

# ABOUT US

Scottish Community Foundation | Empire House | 131 West Nile Street | Glasgow | G1 2RX



## About us

The Scottish Community Foundation is an expert in charitable giving. Every year, we give away £3.5M on behalf of our clients, making us one of Scotland's busiest grant-makers. Our clients choose to support exceptional community based charities and projects across the country. Using our in-depth knowledge of the charitable sector, they can be sure their giving has the greatest and most positive local impact. To date, we've awarded over £20M to projects across Scotland.

Our clients include private donors, companies, charitable trusts and statutory bodies. We also distribute funds for BIG Lottery, Comic Relief and the Scottish Government. They all give because they want to help improve life for people living in Scotland. Some of our clients choose to give to a specific area of Scotland, while others choose to support projects tackling certain issues.

With over 250 charitable funds, we can support a broad range of themes, including:

- rural isolation
- urban deprivation
- unemployment
- environmental issues.

We're also keen to support projects aiming to:

- improve the health and wellbeing of local residents
- provide training and education opportunities.

Our grant-making is also made possible by our two annual fundraising events, the Caledonian Challenge and Caledonian 100. Through the Caledonian Challenge, 13,000 walkers have raised a total of £9M which has been distributed by the Scottish Community Foundation. If you would like to find out more about these events, visit [www.caledonianchallenge.com](http://www.caledonianchallenge.com) and [www.caledonian100.com](http://www.caledonian100.com)

A large part of the Foundation's grant-making involves making grants of a few thousand pounds to small community groups, working at the grassroots to build and maintain strong communities. Often volunteer-run, or with just one or two paid employees, these small groups can make a small grant go a long way.

Groups can apply at any time for awards up to £5,000, either through our Community Grants programme, the Women's Fund for Scotland, or one of the other thematic grants schemes we run from time to time.

To find out more about us, please visit [www.scottishcf.org](http://www.scottishcf.org)

To find out more about our grant-making, please visit [www.scottishcf.org/grantmap](http://www.scottishcf.org/grantmap)

# ABOUT THE JOB

Scottish Community Foundation | Empire House | 131 West Nile Street | Glasgow | G1 2RX



<b>Title:</b>	Volunteer assessor
<b>Hours:</b>	Approximately 2-3 hours per week
<b>Reports to:</b>	Volunteer assessors are supported by a grants officer, led by the grants director.
<b>Location:</b>	From home

## ROLE PURPOSE AND OVERVIEW

We always receive more applications than we have funds to support. We can generally only fund 50% of the projects that apply, but we are working hard to increase the amount of available funds year-on-year.

To make sure we target our limited resources to the most effective projects run by the most committed and well-organised groups, we assess every application we receive. This involves not only scrutinising the application form, but also contacting the applicant to learn more about their group and their project. We know that applicants value this opportunity to talk to someone directly, and not have to rely only on what they've written in their application. This is particularly true for first time applicants.

Following this process, the assessor compiles a short report which is then considered by our Grants Committee, which meets every two months to decide which projects to support. The committee relies on our assessors to consider all aspects of the applications, and make a fair and considered judgement on the relative merits of each.

## WORKING WITH US

The Foundation has worked with volunteer assessors since it was founded in 1996. Originally, this was essential since we couldn't afford more than a few staff, but it's become a tradition we've maintained because we feel it reflects what we're all about.

We know that our applicants – who are usually volunteers too – are often pleased to know that the assessor they are speaking to is also a volunteer. Having Assessors outside Scotland's two main cities also demonstrates that we are genuinely here for the whole of Scotland and in touch with the needs of rural, urban, Highland, Lowland and Central Belt communities.

Of course, having volunteers on the Grants team helps us to process more applications. We are a charity too, so we're keen to maximise the amount of its income that gets distributed as grants rather than paying for administration costs.

## **WORKING WITH US**

Our volunteer assessors are very much be part of our Grants team. We're looking for a team of dedicated people who will add value to our already successful grants programmes.

With our support, training and guidance, we are looking to recruit volunteers who can regularly assess applications. The average assessment takes 2.5 hours to complete, so we're looking for volunteers who can:

- carry out about 30 assessments per year
- attend three training meeting per year
- commit to be a volunteer assessor for at least a year.

We appreciate how precious your time is, so we can work around your holidays, and other times that you might not be available to carry out assessments.

We provide volunteer assessors with:

- initial and ongoing training in grant assessment
- an Assessors Handbook, supplemented by additional guidance notes and briefing papers on themes or issues of relevance to our work
- link you to a network of other assessors and grants officers
- provide a dedicated point of contact within the Grants team for enquiries or assistance
- give you regular feedback on your assessments and the outcome of the applications you've assessed
- conduct an annual appraisal to hear your thoughts on ways of improving our grant-making and supporting your work as an Assessor
- create opportunities for you to visit projects we've funded.
- expenses reimbursed at a rate of £3 per assessment

There may also be opportunities for assessors to develop an in-depth knowledge of areas of interest to them. We endeavour to assist assessors with the cost of attending relevant conferences, or training events of interest to them. In return, we ask for feedback on they've learned to be shared in a report or briefing papers for other assessors and staff.

We also hope that some assessors will be interested in researching issues affecting communities in Scotland and produce reports, briefings and policy suggestions for assessors, staff and the Grants Committee.

All together, we intend the role of assessor to represent a fulfilling opportunity to support and influence the work of the Foundation, and potentially a valuable personal development opportunity.

## **KEY RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **1. Assessments**

- To support the Foundation's grant-making by assessing applications received to our open grants programmes i.e. for grants up to £5,000, through:
  - A desk based review of application materials: application form, governing document, annual accounts/financial projection and any supporting material supplied by applicants.
  - Telephone interviews with applicants and referees.
  - A report prepared for the Grants Committee, using pro-forma template.
- Currently, application materials are posted in hard copy, although we may move to a system of scanning & emailing in future. Assessment reports are completed electronically and emailed to the Foundation.
- Applications are received continuously throughout the year and dispatched to assessors on a rolling basis, usually two to three at a time. We ask assessors to try to complete assessments within three weeks.
- We ask assessors to commit to undertake in the region of 30 assessments per year.

### **2. Develop best practice**

- To contribute to grant making best practice and the Foundation's knowledge and understanding of needs in the voluntary and community sector in Scotland.
- There are opportunities for assessors to:
  - get involved with research and prepare reports for staff and other assessors
  - attend conferences and events and feedback to the grants team
  - share their experiences their work with the Foundation and beyond to improve our work
  - develop their knowledge and connections through occasional events, training courses and conferences.

### **3. Participate in assessor training and development**

- Attend training events, approximately three per year.
- Participate in annual appraisal discussion with a grants officer
- Most training events and meetings will take place in Central Scotland. Travel expenses will be reimbursed.

### **4. Be an excellent ambassador for the Foundation**

- We expect all of our volunteer assessors to be good ambassadors for the Foundation, and promote awareness our work and services to potential applicants, and other relevant stakeholders.

## PERSON SPECIFICATION

ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE
<p><b>Skills</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ability to compare and analyse evidence to assess a case for support.</li> <li>▪ Good interpersonal skills, with a confident and polite telephone manner.</li> <li>▪ Excellent written communication skills. Assessors must be able to write concise, informative reports.</li> <li>▪ Reasonable level of numeracy.</li> <li>▪ Basic word processing and email skills.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Skills</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Research and ability to prepare briefing papers.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Knowledge</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Knowledge of the nature and structure of the Voluntary and Community sector.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Knowledge</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Familiarity with grant application processes.</li> <li>▪ Familiarity with other funders in Scotland.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Experience</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Experience of working with budgets.</li> <li>▪ Experience of one or more of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- project management</li> <li>- managing staff or volunteers</li> <li>- working with or serving on management committees or boards.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Experience</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Experience of managing grant funded projects.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Other requirements</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Access to a personal computer and email.</li> <li>▪ Availability for approx. three training days per year.</li> <li>▪ Availability to contribute to assessments reasonably regularly.</li> <li>▪ Ability to make occasional telephone calls to applicants/referees during day, if necessary.</li> </ul>	

### HOW TO APPLY

Please send us your CV with a covering letter explaining why you are interested in becoming a volunteer assessor, and outlining your relevant skills and experience. Applications must be with us by Friday 13 November.

**Glasgow office** - Scottish Community Foundation, Empire House, 131 West Nile Street, Glasgow, G1 2RX.

If you'd like more information before applying, please feel free to contact Jennifer McPhail on 0141 341 4960, or [jennifer@scottishcf.org](mailto:jennifer@scottishcf.org)

We'll be reviewing applications in November. If we feel that you would make a good volunteer assessor, we will invite you to join us for a chat. This is an opportunity to make sure that the Foundation is right for the applicant, and if the applicant is right for us. If we both agree that an assessor role is right for you, we'll arrange an induction and training session in December, and provide you with everything you need to begin assessing applications from the New Year.