

Social Shifters Competition

Guidance for Applicants

Introduction

The following information is designed to help you submit a competitive Social Shifters Competition application. Please read through the information fully before submitting an application. Award of £1000 for students looking to set up a social enterprise to make a positive change in the issues that matter to them. The funding is designed to contribute to the costs of getting an idea up and running, while business support can help to turn the idea into a business. This guidance will help steer you through the application form.

Who Can Apply?

You can apply if have an idea to set up a social enterprise and generate positive change through business, and need some funding to get your idea off the ground.

[Check out our Success Stories](#) for examples of young entrepreneurs that we have supported.

Eligibility

Applications must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- You are a student at one of these Universities: Glasgow Caledonian University, University of St Andrews, The University of Edinburgh, Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh Napier University
- Your idea will be a social enterprise and benefits people, communities and/or environment.
- Your idea is a start-up/not an established organisation and you are not applying on behalf of a pre-existing, established organisation.
- Your idea will not involve political campaigning or the advancement of religion.

If the application does not meet these criteria, it will be ineligible.

If you have any questions about eligibility that aren't answered below, please contact us via email at anna@firstport.org.uk or via phone on 0131 564 0331.

About You

This is where you fill out your basic contact details.

If you have any accessibility requirements, please tick the box. Firstport endeavour to make the assessment process as accessible as possible, so it's important for us to know if you have any requirements.

If you have engaged with one-to-one business advice through Social Shifters/Firstport/Just Enterprise with a view to applying, please let us know.

If you are developing the idea with someone else, please give further details. Please remember that we fund individuals and so you will be the main point of contact.

About your enterprising idea

If you don't have a name for the proposed enterprise/idea, that's fine – just give us a brief summary of the idea.

We don't expect you to have already set up a company or charity to carry out your project, but if you have, please let us know the legal structure and the charity/company number if applicable. You can find this number on [OSCR](#) (charities) or [Companies House](#) (companies).

Your idea may work across multiple sectors, but there should be a main sector which fits the idea in the drop-down list. If there isn't, please select the closest fit.

As above, some ideas are carried out in one specific local region; others work across a wider area. If your project will not be restricted to a specific place, please select 'Scotland Wide'.

The introduction to your idea should be brief and factual. Please include:

- What your idea is (a product, a service, an event, a campaign, or other) and what activities you will carry out.
- How will your idea generate income?
- The social or environmental issue you are tackling and the positive impact your idea may have.

Tell us about yourself

Firstport funds individuals not projects, so we're interested in what makes you the right person to take this idea forward. Passion absolutely counts, but it's also worth considering the following:

- Do you have personal/lived experience of the social problem you're trying to address?

- Do you have any qualifications that will help you deliver your idea? If you're working with vulnerable people, do you have professional/personal experience? Do you have business experience?
- What kind of support network do you have? What skills do they have? What skills do you lack?

You don't have to answer all of the above, but you should show that you have considered some of the points.

What is the positive change or impact of your idea?

If you are trying to solve a particular problem, tell us how this affects people or the environment and the scale of the issue. Ideas funded include:

- **Tacking inequality.** Breaking down barriers in society due to age, disability, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, economic deprivation, or any other unjust reason.
- **Bringing people together.** Creating events or social spaces that are inclusive and welcoming, reducing isolation and building connections.
- **Promoting positive mental health.** Battling stigma and prejudice and helping people with mental health issues to reach out.
- **A greener world.** Reducing negative impact on the environment and creating a more sustainable future.
- **Caring for others.** Working to support and look after the more vulnerable members of our society, including children, the elderly, the sick, and individuals affected by financial hardship or homelessness.

But that's just the tip of the iceberg. If you have an idea that doesn't fall under the above themes, we're still excited to hear about it.

How is your idea going to generate income?

We are particularly keen to support ideas that are sustainable social enterprises that can generate income and continue making a difference over the long term. Don't worry if you haven't thought about this in any detail – this is something Firstport can help you with – but if you have ideas on how to generate income, you can work with a business adviser to develop that.

How will you measure your success/evidence the impact?

We're also keen to support ideas that can deliver a measurable difference to society. Again, don't worry if you haven't thought about this in any detail, but if you have an idea of how you'll measure the difference you're making, please provide details here.

How you will use the money

Please provide us with a list of the items you want to spend your award money on, and how much each will cost. This request will form the basis of your award if you are successful.

Any costs associated with delivering your idea are eligible, but we'll let you know if anything doesn't fit the bill.

Examples of eligible costs: website development, branding and marketing costs, legal fees, rent, utilities (permanent or pop-up premises). While we don't require quotes at application stage, the more specific these costs are, the better. Please note you **cannot cover wages of freelance fees**.

Details of academic representative for verification purposes

You will need to provide details of your course tutor, enterprise hub coordinator etc. who we will contact to simply confirm you are a University student.

Equal Opportunities

We only use equal opportunities information for statistical purposes, and it will not form part of your application assessment.

If there are any questions that you would prefer not to answer, please leave the field blank.

Submit

And you should now be ready to submit! If you've missed any required fields, the form should let you know.

If you're having issues submitting your application, please email us at info@firstport.org.uk or give us a ring on 0131 564 0331.

What Happens Next?

You should receive an email confirming that we have received your application.

If your idea is eligible and approved by a shortlisting panel, we will then contact you to invite you to a **pitching event**.



This will take place via **Zoom or in person**. This will provide you with an opportunity to pitch your idea, talk about your motivations, and your plans for the future.

The judges will choose a winner during the online event.

Once you're up and running, we will ask you to complete a brief written report, confirming how you have spent the £1000 and attaching photographs or videos of your project in action.

Any Questions?

If you have any queries at all or would like to speak to us before applying, please give us a call on 0131 564 0331. Good luck!