset is expected to bring to the grant recipients/society. This can be interpreted widely (doesn't have to be monetary), but it does have to have future 'value' to someone. And it must be over the longer term (= more than 1 year).
- 2) It must be **building or improving on something****, not just maintaining. Funding should not be used for routine maintenance of standard equipment. Spending on enhancing or upgrading an existing capital asset is treated as capital, but routine maintenance

Small Grants – Capital Costs 2025
Further guidance & FAQs

and repairs are not.

- 3) The asset should be **used for more than 1 period (year)**

- 4) You must be able to **measure (or estimate) cost** – this is the actual amount of money spent on an asset, or amount of funding granted. This cost includes not just the purchase price but also any other costs directly connected to making the asset ready for use. Estimates can be used if needed.

- 5) **Intangible assets also count** (but not licenses). These can be things like IT systems or intellectual property, provided they have a value/benefit to us, and are in use for more than one year. That typically rules out licenses which are annual costs rather than a long-lasting benefit.

Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible to apply for this funding, please make sure your organisation meets the criteria outlined below. If you are not sure if you are eligible, please do [get in touch](#).

1. **Organisation purpose:**
Your organisation provides free social welfare legal advice.

2. **Location:**
Your organisation is based, or operates in London. If you have multiple branches or sites, you need to be able to explain how the funding will be used for your London location specifically.

3. **Delivery style:**
Your organisation offers face to face advice as part of your services.

4. **Type of organisation:**
Your organisation is a:
 - Registered, exempt or excepted charity
 - Charitable incorporated organisation (CIO)

Small Grants – Capital Costs 2025
Further guidance & FAQs

or

- CIC limited by *guarantee* (with a minimum of three Directors and an asset lock in your constitution – note that CICs limited by *shares* are NOT eligible)

5. Organisational structure:

You have at least three Trustees, Directors or Management Committee members who are not related to each other.

Please note that meeting the eligibility criteria is not a guarantee of securing funding. Please see our [‘shortlisting criteria’](#) for further details of the priorities for the grant round.

Shortlisting Criteria

We anticipate that there will be a larger number of applications than we are able to fund. The decision-makers will therefore be assessing applications that can demonstrate strengths in a significant number of the following areas:

1. A clear understanding of how the proposed solution would address a security issue or safety concern.
2. Clear demonstration of how the funding would be used for safeguarding life and property, preventing suffering or severe inconvenience, or reducing the risk of further disorder in the future.
3. Knowledge and experience of providing social welfare legal advice to communities.

We will also:

1. Consider the geographical spread of grants (as far as possible).
2. Balance funding across multiple areas of social welfare advice, with a particular focus on immigration and asylum advice.
3. Give priority to agencies with less than 6 months of reserves.
4. Give priority to agencies directly affected by the riots of summer 2024.