

Foundation Grant Scheme Terms and Conditions

Reviewed October 2024

Aims of the Foundation Grant Scheme

The purpose of the scheme is to provide grants for people over the age of 16 living in our homes to improve their employment opportunities. A grant can be used to fund a college or training course, to buy course related equipment, or to pay for associated transport or childcare costs.

We support applications that meet our strategic aims of:

- supporting customers to achieve their aspirations and ambitions; and
- ensuring a highly skilled, capable and resilient workforce.

We want your application to be successful, so please read all sections of this guide to check you meet the criteria and to give yourself the best chance of being awarded a grant.

What can a grant pay for?

The maximum grant awarded will be £1,500 in a three-year period. Customers will be limited to one single application in any three-year period, to allow the grant to serve a higher number of people.

Grants of up to £250 can be fast-tracked within a few weeks to make sure you don't miss out on employment opportunities. To be considered for a fast-track award, you must give a reason for needing the grant before the next deadline. We can't fast-track applications for requests above £250 under any circumstances.

Some examples of how the funding could be used are:

- to cover the cost of a training or college course to enhance career prospects;
- to cover the cost of transport related to training or education;
- to fund the cost of childcare to allow you to continue or begin a training course; or
- to pay for equipment needed to support learning and development.

Note

Course equipment must be purchased through your course provider.

Please note that we can't guarantee to fund the maximum amount requested. In this case, or where the overall cost of your activity is more than £1,500, you'll need to show how you'll

fund the remainder and that this won't delay your proposal. Proof that the additional cost has been paid to the course provider will be required before grant funding is released.

What can't be funded?

Anyone who doesn't live in a Vico Homes home, groups and companies may not apply. Vico Homes colleagues who live in a Vico Homes home also cannot apply for the grant.

The Foundation Grant can't be used to pay for:

- electrical equipment such as laptops, mobile phones or printers;
- running costs that do not relate to personal development, such as rent, rates, utilities, printing, stationery, salaries, insurance, postage, phone, broadband, routine repairs and maintenance, loans or interest payments;
- courses where fees can be paid for through Government initiatives such as Student Finance England or an Advanced Learner Loan;
- any course which include unregulated invasive or potentially harmful treatments such as Botox, fillers or micro-needling;
- courses that can be accessed for free through local colleges or adult education centres;
- courses or activities that happen or start before the grant is confirmed or has already been paid for by the applicant – **no applicants can be awarded funding retrospectively**;
- driving lessons;
- training for commercial businesses;
- courses for individuals where there is evidence that a previous grant hasn't been used as awarded; and
- previously unsuccessful applications, unless the content or circumstances surrounding the application are fundamentally different.

Criteria for application

To be eligible to apply for a grant, you must be able to:

- provide two forms of ID – this includes but is not limited to a driving licence, passport, utility bill, birth certificate, or council tax bill. One form of ID submitted must confirm your current address;
- explain what the grant will be used to fund and why it will benefit your learning and personal development;
- demonstrate how the grant will help you achieve your career or development goals and how this is likely to benefit you in the future;
- provide full details of the course or project as specified in the application form, such as quotes and costs, and course provider name and address;
- provide evidence in support of your application, including three quotes (whenever available and these can be within an email or a page printed from the internet);
- commit to working with a Vico Homes Community Employment Advisor where appropriate; and
- confirm grant funding is still required within two weeks of the Foundation Grant Panel meeting.

Where there is any breach of the Tenancy Agreement, including conduct or behaviour issues, your application may be rejected.

We don't accept applications from anyone who has carried out antisocial behaviour.

Applications from customers in arrears are considered where those involved are working with Vico Homes's Debt and Cash Wise Teams to address the issue.

Each application will be taken on its merits and assessed on an individual basis.

Where required, payments for courses can be deferred for up to one year from the date the Foundation Grant is offered. Before payment is made, deferred applicants will be re-validated to ensure they still meet the scheme criteria. Applicants who defer for more than one year will need to reapply for the grant.

Vico Homes and the Foundation Grant Panel reserves the right to refuse any application at its own discretion. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified.

Value for money

We're committed to providing value for money in all that we do. Doing this means that we achieve the most benefit from the money we spend. It's very important that in your application you show how you have thought about getting the best value for money. This is why we ask for three quotes for funding your project.

Diversity and Inclusion

We're committed to fair treatment and respect for everyone. We recognise the nine protected characteristics of sex, disability, sexual orientation, age, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnerships, as defined by the Equality Act 2010. Your grant application will be viewed positively whoever you are and we can provide extra support – such as translated documents or the support of a Community Employment Advisor, if you need it.

Sustainability

As an organisation, we try to be a sustainable, responsible business by minimising our impact on the environment. To continue to reduce our carbon footprint, we encourage you to apply for local training and to travel sustainably.

Monitoring and Evaluation

If you're successful in your grant application, we'll contact you in six months to see how you're getting on and to check that the grant is being spent as described in your application form. This is a good opportunity to let us know if you are having any problems, or if we can help at all. If it's all going well, we'd love to hear about that too.

Please bear in mind the following important information:

- Monitoring and evaluation forms will be sent to you after six months and when your course is due to end and should be completed and returned.
- One of our officers may visit you to see how the grant has been spent and how you have benefited.
- Grants awarded must be used as specified in your application form. If there are any changes to the application once the award has been issued, you must let us know straight away. If the change means that the project is substantially different to the one you described in your application, the grant award will be reviewed and you may have to repay some, or all, of your grant.
- If there's any unused money at the end of your project, you must let us know and this should be repaid to us.
- Should the course provider dissolve, you should notify us and any unused grant should be repaid.
- If the development activity cannot be completed, you should notify us and ensure any unused money is repaid. Unused equipment provided by us may need to be returned.

How to apply

1. To apply for the grant please fill in an application form online at:
www.vicohomes.co.uk/supporting-you/grants-and-funding
2. After submitting your application, you will have seven days to submit two forms of ID and three quotes (where relevant). After this we'll check that there are no problems with your tenancy. We'll let you know if your application has been successful within one month of the closing date. Please ensure the course you want to undertake begins after the closing date, so we have time to present your application to the Foundation Grant panel and arrange any payments if you are successful. Making an application does not guarantee you an award or the total amount requested on your application, so please bear this in mind.

Note

Where an email address is provided this will be used as the primary method of contact. If you would like to be contacted by any other method, please state this in your application form.

3. If we don't hear from you within seven days, we'll assume your application has been withdrawn and close our records. Applications received after the closing date won't be considered until the next window for applications is open.
4. If your application meets the scheme criteria, it will be presented to the Foundation Grant panel of customers who decide which applications to approve. It's important to provide as much information as possible to allow the panel to make an informed decision. If the panel believe further information is needed, they may delay their decision or reject the application.
5. For award requests up to and including £250, we may be able to fast-track your application if there is a need for the grant to be awarded before the next deadline.

To be considered for a fast-track award, a reason must be given on the application. Fast-track

awards will not be considered for requests above £250.

6. If your isn't successful, we'll contact you.
7. If the Foundation Grant panel award you a grant, you'll need to sign and return an offer form and accept the terms and conditions of the grant. When you've returned your signed offer form, the Foundation Grant team will pay the third party supplier or course provider directly. Payment will not be made directly to you unless the third party supplier requires direct payment from the person who will be using their services. You must provide accurate payment information to ensure your payment is not delayed.
8. Where grants are awarded, you may occasionally be asked to go forward with the second or third options from the quotes given. This is to ensure grant money is distributed more widely throughout the district and to a range of local course providers.
9. Where grant applications have been made for several courses, you may be funded for fewer courses. This is to ensure grant money is distributed more widely throughout the district and to a range of local course providers.
10. The Vico Homes Communications Team may contact successful applicants to arrange appropriate publicity. Any publicity regarding the grant awarded must acknowledge Vico Homes.