

# Domestic Event Fund Guidelines

ISSUED BY THE DEPARTMENT FOR ENTERPRISE

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# Department for Enterprise Domestic Event Fund Guidelines

## Disclaimer

The information contained in this document is intended to serve as guidance as to the manner in which the Department for Enterprise (a Department of the Isle of Man Government) ('the Department') exercises its powers to provide financial assistance to eligible businesses and organisations under the Domestic Event Fund. The content is intended to be general in scope and should not be relied upon as advice.

Provision of financial assistance is discretionary and the decision to provide assistance in any particular case will be based on the merits of the application.

The Department may amend these Guidelines from time to time. While every effort has been made to ensure that the content was correct and up-to-date at the time of publication the Department does not accept any responsibility, legal or otherwise, resulting from any errors or omissions and shall not be liable for any losses or damage that anyone may suffer as a result of relying on the information contained herein.

## 1. Terms used in these Guidelines

'Department' - The Department for Enterprise (DfE)

'Fund' - The Domestic Event Fund

Prospective applicants may wish to take professional advice before making an application and should seek advice in relation to any documents they are asked to sign whereby they offer security for any financial assistance offered to them.

## 2. Overview of the Fund

The Fund is a **discretionary** financial assistance scheme aimed at stimulating economic activity in towns and villages through the development of domestic-focussed events, aligning with the vision of the Local Economy Strategy:

**To ensure the Island is a great place to live, supporting vibrancy and distinctiveness in our city, towns, and villages by empowering communities and enabling retail, leisure, and hospitality businesses.**

Local events are key to attracting visitors and increase spending in retail and hospitality businesses. Priority will be given to applications to fund events that are located within towns and villages, however there are also opportunities for applications for events located outside of towns and villages where there is a clear demonstrable economic benefit to local businesses.

Please note the guidance contained in sections 2 - 6 of this document relates primarily to the standard route for applications into the Domestic Event Fund. Please see **section 7** of this document for further information on the recent extension of support to facilitate single-venue events under the Winter Event Scheme between November 2024 - March 2025. For the extension for 50% rent support for pop-ups please see **section 8**.

For the standard Domestic Event Fund route, organisers need to submit an application form detailing what activities the event would include, how the event would provide value to local businesses and support future operations, along with the cost of putting on such an event. Applications will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and limitations to funding are based on town population size and number of businesses that could benefit from such events.

## **2.1 Example applicants and events**

The Fund would be available to the following provided that the event(s) stimulates direct economic activity for local businesses:

- Local Authorities / Town Commissioners
- Local businesses
- Local industry trade bodies
- Charities

Eligible events would increase/generate footfall to stimulate direct economic activity to benefit local businesses. Examples include:

- Local Markets
- Festivals
- Shows
- Concerts

## **2.2 New Events**

Priority will be given to new events that have not yet been planned / organised / publicised / paid for in advance of the submission of the application.

Organisers of new events are invited to share a three-year plan demonstrating how the event will become established longer term. With this, funding support may be offered in principal beyond the first year on a sliding scale to assist in the event becoming self-sustaining.

Events that have taken place in previous years will be considered, but they must demonstrate a clear enhancement or improvement in terms of format, content, etc. and any financial support received should contribute to these enhancements or improvements.

Local Authorities may apply for support for repeat events without new elements, provided they demonstrate past success in meeting the aims of the Fund. However, the level of support will be lower.

## **2.3 Available funding**

All completed Event Fund applications will be reviewed by the Business Isle of Man Team before being sent on for final approval.

The Fund will provide up to 80% of approved funding for each event under the standard route. (Support for Pop-Ups is at 50%, please see section 8 for details) Any costs that exceed the amount approved by the Department will not be reimbursed. Any unused funding must be returned to the Department immediately after the event.

Eligible costs for reimbursement include:

- Entertainment
- Marketing
- Insurance
- Health & Safety
- Third Party Event Organiser Fees
- Equipment hire
- For Local Authorities/Town Commissioners - Costs related to the purchase of event equipment which can be reused at future events at the discretion of the Department.

Costs not eligible for reimbursement by the Fund include:

- Food
- Drink
- “Freebies”, prizes., etc.
- Charity donations
- Payments to club officials, members or officers of the organising committee, unless previously agreed by the department.
- Travel and accommodation for participants, friends, family, judges performers or artists, unless previously agreed by the department.
- Staff costs and overtime. However, if a large-scale event requires additional staffing, and it can be demonstrated that using existing staff presents a significant cost saving, the Department may consider providing support.

The Fund is intended to stimulate economic activity across the Island focused in Town Centres. To ensure this, the total amount granted to each applicant for all of their proposals will be balanced against the anticipated needs of other applicants, as well as against the impact that approved applications would have on the projected balance of the Fund.

If you have any questions, please contact the Domestic Event Fund Team at [eventfund@gov.im](mailto:eventfund@gov.im).

## **2.4 Single use plastics & recycling**

The Isle of Man Government has committed to significantly reduce the amount of single use plastics.

Single use plastics represent an unsustainable use of resources and make a significant contribution to global greenhouse gas emissions. Applicants should demonstrate how they plan to source raw materials and deal with recycling waste product. In assessing applications, credit will be given to applicants that demonstrate sustainable sourcing.

## **3. Criteria used to assess economic value**

The Department assesses applications for financial assistance on a case by case basis. The following are the key criteria which the Department takes into consideration when

determining what amount of financial assistance to grant in applications to the Fund, not limited to:

- Expected increase in footfall
- Expected increase in revenue
- Expected increase in awareness for the business / area as measured by marketing data (e.g. increase in social media followers)
- Expected impact on unit vacancy rates

The proposed events should support the aims of the [Local Economy Strategy](#).

#### **4. Terms and Conditions**

Any offer of funding is subject to acceptance of the Terms and Conditions of the Domestic Event Fund.

If an event has to be cancelled for any reason, then all or part of the financial assistance received may be repayable. The Department may also impose further, specific conditions depending on the particular applicant's circumstances.

#### **5. Public disclosure of financial assistance paid**

It is a statutory requirement that the names of businesses which received support under the Fund be published in an annual report prepared by the Department which is laid before Tynwald (the Isle of Man's Parliament). Details of financial assistance cannot, therefore, be confidential to the business concerned.

Applicants should also be aware that parliamentary questions may be asked, and Freedom of Information requests may be made about particular applications or applicants.

#### **6. The application process**

Potential applicants who would like to discuss financial assistance through the Fund and how the Fund could help their business are encouraged to contact the Domestic Event Fund Team by emailing [eventfund@gov.im](mailto:eventfund@gov.im) before submitting an application. All applications for events

in town and village centres will be shared with the local authorities as part of the review process. The application must be signed by a liable party on behalf of the applicant.

Please note:

- financial assistance cannot be considered retrospectively for items of expenditure that have already been purchased unless agreed with the Department;
- neither a preliminary discussion nor presentation will be considered a substitute for a properly supported application;
- the applicant is responsible for all costs involved in preparing and submitting an application.

### **6.1 Evaluation of the application**

The Department aims to deal with the majority of applications within 3 weeks of receipt or, where additional information is sought, the date such information is provided (whichever is the later).

### **6.2 The decision**

Where the application is successful the applicant will be notified of the offer in writing along with the terms and conditions that would apply upon acceptance. Standard terms and conditions are applied to each offer of financial assistance. These cover the implications of acceptance of assistance and set out the process for reporting information on the business that the Department will require as a condition of providing assistance.

The Department reserves the right to withdraw an offer of assistance at its discretion. Although unusual this circumstance could arise if an applicant fails to comply with terms

and conditions or if the Department believes that any information submitted as part of the application is incorrect or untrue.

Subject to timescales and resources, if an application potentially meets the criteria of the Fund but additional details are required, this will be discussed with the event organiser, and an opportunity will be provided to update and resubmit the application.

Where the application is refused, the applicant will be advised of the decision and the reasons for it.

The Fund is discretionary. The offer of any financial assistance is entirely at the Department's discretion. The Department is under an obligation to process and consider all applications reasonably, but is not under an obligation to make any payment.

Any offer of financial assistance is also subject to availability of Department funds.

### **6.3 Accepting the offer**

Where the offer of financial assistance is accepted the terms and conditions should be signed and returned to the Department. This is necessary before any application for payment can be considered.

The offer of financial assistance must be accepted by the applicant **within two weeks** of issue of the offer letter.

Applicants who are in receipt of an offer should read the terms and conditions carefully, as they may include significant obligations. As pointed out, the Department may impose conditions (including but not limited to the giving of security for the repayment of the financial assistance), which are additional to those included in the standard terms and conditions. Applicants are advised to seek independent legal advice as to the terms and conditions and any additional documentation which they are required to sign.

**If you are successful in receiving funding for an event, you must use the official 'supported by' stamp on any promotional materials and reference that the event is supported by the Domestic Event Fund.**

A copy of the Domestic Event Fund logo can be obtained from the Business Isle of Man team - email: [eventfund@gov.im](mailto:eventfund@gov.im)

### **6.4 Claiming payments from the Department**

Financial assistance under the Fund will be paid retrospectively, except in exceptional circumstances when the Department can make available working capital grants. This type of financial assistance is only available to existing businesses and is subject to agreement in advance based on demonstrable need.

In order to submit a claim for payment, applicants should submit all original invoices and receipts to the Department within one month following the event. To assess the impact of the Fund, applicants must also submit a breakdown of income generated as a result of the event in addition to key performance indicators as outlined in the application (e.g. increase in footfall, revenue and marketing reach). Any queries regarding the claim procedures should be directed to the Domestic Event Fund Team by emailing: [eventfund@gov.im](mailto:eventfund@gov.im).



## 7. Winter Event Scheme

With the launch of the Local Economy Strategy, funding has been granted to re-open the single venue hospitality route for the Domestic Event Fund in winter 24/25. This support will allow for more targeted support for newly planned events in single venue hospitality locations where the concept of the event itself may not be new and may have taken place previously for example live music and entertainment. As with the standard Domestic Event Fund route, up to a maximum of 80% of the total costs associated with the development of single venue domestic focused events will be covered by financial support with the remaining % being sourced and confirmed by the event organiser.

This support will be eligible for specific events taking place from the **1<sup>st</sup> November 2024** to the **31<sup>st</sup> March 2025** and a new application route with a specific application form has been developed to reflect this change as outlined below.

An eligible business under this single venue hospitality extension of the Domestic Event Fund must have income wholly or mainly from operating a: -

- a) Commercial business premises which is registered with the Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture as a food business, such as coffee shops, cafes and restaurants;
- b) Or Commercial business premises in respect of which an on-licence, granted under the Licensing Act 1995, is in force, such as bars, nightclubs and public houses, whether or not they serve food;
- c) Commercial business premises that operate leisure activities, services, and other recreational facilities open to the general public.
- d) Retail premises, hosting one-off promotional events or activities such as product launches, special entertainment, or exclusive in-store experiences designed to engage the public. (Not including standard seasonal sales or ongoing retail activities.)

Key support caveats:

- a) Support cannot be paid retrospectively for an event that has already taken place or costs that have already been paid out before approval of funding.
- b) Events that have already been planned and advertised/marketed in advance of an application being received will be considered however the preference is that this support is used to facilitate newly planned events in hospitality venues.

A funding limit of £1,500 per venue will be in place across the application period until the end of March 2025, or until available funds have been exhausted. This funding could be used by the business to support a single event or multiple events. Collaborations between businesses are encouraged and in this instance, the funding per venue could be combined. It should be noted that as within the standard Domestic Event Fund the maximum amount of funding per event is 80% and the applicant must cover the remaining 20% of event costs.

This financial support will be available for event organisers to claim for specific eligible costs including but not limited to;

- Entertainment
- Hire of equipment such as PA systems or
- Marketing and advertising costs specifically associated with the event
- Venue preparation costs

Event organisers should make every effort possible to use local suppliers and costs of off island businesses should only be included in the application for if the services or products are not available on the Isle of Man.

Example of events eligible for extended support within hospitality venues include but are not limited to:

- Live music and other entertainment
- Open-mic nights
- Drama performances
- Quiz Nights (excluding any prizes)
- Themed occasions
- Comedy nights
- Film screenings etc.

Financial support is only available through this route for events that are open to the general public with free access or via tickets ultimately to drive open footfall to a venue. Therefore private events with restricted attendance such as private functions and family events will remain excluded from this financial support.

Applications will be reviewed on a case by case basis and funding is only available on receipt of a full completed application form and detailed projected costs for the event. Every effort should be made by event organisers to limit sunk costs and therefore reduce the burden on the finances of the Domestic Event Fund.

### **7.1 Application Process**

Applicants who believe they may be eligible for support through this extended funding route should complete the unique online application form available at: [www.businessisleofman.com/eventfund](http://www.businessisleofman.com/eventfund).

If they have any queries before completing the form these can be directed to [eventfund@gov.im](mailto:eventfund@gov.im). Please note the application form is unique for this extension for single venue events within the hospitality sector and should not be confused with the standard Domestic Event Fund application form/application route which requires a greater level of details. Once complete, this application form will be reviewed within the Department for Enterprise and if further information is required a member of the Business Isle of Man team will be in touch.

### **7.2 Assessment criteria**

The Department will assess each application based on the following criteria:

- Full completion of the electronic application form
- Eligibility as a business under the Fund Guidelines; and
- Analysis of submitted costings based on event specifications
- Projected economic benefit of the event to the business itself and local area through stimulated footfall and domestic spending.

### 7.3 Decision

Where the application is successful the applicant will be notified of the offer in writing by and receive copies of the terms and conditions that would apply upon acceptance. Standard terms and conditions are applied to each offer of financial assistance. These cover the implications of acceptance of assistance and set out the process for reporting information on the business that the Department will require as a condition of providing assistance.

The Department reserves the right to withdraw an offer of assistance at its discretion. Although unusual this circumstance could arise if an applicant fails to comply with terms and conditions or if the Department believes that any information submitted as part of the application is incorrect or untrue.

Where the application is refused, the applicant will be advised of the decision and the reasons for it.

**The offer of any financial assistance is entirely at the Department's discretion. The Department is under an obligation to process and consider all applications reasonably but is not under an obligation to make any payment.**

**Any offer of financial assistance is also subject to availability of Department funds.**

For any further queries relating to the winter hospitality support extension of the Domestic Event Fund please email the Business Isle of Man team direct at [eventfund@gov.im](mailto:eventfund@gov.im).

## 8. Domestic Event Fund - Support for Pop-Ups

**The following will apply from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025 subject to funding.**

To support the objectives of the Local Economy Strategy to both invigorate high streets and transform vacant spaces, the Domestic Event Fund will now offer specific support for businesses looking to “pop-up” in one of the available empty units around the Island. Subject to a successful application, the funding will pay up to 50% of the rent of the space for the first six months of operation. As with the standard Domestic Event Fund route the remaining 50% is to be sourced and confirmed by the applicant.

An eligible business under this pop-up extension of the Domestic Event Fund must be:

- a) A Manx Registered Business.
- b) Offering a product or service that is distinctly different from the other businesses in the area.
- c) The business must not be, or become, eligible for retail tax.

Financial services (e.g., banking, insurance, accountancy), ICT and digital businesses, utilities, and public administration are generally ineligible, subject to departmental discretion

Key support caveats:

- a) Support cannot be paid retrospectively for rent that has already been charged or paid out before approval of funding.
- b) The funding is only for rent and not for other related expenses such as utilities, rates and insurance.
- c) Payment will be made on sight of the invoice and can be paid directly to the landlord.

Applications will be reviewed on a case by case basis and funding is only available on receipt of a full completed application form and supporting business plan. Applications can be submitted before or within the first six months of unit occupancy. Funding is only available for up to six months from the start of occupancy, meaning support will cover the remaining period if an application is made partway through the first six months

### **8.1 Application Process**

Applicants who believe they may be eligible for support through this extended funding route should complete the unique online application form available at:

[www.businessisleofman.com/eventfund](http://www.businessisleofman.com/eventfund).

If they have any queries before completing the form these can be directed to [eventfund@gov.im](mailto:eventfund@gov.im). Please note the application form is unique for this extension for pop-ups and should not be confused with the standard Domestic Event Fund application form/application route with requires different details. Once complete, this application form will be reviewed within the Department for Enterprise and if further information is required a member of the Business Isle of Man team will be in touch.

Applicants will be required to:

- Complete the application form.
- Undertake a review of the local area and demonstrate the requirement for the business.
- Provide details of business plan, targets (sales, footfall etc.), marketing plans, review of competition, and how the space will be used and what the intended hours of operation will be.
- Demonstrate that the intended unit is priced competitively for rent.

### **8.2 Assessment criteria**

The Department will assess each application based on the following criteria:

- Full completion of the electronic application form
- Eligibility as a business under the Fund Guidelines; and
- Analysis of submitted costings

- Comment from the local commissioners or town group

### **8.3 Decision**

Where the application is successful the applicant will be notified of the offer in writing and receive copies of the terms and conditions that would apply upon acceptance. Standard terms and conditions are applied to each offer of financial assistance. These cover the implications of acceptance of assistance and set out the process for reporting information on the business that the Department will require as a condition of providing assistance.

The Department reserves the right to withdraw an offer of assistance at its discretion. Although unusual this circumstance could arise if an applicant fails to comply with terms and conditions or if the Department believes that any information submitted as part of the application is incorrect or untrue.

Where the application is refused, the applicant will be advised of the decision and the reasons for it.

**The offer of any financial assistance is entirely at the Department's discretion. The Department is under an obligation to process and consider all applications reasonably but is not under an obligation to make any payment.**

**Any offer of financial assistance is also subject to availability of Department funds.**

For any further queries relating to the pop-ups extension of the Domestic Event Fund please email the Business Isle of Man team direct at [eventfund@gov.im](mailto:eventfund@gov.im).