



# Connecting Scotland Housing Programme

## Frequently Asked Questions

**Can I speak to someone to discuss our project in advance of putting in an application?**

Yes. To get in touch with us email [help@connecting.scot](mailto:help@connecting.scot).

**Can I apply for revenue funding?**

This opportunity is for capital only.

**Can I apply for more than £10k?**

We anticipate that the largest awards will be devices and connectivity to the value of £10,000. However, if you feel there are exceptional circumstances and would like to request kit to a greater value then please contact our helpdesk in the first instance to discuss.

**How many of the themes can we bundle into our project?**

You can bundle as many of the themes as you wish into your project as long as the total does not exceed £10,000

**Can we use this opportunity to apply to set up a new device library?**

Yes, however you must be able to demonstrate within your application that you can operate the project safely and effectively.

**We already have a supplier. Can we use that supplier, or must we order through the device catalogue?**

Yes. If you already have a supplier, you can continue to purchase through them.

**Can we order kit from you that isn't in the device catalogue?**

No, we have negotiated the prices for these products from our suppliers. These are the devices and connectivity that are available.

**Can we gift any of these devices to people who are digitally excluded?**

No, our aim through this programme is to provide devices that can be shared amongst multiple people.

**Can I apply for adaptive kit for technology to make devices more accessible?**

The main aim of the programme is to provide devices and connectivity for a wide range of people. Adaptations can be considered, for example:

- If your project supports people that this programme is aimed at to try before they buy
- If the kit will benefit a significant percentage of your community



If you would like to discuss any accessibility requirements and kit as part of your application please do get in touch with us via [help@connecting.scot](mailto:help@connecting.scot).

**We are an organisation that has a number of housing sites can we apply for grants for multiple sites?**

We can offer one grant of £10k to each individual organisation.

**How long will we be asked to report on our activity?**

We would like to hear from you every six months for two years.

**What monitoring information will we need to collect?**

As part of this grant programme, we want to find out more about digital inclusion provision in housing and transitional accommodation, how sustainable schemes are for providers and how far they go in meeting clients' needs. This will help us develop a future programme with initiatives that can meet organisational and client needs as well as have a bigger impact on improving digital inclusion across Scotland.

Awardees will be expected to report back on use and impact of devices via the online monitoring in the grant portal using information collected as part of administering the scheme. This would include numbers of devices purchased, number of users supported, patterns of use, the demographic of the user group and the benefits to the users of getting online. A simple reporting form will be provided for this purpose.

Successful organisations will also be asked to take part in an interview with a Connecting Scotland researcher to share their experiences about the scheme. This conversation would take about 45 minutes. It would include questions about their experience of running the scheme, how they see the service developing, where gaps are in terms of provision for clients and what we can do in the future to help.

There will also be an opportunity for successful organisations to assist with research activities that directly involve clients. This is so we can hear from clients about their needs, their experience of getting online using the scheme, and their plans for getting online in the future. To help set this up, we may ask you to do one of the following things: assist our researchers to speak with a sample of service users, assist our researcher to visit a communal facility and speak to users there, or to circulate a survey to tenants on our behalf. If successful, we will ask you which approach might be easiest for you to help with, and which would be the most comfortable for your clients to take part in.

Research findings would be shared with participating organisations.

**Are there guidelines on how we should run our device library?**

When setting up a new device lending scheme, there are number of things to consider, for example:



- Who is the scheme going to support and what are their needs? How will they be able to access the devices? Set up your scheme in a way that works best for the people you're looking to support.
- Consider the different types of devices and which are most suitable for the scheme and its prospective users. Will you include mobile connectivity too?
- Loan periods – test and define loan periods and possible extensions/renewals which are suitable for your users whilst managing capacity.
- Loan agreements - A loan agreement sets out the terms of the loan and the expectations individuals are expected to meet. However, be mindful that holding individuals liable for any loss or damage may act as a deterrent for taking up the loan, especially among those who would benefit the most.
- Security and safety of devices – who is going to be responsible for the set-up, ongoing management and the security of devices? What policies and procedures will be needed for the secure management of the scheme?
- Can you provide some support for users if they get stuck while using a device, or if they would just like to improve their digital skills and confidence?

More information to help you get started can be found via the link below, but other resources are available online.

<https://digitalinclusionkit.org/how-to-set-up-and-run-a-digital-device-lending-scheme/#The-risks-of-running-a-device-lending-scheme->

We would anticipate that you will adapt your practice as you learn and would love you to share that with us to contribute to a 'playbook', guidance to help others.

### **What is a playbook?**

A playbook is a 'how to' guide. It contains a number of things including

- How a device library operates
- The steps in setting up a device library and running it
- The policies and procedures that are in place to run it

### **Are there any specific guidelines on safety and security?**

Organisations are responsible for the set-up, ongoing management and the security of devices. These responsibilities include, but aren't limited to:

- GDPR compliant wiping of personal data between loans, which could be done by organisation staff or outsourced to a data cleansing service
- Safety testing, which could include documented Portable Appliance Testing (PAT), visual inspections and physical cleaning
- Terms of use agreement for clients, detailing loss and damage conditions
- Public liability or product indemnity insurance which covers lending of equipment beyond the organisation's central location



- Environmental standards compliant electronics recycling process for damaged or end of life devices and accessories

**Do you have training available to our staff/volunteers who are supporting our users with their digital skills?**

Yes, you can sign up to our online Digital Champions training sessions.

**I'm having trouble logging into the application system – how do I get help?**

Email help@connecting.scot and one of the Connecting Scotland Team will be in touch to help you within two working days, but usually within 24 hours.

**I've got some questions about completing the application form. Who should I contact?**

The Connecting Scotland Team at SCVO are happy to help with any questions at any point during the process. They're there to support you in your application and throughout the fund programme. If you email help@connecting.scot with your query one of the team can get back to you by email or arrange a call or virtual meeting if that would be easier for you.

**How will my application be assessed?**

A group of assessors from SCVO and the Connecting Scotland Team at Scottish Government will review applications for suitability against the fund criteria and make decisions on awards.

**What if our project doesn't go to plan or we can't deliver it within the timescale?**

We appreciate that things don't always go to plan. However, the fund is time limited, and all awards, apart from infrastructure improvements, must be spent by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024. If you have any delays in purchasing devices or think that your delivery timescales are slipping, please contact us and we'll make sure you have the support you need to get things back on track.

**When does the funding need to be spent by?**

Your grant funding will need to be spent by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024, unless you are receiving a grant for connectivity infrastructure, in which case funds need to be spent within 12 months of receipt. We expect your delivery to continue beyond this date and are asking organisations to provide feedback on delivery over a 2-year period.