

Community Zone Exhibitor Small Bursary Scheme: Guidelines

Please read these guidance notes carefully noting that the scheme is discretionary and applicable only for those contributing to the Community Zone as part of SED (Science and Engineering Day) on Saturday 15th March 2025, part of the wider [SOTSEF \(Southampton Science & Engineering Festival\)](#), coinciding with [British Science Week](#).

What is the Small Bursary Scheme and who is it for?

Small bursaries of **up to £200.00 (inclusive of VAT)** each will be awarded to approximately **10 x small VCSE (Voluntary, Community, and Social Enterprise) groups or organisations** to support them to exhibit at SED (Science & Engineering Day) on Saturday 15th March 2025.

Please see below for full eligibility, timeline and payment details and guidance.

If you have any questions, please contact the **SED Community Zone Team** on festival.community@soton.ac.uk, **023 8059 7521 (Jess)**, or **023 8059 9348 (Ronda)**.

How do I apply?

- 1. Register your activity for Science & Engineering Day (SED).** This is called the 'Stage 1' submission and full details of how to do this can be found here: [Southampton Science and Engineering Festival 2025 - Sed-registration](#)

☛ If you have any questions about registering your activity or the Stage 1 submission, let us know, using the email or phone number above - we're here to help! 😊

- 2. Complete the short, simple application form.** Once your activity has been accepted, you will be sent a short (less than 2 sides of A4 paper) form to complete. It will ask you to tell us concisely about: your group or organisation; the activity you want to bring to SED; the items you want to purchase with the small bursary; how much they will cost; and why they are required for your activity.

☛ **The application form will be sent to you after the Stage 1 submission closes** (Monday 13th January) and activities have been accepted.

☛ **The deadline for submitting the small bursary application form is Monday 3rd February** (the same as the Stage 2 submission deadline).

Who is eligible to apply for the small bursary?

The small bursary is available for **small, VCSE sector groups & organisations** i.e. community groups or organisations, voluntary groups or organisations, charities, CICs (Community Interest Companies) and social enterprises. Groups will **need to have registered to exhibit an activity at SED**, i.e. have completed the Stage 1 submission, in order to apply for the small bursary (more details above under '[How do I apply?](#)').

The activities will be physically located in the 'Community Zone' at SED 2025, unless there is a valid reason for them to be located elsewhere (e.g. a particular link with a theme or other activities in another area of SED, for example, in 2024 a community-led photography & microscopes workshop was located alongside microscopy research activities).

In particular, we are looking for activities led by community groups that:

1. Are part of, or would like to become part of, one or more of our Public & Community Engagement (PCE) Hubs (you can find [more information on the PCE Hubs here](#) and the [link to join the PCE Hubs here](#)).
2. Take appropriate steps to look after the safety and wellbeing of all the people involved.
3. Have a clear plan for how they will engage visitors during SED 2025 and how the visitors will benefit from engaging with you.

☛ SED activities are generally more interactive than e.g. volunteer fair stands – but the Community Zone team are here to help however we can, such as discussing activity ideas or helping think about the visitor experience. For more information on what to expect about SED, or the SED visitors, you can also look at the [SED FAQs \(Frequently Asked Questions\)](#).

4. Consider value for money in their itemised budget.
5. Are interested in **developing** positive relationships between their group or organisation and the University of Southampton (see below).

How can I develop positive relationships between my group or organisation and the University of Southampton?

If your organisation doesn't currently have a relationship with the University, this is a chance to start building one! If you already have a relationship with the University, this is a chance to develop this further! For example...

Starting out in creating relationships:

- Will your staff or volunteers will feel more able to reach out to the University as a result of getting to know us?
- Will your beneficiaries be more likely to consider the University as an employer or place to study in future?

Building on or growing existing relationships:

- Will there be University staff and students involved with delivering your SED 2025 activity, your wider work, or specific projects?
- Are University staff or students among the residents who benefit from your work?

It is NOT essential to have confirmed involvement from University staff or students already when applying for the small bursary. We are looking for a realistic approach.

What can I spend the small bursary on?

The small bursary is there to enable your group or organisation to exhibit an activity at SED 2025. It can therefore be used to purchase items you need to do so, whether that is for the activity itself (such as materials, stationery, printing etc.) or for the people delivering the activity (such as travel costs, staff time etc.).

☛ **Lunch vouchers are provided as standard to all SED 2025 exhibitors so you do not need to include lunch in your small bursary costs!**

Sustainability is important to us, so using the small bursary for **reusable activity materials** (e.g. playing pieces for a game, posters you without a specific event or date on them etc.) is **highly encouraged**. **We hope that any activity you develop for SED 2025 will be one you can use again at other events.**

Who or what is NOT eligible for funding through the small bursary scheme?

The aim of the scheme is to fund SED 2025 Community Zone exhibitors who need support as part of the development and delivery of their engagement activity on the day.

We will NOT fund:

- Standard for-profit organisations.
- Groups or organisations with an annual income of more than £250,000.

☛ Groups who have an annual income of between £50,000 and £250,000 will be treated as a lower priority. This means that your application will be considered last, once all the applications from groups with an annual income of less than £50,000 have been considered.

- Individuals.
- Statutory bodies, including schools. We will fund organisations that work with statutory bodies and activities happening on the premises of statutory bodies (e.g., activities at after-school clubs).

☛ There may be separate funding available for schools meeting Widening Participation criteria who wish to **exhibit** at SED 2025. Please enquire via festival.community@soton.ac.uk.

☛ For schools, colleges, youth groups, or youth charities meeting Widening Participation criteria who wish to request funding to support their children, young people, and families in **visiting** SED 2025, **please contact** festival@soton.ac.uk

- Politically affiliated groups or organisations.
- Groups or organisations without an organisational bank account.
- Companies without a governing document. Governing documents must be supplied along with your application if you're a company.
- Applications led by members of **staff** from any university, including the University of Southampton. **Students from any local university can apply** but must do so through an organisation (e.g., a student society) and must be working with and for local residents, including residents who are not currently students.
- Groups or organisations whose only charitable objective is the promotion of religious or political beliefs. We will check this against your Charity Commission registration, not what's on your website.
- Staff time that isn't specifically for exhibiting at SED 2025, i.e. we will not fund staff time for tasks that are part of the general day-to-day running of your organisation (e.g. receptionists, janitors, cleaners). We will fund staff already employed by your organisation for any time being spent delivering your contribution for the SED 2025 Community Zone. You are also welcome to recruit new staff.
- General running costs of a building or organisation, e.g. rent, utilities.
- Renovations or other building work.
- Applications where there isn't evidence of a will to engage positively with the University of Southampton.
- Groups or organisations in financial difficulties.

What is the purpose of the small bursary scheme?

The purpose of the small bursary scheme is:

1. To support and encourage small, local VCSE sector groups and organisations - including community groups, organisations, charities, social enterprises, and CICs – to exhibit at SED on Saturday 15th March 2025, by supporting some of the financial costs.

2. To enable us to support the work of small, local community groups & organisations by making our engagement platforms such as SED 2025 genuinely accessible to them.
3. To support small, local community groups & organisations who wish to exhibit at SED 2025 to develop interactive, engaging activities and think about how they can use these to engage visitors at SED 2025.

How much money can I apply for?

A small bursary for those that meet the eligibility criteria, is available of **up to £200.00 (inclusive of VAT) per group or organisation**.

We have been advised, through discussion with community groups, that this amount will be sufficient to stop financial concerns being a barrier to exhibiting at SED 2025 in **most** cases. There is potential for flexibility depending on need.

How many small bursaries are available?

We hope to support up to 10 community-led exhibits at SED 2025.

When will the small bursary applications be open?

Once Stage 1 submissions have closed (on Monday 13th January 2025) the Festivals Team will finalise the activities. **Once your activity has been accepted, you will be sent the small bursary application form to complete. This will most likely be during the week commencing Monday 20th January.**

There will also be the opportunity to complete the application form with support from the Community Zone Team at the Community Zone Networking Event at Swaythling Neighbourhood Centre on Thursday 30th January (see [‘What other support is available to me for exhibiting at SED 2025?’](#) below).

The deadline for submitting the small bursary application form is Monday 3rd February (the same as the Stage 2 submission deadline).

☛ We are also happy to discuss your need for the small bursary as part of your Stage 1 submission, as part of your considerations for exhibiting at SED.

Who will decide if my small bursary application will be funded?

Whilst this is a discretionary bursary scheme, a small panel of university staff involved in communications, social responsibility and community engagement will review applications alongside our partners from [SVS \(Southampton Voluntary Services\)](#), a local external organisation that represents the VCSE sector.

Panel members are required to declare conflicts of interest and do not mark applications where these arise.

When will I hear if my small bursary application is successful?

We will aim to let you know within the week commencing Monday 10th February 2025.

How and when will my group or organisation receive the small bursary?

Funds will either be transferred directly (if you are already an approved University supplier, or are able to complete the paperwork to become one before the transfer of funds) or via our partners at SVS.

Our team will complete the paperwork for your payment as soon as the small bursary has been accepted and the above information has been confirmed.

- **If you are or will be an approved University supplier:** we will send you a PO (Purchase Order) number for you to add to an invoice, which we then submit for approval. Payments should usually be received approximately 15 working days after the invoice has been submitted.
- **If you will be paid via SVS:** this will happen as per their normal payment processes and timeline. Please note this may be quicker than the University process.

What terms and conditions apply if I accept funding from the University?

As the funding is to support exhibiting at SED 2025, we expect your group or organisation to deliver your activity at SED 2025, and to adhere to our [Code of Conduct](#) as exhibitors at a Festival event.

The following things would also help us in working with your group or organisation:

- When taking pictures or films of your SED 2025 activity, please try and get **consent** for the University to use any content publicly in relevant communications (we can provide the relevant consent forms).
- Please **keep in touch** with us, both before and after the event, and especially if your preparation for SED 2025 is not going to plan as **we would like to help you overcome challenges where we can**.
- Where appropriate, please **acknowledge** the University's support for your SED 2025 exhibit (we can provide you with e.g. templates for printed materials).

How long will you keep my personal data for?

For unsuccessful applications, we will keep personal data included in your small bursary application (including your name and contact details) for up to five years, after which it will be deleted as standard. We will keep a copy of the rest of your application indefinitely. For successful applications, we will keep your name and contact details on our records indefinitely, but will delete your signature and bank account details after five years. Read more about the University of Southampton [Privacy Notice](#) and [Data Protection and Freedom of Information](#).

Support with applying for the small bursary scheme

If you have questions or need assistance with any part of the small bursary scheme process, we are happy to speak to you on the phone, over an online video call such as Teams or Zoom, or even meet you in person. (If meeting in person, a mutually suitable venue can be agreed). We usually allow up to 20-30 minutes per meeting. We may be able to speak for longer or more than once if needed and our staff have time.

To arrange a call or meeting, please email festival.community@soton.ac.uk to arrange a time slot (inbox checked during working hours Monday-Friday). You can also call us directly and we will answer if available:

- 023 8059 7521 – Jess, Senior Public Engagement Manager, PCE Hubs
- 023 8059 9348 – Ronda, Senior Public Engagement Manager, Civic University

When contacting us, please let us know if you need extra assistance to meet with us, such as BSL video interpreting, text relay or a meeting venue with level or step-free access.

You will be speaking with a member of the University's SED Community Zone Team, made up of staff from our [Public Engagement with Research unit \(PERu\)](#).

What other support is available to me for exhibiting at SED 2025?

The bursary is part of a new package of support for small, local community groups & organisations taking part in SED, which also includes:

- drop-in sessions and Q&A (Question & Answer) sessions;
- opportunities for networking, and trying out activities;
- step-by-step support throughout the process, from registering to being there on the day;
- template documents; and
- access to a team of named contacts specifically supporting community-led exhibits at SED 2025.

👉 **Save the dates!** We are running the following information events for Community Zone SED exhibitors:

Registration Support Drop-in: Friday 10th January 2025, 1-4pm, at SVS and online, [sign up here!](#)

SED Community Zone Networking and Q&A event: Thursday 30th January, 2-4pm, Swaythling Neighbourhood Centre. Invitations will be sent directly to groups whose activities have been registered and have been accepted.

What if my questions have not been answered here?

In the first instance, check the SED 2025 Exhibitor FAQs – these have been developed over 10+ years of running the Festivals and in conversation with many exhibitors including community groups, so they really do provide useful answers to the majority of the questions people ask!

[Southampton Science and Engineering Festival 2025 - Exhibitors-sed-faq](#)

If you have any further questions, or there's anything else we can do to support you exhibiting at SED 2025, please contact the **SED Community Zone Team** on festival.community@soton.ac.uk or **023 8059 7521 (Jess)**, or **023 8059 9348 (Ronda)**.

We hope you can join us on Saturday 15th March 2025 at Science & Engineering Day!