



Facility Funding Guide

1,400 Teams 21,000 Players 18 County Cups Men Women Boys Girls



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Northamptonshire FA

A WARM WELCOME

My name is **Ian Tinto** and I am Head of Football Development at Northamptonshire FA. As part of my role and remit, I have a responsibility to try to support local organisations to develop and invest in local facilities that will increase and sustain participation in football, while also assisting The FA and other organisations to achieve wider targets, such as increasing coaching and officiating.



Facilities investment is potentially the single biggest undertaking a voluntary sports organisation can do. It requires persistence and determination, as well the ability to work as part of your wider community and diverse partners. It shouldn't be taken lightly and organisations with good and diverse volunteer bases are generally best equipped to deal with the rigours that a major facilities project demands.

That said, facility projects are rewarding and provide a tangible asset to community football. They can often be the catalyst for clubs to expand at a great rate, or sustain a long legacy of football provision within an area.

Projects can take a long time to come to fruition. Whether it be feasibility, planning, funding, partner involvement or the build itself – the bigger the project, the longer it takes. It's really important you

use the support from your County FA as early as possible, and do as much research about what lies ahead as you can.

This document is to help you to do just that and identifies just a handful of the major funds that are available to support facility development. Different funds always pop up and disappear, and we'll regularly circulate opportunities. They are also highly competitive as well; often with the majority of applications not receiving funding. Hopefully the information, advice and resources here will help you identify potential sources of funding and support towards achieving your project.

Ian Tinto

Ian Tinto, Head of Football Development

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FA and Premier League FACILITIES FUND

What is it?

The FA nationally contributes money into the Football Foundation, along with central government and the Premier League to help deliver the FA's Strategic Facilities Strategy. This money focuses on investing in grassroots football to increase the provision of football within communities.

Each region of the country is notionally provided with an amount to allocate to facility and building projects that meet The FA's strategic vision.

What does the funder want to see it used for?

The FA's latest strategy, which runs to 2019, is heavily focused on the Chairman's Commission's recommendations, and subsequently there will be a focus on providing new 3G pitches at strategically important sites. However, this funding stream will also look to support the refurbishment or construction of new facilities that increase participation within football.

How much can we access?

Theoretically projects can access up to £500k of support, but this is rare. Because projects have to source large amounts of match funding, grants tend to be in the region of around £150k-£300k.

What is the application process?

In Northamptonshire, we invite projects to express an interest in funding in October/ November in the preceding year. For example, projects delivered in 16/17 will have to express an interest in October

2015. These projects are then prioritised against the strategic priorities of the county before being assessed for viability. Applications cannot be made to the Football Foundation without the support of both Northamptonshire FA and the national FA. Expressions of interest (EOI) can be made online at www.footballfacilityenquiry.co.uk

What makes a successful application?

A full facility build or refurbishment is potentially the biggest single investment a grassroots organisation will receive and understandably the process is lengthy, and highly competitive. As a minimum, projects will have to have ownership or long-term lease (min. 25 years) of the site or building, as well as substantial match funding and, eventually, planning permission. Clubs are encouraged to complete an EOI at any time, but projects that cannot adequately demonstrate solutions to the above are likely to be delayed or not prioritised. While the project may be prioritised no applications are made to the Football Foundation until all of the above is complete, and failure to achieve the pre-requisites may mean you lose your funding allocation indefinitely.

Head of Football Development says:

At the earliest possible point, contact the County FA to discuss your project. The vast majority of projects are not funded through this route and we recommend clubs don't proceed without seeking the advice of the professional support they can access.



Football Stadium IMPROVEMENT FUND (FSIF)

What is it?

Administered by the Football Foundation the fund is used to assist clubs at step 7 and above with facility and building projects to meet the ground grading regulations as they move up through the league pyramid.

What does the funder want to see it used for?

There is a detailed criteria of what can and cannot be supported using this fund on the FSIF website – www.fsif.co.uk. Examples of projects delivered using this fund recently include new changing rooms and spectator areas to full stands.

How much can we access?

This depends on what level your club is playing at and again full details are on www.fsif.co.uk. Clubs can apply multiple times until their full allocation is used, so if projects have to be done step by step, this is an option.

What is the application process?

Projects for this fund are invited anytime. Projects are then prioritised against the strategic priorities of the county before being assessed for viability. Applications cannot be made to the Football Foundation without the support of both Northamptonshire FA and the national FA. Expressions of interest (EOI) can be made online at www.footballfacilityenquiry.co.uk

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Head of Football Development says:

A vital funding pot for our most senior clubs, some forward planning for sites can secure their future, as well as supporting clubs continue their development. The fund can also be used to match against other funding pots, such as The FA and Premier League Facilities Fund, to deliver much larger projects. It is vital clubs contact the County FA for advice at the earliest point possible.



Football Foundation

SMALL GRANTS SCHEME

What is it?

Administered by the Football Foundation, the fund is used to support small but vital facility projects for community venues.

What does the funder want to see it used for?

There is a short list on the football foundation website :

www.footballfoundation.org.uk/funding-schemes

Generally, successful projects are for small extensions, refurbishment works or grounds maintenance. In rare cases, it has funded unsafe goalposts.

How much can we access?

Up to £10k on a 50% match funding basis (so up to £10k if your project costs £20k).

What is the application process?

Projects for this fund are invited anytime. Projects are then prioritised against the strategic priorities of the county before being assessed for viability. Applications cannot be made to the Football Foundation without the support of both Northamptonshire FA and the national FA. Expressions of interest (EOI) can be made online at www.footballfacilityenquiry.co.uk

What makes a successful application?

Projects need to be able demonstrate the vital need and how it will increase football participation. Projects that help safeguarding on sites are also



encouraged. As a minimum you'll need 50% of the cost secured through a match contribution as well. Applications that are more routine (i.e. decorating/refurbishing changing for existing teams) are likely to be less favoured.

Head of Football Development says:

This funding is really handy for small works and essential builds and the application is slightly shorter than other schemes. We have also had some local success with purchasing pitch improvement equipment through this scheme. It is however very limited and projects that haven't explored other funding avenues are likely to be asked to do so prior to being assessed. Projects need to be able demonstrate how it will help development of the club and provision. A common explanation is "nicer changing rooms will help us keep the players and recruit more" and isn't what this funding is there to support. As usual, any interest in funding through the Football Foundation should be discussed with the County FA as soon as possible.



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Pitch Improvement SCHEME



What is it?

Administered by the Football Foundation, the fund is used to support the improvement of grass and artificial surfaces.

What does the funder want to see it used for?

Typically this fund is used to finance major pieces of maintenance machinery. Large cutting tractors, verti-drains, spreaders, slitters are all included under this scheme. In rarer cases, it could be accessed to bring grass pitches back into use; however, there are other more accessible funds for this purpose.

How much can we access?

While theoretically there isn't a limit, projects usually fund around 50% of the total project cost up to about £25k.

What is the application process?

In Northamptonshire, we invite projects to express an interest in funding in October/ November in the preceding year. For example projects delivered in

16/17 will have to express an interest in October 2015. These projects are then prioritised against the strategic priorities of the county before being assessed for viability. Applications cannot be made to the Football Foundation with the support of both Northamptonshire FA and the national FA. Expressions of interest (EOI) can be made online at www.footballfacilityenquiry.co.uk

What makes a successful application?

First and foremost, sites need to invest in having a professional pitch test carried out by professional groundsmen through the County FA. This will subsequently generate maintenance recommendations for the site. You will also need a decent period of tenure; probably for at least the lifespan of the equipment you apply for. Sites with multiple pitches, or that are currently relying on external contractors or local authorities, are also encouraged to explore this.

Head of Football Development says:

Arguably this is having the biggest impact currently within our county. I'd love to see clubs local to each other working together to put applications in. Equipment tends not be used on a daily basis and if clubs can share, then we can improve more pitches for the same investment. It's also likely to be easier to get the match funding together! Even if you don't pursue an application for equipment funding, having a visit from one of our professionals can maximise the value of your current maintenance budget.



Mick George/SITA/BIFFA/VEOILA

COMMUNITY FUNDS

What is it?

Community funding paid for through taxing waste that is sent to landfill. Companies invest in projects within a certain radius of their sites.

What does the funder want to see it used for?

Typically there is a little more flexibility in what these schemes will cover, but generally they are the same as the Football Foundation funds. It will also cover activities and football facilities with additional uses, such as other sport or community use.

How much can we access?

It varies depending on the company, but sums of £50k are common, as are some higher grants.

What is the application process?

Again it varies by company, but generally it is online/paper-based, with a few windows per-year.

What makes a successful application?

There are a few things that can really help you access this money. First and foremost try to check the postcode of your site to make sure it is eligible. Similar essentials like security of tenure are also required, as is substantial match funding for big projects. What is really beneficial though is speaking to the companies directly. Invariably they have people administering these schemes who will be happy to informally discuss applications.



Head of Football Development says:

These funders offer slightly more flexibility in their funding but it's still very stringent. One advantage to using these funding sources is that you may not have to meet the build specifications of another funding partner. But beware, building a facility that isn't in line with current standards and recommendations are likely to prevent you from accessing future funds, or may not meet grading regulations hampering promotions through the leagues.



Inspired Facility FUND

What is it?

A fund administered through Sport England for the renovation and modernisation of local sports facilities.

What does the funder want to see it used for?

Sport England will be looking to invest in locally-significant sports facilities that will increase sports participation and active recreation with its community.

How much can we access?

£20k- £70k and potentially more, if the project is led by a statutory body like a local authority. However beware of 'additionality'. This is where Sport England, which is government funded, cannot fund projects already in receipt of government money. Some other funding bodies are also funded by the government and can be excluded on this basis.

What is the application process?

It is an open application process with a panel that meets periodically to assess applications. There is significant guidance and online support for the process at www.sportengland.org/funding/our-different-funds/inspired-facilities

What makes a successful application?

The usual 'showstoppers' apply to this source. Security of tenure and significant match funding is likely to make your application much more attractive. It's really important to be able to demonstrate how it will keep people playing,



or increase people playing. The fund likes to see over 14-year-olds forming a major part of the participation, given the other funding sources and relatively strong participation for children under 14.

Head of Football Development says:

This option can be attractive, as it can require a smaller security of tenure period. It's highly competitive and ultimately only for a small amount of funding (in facility terms). The FA and County FA also get asked if they have been consulted on all applications, therefore it's important you involve us, as your application will be viewed poorly if we are not in a position to feedback through no contact.

Being through Sport England however, there's a lot of guidance and support, as well as some helpful videos for all applicants – and a lot of the principles are transferable for other applications. Use these resources to maximise your application's appeal.



Protecting PLAYING FIELDS

What is it?

A fund administered through Sport England for the protection of natural turf pitches.

What does the funder want to see it used for?

Sport England will be looking to invest in bringing previously mothballed sports pitches back into use, or developing new pitches. It only covers natural turf pitches, so 3G doesn't meet the criteria here. It can also be used to improve pitches, which generally means drainage or levelling works.

How much can we access?

£10k-£65k for voluntary organisations (like clubs) or more for other bodies like local authorities.

What is the application process?

It is an open application process with a panel that meets periodically to assess applications. There is significant guidance and online support for the process at www.sportengland.org/funding/our-different-funds/protecting-playing-fields

What makes a successful application?

The usual 'showstoppers' apply to this source. Security of tenure and significant match funding is likely to make your application much more attractive. It's really important to be able to demonstrate how it will keep people playing, or increase people playing. The fund likes to see over 14-year-olds forming a major part of the participation, given the other funding sources and relatively strong participation for children under 14.



Head of Football Development says:

Security of tenure is really important on this application, and there is a lot of emphasis on ensuring pitches will remain pitches in the foreseeable future. It can also be an excellent funding source when exploring asset transfer from local authorities, especially pitches that have been previously mothballed. It's really important to read the guidance and familiarise yourself with its intricacies, as it's a little different in places from a typical facilities fund.





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1,400 Teams

21,000 Players

19 Leagues

400 Clubs

450 Referees

18 County Cups

570 Matches a Week

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9,500 Volunteers



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