

Appendix 2 - UK Shared Prosperity Fund – Application Summary

1. Aberdeen City Council - Community Buildings Feasibility Study - £70,000 request

This project proposes multi-year feasibility work to investigate a pathway for energy efficiency upgrades of Council owned community centres in Aberdeen City, mapping out specific measures to bring identified buildings up to a certain EPC Band. By completing feasibility work prior to the capital project, the energy efficiency measures will be the most sustainable options considered, reflect value for money, and provide a consistent standard across the City region. Demonstrating the feasibility of transforming the energy efficiency of Council buildings will aid decision-making, refine future any delivery of the work, and provide a blueprint for other service areas and corporations to replicate.

The objective of the feasibility is to map out a pathway for these buildings to become net zero carbon buildings which are highly energy efficient and powered from on-site and/or off-site renewable energy sources, with any remaining carbon balance offset.

The feasibility will involve site survey visits to carry out a visual assessment of building fabric, analysis of energy usage, thermal imaging to determine air tightness, demand requirement, a detailed review of the existing mechanical and electrical services (M&E), collating of information on maintenance records and costs, reviewing of recent or proposed energy projects for the building, and whole life cycle assessment including carbon.

Studies will investigate Energy Efficiency Rating improvements (lower running costs) and Environmental Impact Rating improvements (lower CO2 emissions), including:

- Investigating heat pumps or connections to heat networks.
- Investigating passive design measures for any new construction works.
- Investigating fabric improvement works that reduce demand for energy.
- Consideration of construction carbon, embodied carbon and operational carbon.

A structured quantitative and qualitative assessment methodology will be used to inform decision making. A Total Performance Index (TPI) can be used to rank intervention options and looks wider than just zero carbon. This includes:

- Comfort (overheating and thermal comfort, CO2 and ventilation rates, air quality, daylighting)
- Lifecycle carbon (operational and embodied)
- Running costs (based on existing tariffs)
- Capital cost
- Heritage impact (conservation of heritage value)
- Fabric risk (minimised risk to fabric integrity)
- User disruption (minimised user disruption)

There are 24 Community/Day Centres which Aberdeen City Council owns. With 19 of these buildings having an EPC rating below D. Inchgarth Community centre has already undergone feasibility work so this will not be repeated and so 23 buildings will potentially be surveyed.

EPC rating B , 1

EPC rating C , 0

EPC rating D , 4

EPC rating E , 4
EPC rating F , 5
EPC rating G , 10

After the site surveys and assessments, the feasibility will outline a high-level pathway towards net zero by 2045, at the latest. The output of this feasibility work will be a report for each building containing the detailed information from the feasibility survey and assessment, a costed pathway for net zero, which can then be used to develop business cases for investment for energy efficiency improvement and long-term net zero decision making, for each of the buildings.

The priority list for feasibility will be developed prior to an agreed site survey plan. Options include to prioritise buildings by poorest EPC rating or by building usage.

2. Aberdeen City Council – ClimateOS Software - £101,000 request

Aberdeen City has been working with multiple organisations across sectors to co-design and deliver a just transition to net zero in our local authority area. A problem which has been identified is a lack of consistent approach and data to back our climate-based decision making. The Carbon Scenario Tool Pathfinder Project: (Recommendations for building local authority decision-making capability to deliver area-wide net zero strategies) highlighted the challenges that local authorities face in taking the lead in reducing territorial emissions, and their need to build capability and capacity to deliver on area-wide emissions.

This proposal seeks funding for a license to access, test and share knowledge on the application of the existing online tool ClimateOS that supports informed decision making towards high impact new shared area wide strategies, policies, and project programmes for net zero.

Use of the tool aims to support collaborative local place-based climate planning and provide a platform for project management and monitoring against net zero targets, ensuring this information is documented, accessible and transparent to participating stakeholders. The tool also has emerging capacity to measure and monitor co-benefits of social, jobs and investment impacts.

As strengthened governance on net zero emerges in the local authority areas, work with stakeholders is starting to progress to the development of high impact project programmes for the net zero transition. Robust and consistent application of the tool aims to improve efficiency in project planning and monitoring across multiple themes and work programmes. As well as build new knowledge among stakeholders in scenario modelling, to inform the most appropriate net zero interventions at the right time.

Transition of the energy industry in the northeast will mean rapid structural change in the energy market, supply chain and skills required. There is a need to accelerate a just transition for the energy sector and have the means to navigate this change process, with oversight of the contributing transition elements to focus direction and avoid duplication. The tool has the capacity to identify co – benefits from net zero projects that can support a Just Transition.

Given the scale of work across all net zero themes, there is a complexity in monitoring that this tool can greatly simplify, in doing so freeing up capacity to focus on action. Use of the tool will establish a publicly accessible online system for net zero, that will help to build understanding, increase wide transparency and credibility on action for business, organisations and community partners involved in the transition.

This project supports deeper participation, co-creation and empowerment. The approach and tool will enable engagement and direct input by officers in building individual and collective understanding, testing and defining high impact projects, scenarios and investable programmes. This also includes those outside of the Council, e.g. community plans, etc. It is intended that further public and stakeholder engagement will take place using the tool and access to the tool will be provided to some stakeholders, including those of community interest, helping to bring wider perspectives into the discourse and ensure accountability towards the outcomes we seek and the investment we direct. Community access to the tool will also allow the 3rd sector to better direct their own investments towards higher impacts.

Options for project design

1 year license = 33,000

3 year license = 71,000

5 year license = 101,000

To support longer-term regional and cross sector testing, programme & investment planning and wider knowledge sharing, a 5-year software license is sought but we would be happy to amend this to 3 years if there is a pressure on funds.

3. Aberdeen City Council – SPECTRA Scotland’s Festival of Light - £240,000 request

Spectra, Scotland’s Festival of Light, will be held for the 8th time in February 2023 and is a vital part of Aberdeen’s events calendar, directly contributing to the post-pandemic recovery of the city centre and shining a light on Aberdeen at a time when the evenings are cold and dark.

The long-term goals for this funding is to commission new works of art for the festival in collaboration with Aberdeen Art Gallery, creating a legacy piece for new employment opportunities while showcasing and interpreting the existing collection. However, Spectra has an immediate funding requirement to enable delivery of the event in 2023.

For 2023, the festival planning is already well underway, but facing budget pressures due to current inflation impacts making costs exceptionally high across the events sector and additional funding is required to deliver an event which meets the strategic aims of Aberdeen City Council socially, economically and culturally. As this will be the first major event held in Union Terrace Gardens once it has opened to the public, additional funding is needed to ensure the site has the scale and quality artworks required to meet expectations, as well as activating other city centre spaces such as Broad Street/Marischal College and Aberdeen Art Gallery. For 2023 the funding would secure large scale artworks which would be tailored for the site and to the Aberdeen visitor experience. Spectra has a track record of matching established works with opportunities for local artist to provide additional interpretation through the prism of North East culture, such as the inclusion of Doric elements which make the festival such a unique experience celebrating our communities heritage.

In addition, funding from the Shared Prosperity Fund would be used to deliver a bespoke tourism marketing campaign to drive weekend break visitors to Aberdeen during Spectra

For 2024 and 2025 funding will be used to:

Commission 2 new signature artworks for display as part of Spectra 2024 and 2025 respectively, showcasing items held by Aberdeen Art Gallery and Museums - £60,000 each year

Deliver a Spectra Ambassador training programme in partnership with Aberdeen Art Gallery to develop production and curatorial skills with recent graduates - £20,000 each year

Continue delivering a bespoke thematic tourism marketing campaign to drive weekend break visitors to Aberdeen during Spectra - £5,000 each year

Spectra has grown to be the largest urban light festival in Scotland and a firm fixture on Aberdeen's event calendar. The 2022 festival saw record numbers returning to Aberdeen city centre for the first time following the Coronavirus pandemic and brought confidence back to the city. Spectra is an ideal candidate for Shared Prosperity funding due to its status as a signature event, the catalyst impact it can have on city centre businesses, local communities and the cultural life of Aberdeen and the region as a whole.

4. Aberdeen City Council – Tolbooth Museum external improvements and structural repairs - £700,000 request

The Tolbooth Museum has been closed since the start of the pandemic. Unlike other cultural venues (such as Aberdeen Art Gallery and Maritime Museum) it has not reopened. The primary reason for this is due to a large crack to an internal archway on the ground floor, which is considered a potential risk to health and safety. Furthermore, there are extensive repairs required to external areas, including the roofs, stonework, parapets and pointing. These requirements have now been initially assessed and a scope of work has been established.

Parts of the Tolbooth Museum date back to 1615 and is one of the oldest buildings in Aberdeen. It is a grade A-listed building located on Castle Street. The Council has a duty to maintain Listed Buildings in its ownership. Failure to maintain the exterior would create a risk of falling masonry, slates and leadwork. The internal condition of the building is also being affected by the water penetration. Lack of action would see further deterioration of internal finishes. The work will protect a historically important asset and allow it to be brought back into use.

The proposed works to be completed are as follows:-

- Structural repairs to archway.
- Loose surfaces to stonework to be brushed down.
- Removal of rusting embedded metal in stonework.
- Removal of previous mortar repairs and replace with lime based mix.
- Repointing.
- Lead covered spire to be stripped and new sheeting installed.
- Repair or replacement of flat roof.
- Renewal of timber louvre infills.
- Refurbishment of clockfaces.

This work will require an extensive scaffolding system to be put in place for a number of months to allow the work to be carried out. Listed building consent will be required. Officers with Capital team have extensive experience of working with Historic Environment Scotland with regards to work on historic assets.

The museum is currently closed with contract acceptance and mobilisation set for January 2023. Work is to start in March 2023 and be completed in Autumn 2023. This will facilitate the reopening of the museum in 2024.

The key benefits of the project would be the protection of a Grade A listed building and the reopening of the museum. A reopened popular visitor venue enhances the heritage portfolio of the city, making the Broad Street end of the city centre a key location for visitor flow, advancing post-covid city centre economic recovery and the emerging cruise market offer, as well as increasing city dwell.

5. Aberdeen City Council - Aberdeen Archives, Gallery and Museums – Reimagining The Cowdray Hall – Feasibility Study - £40,000 request

The aim is to undertake a feasibility study to guide the future use and development of the Cowdray Hall.

The Cowdray Hall is a concert venue with its exceptional acoustic was funded by a gift from Annie, Viscountess Cowdray, whose family has strong links with Aberdeenshire. It was constructed to encourage “a taste for art and music in the city of Aberdeen.” The Cowdray Hall was opened on 25 September 1925 by King George V and Queen Mary. It continued the expansion of the Art Gallery site located at Schoolhill.

The redevelopment of Aberdeen Art Gallery 2015-19 placed the Cowdray Hall at the centre of the Art Gallery complex, a place which celebrates the inspiring power of art and music.

Works undertaken in the Cowdray Hall during the redevelopment project were light touch decoration, new carpets, rewiring, the installation of a small kitchenette, new green room facilities and the installation of Wi-Fi. As we start to see audiences return post-pandemic their expectations have changed and developed. We are also seeing an increased audience for events that require more IT and AV infrastructure.

As the Cowdray Hall was originally designed as an acoustic chamber-music performance space, it is not currently set up with integrated and seamless digital systems.

The proposed project would involve a tendering process to hire a consultant. They would be contracted to undertake a research, benchmarked feasibility study, working closely with Archives, Gallery & Museums staff and the Commercial Development team.

It is expected the consultant to test the market, consult with cultural partners and consider gaps in the market and market saturation. They would undertake industry/sector specific research and feasibility study; determine scope of our current offer and benchmark; recommend development opportunities and cost out.

The consultant will develop and lead audience consultations, research and analyse current audience demand, consult with companies and organisations who have hired the space, gather evidence of current demand / missed opportunities undertaking focus group studies with staff and users.

The Service Manager – Archives, gallery & Museum and Service manager – Commercial development will ensure the consultant has access to appropriate partners and internal staff, and share information as required.

With the recent closure of the Belmont Cinema there is potential for a greater variety of events to take place within the Cowdray Hall, as well as an anticipated increase in demand. This would be considered in the feasibility study.

6. Aberdeen City Council - Aberdeen Archives, Gallery and Museums – Aberdeen Archives Centre – Feasibility Study - £90,000 request

The collections of Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Archives contain a wealth of documents and records dating from the 12th century to present day, relating to the rich history and heritage of the City of Aberdeen and the three ancient counties of Aberdeen, Banff and Kincardine. The aim is to undertake a feasibility study and options appraisal to guide the future location, creation, development and funding for a co-located Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Archives, incorporating paper-based original-source material currently held in museum and library collections in the council, and opportunities for joint working with city and regional partners to create a “one stop shop” for ancestral tourism, research and access to the historic archives (UNESCO designated), and council records (statutory).

Currently the Archives are located at the Town House and Old Aberdeen. Aberdeen City and Shire Archives share the premises in Old Aberdeen with St. Peters Roman Catholic Primary School (St. Peters RC) and previously Aberdeen Scientific Services Laboratory (who recently vacated the premises). By 2025, St. Peters RC Primary School are expected to have relocated and the Archives team will be the sole occupant in the building.

To allow release of this asset, and with the future use of the Town House being explored, we must conduct a feasibility study now to determine our future options for a safe, secure and accessible location.

A new centre would be fit-for-purpose; safeguarding the heritage of the city, fully accessible, encourage more visitors/users and tourists to the city, provide facilities to increase the number of volunteers working with the collection and explore options to increase environmental sustainability of a traditionally plant-heavy storage requirement as part of BS 4971:2017. Current accommodation requires significant intervention for environmental control and pest management, but significantly underachieves.

Public access is limited and made more complex for the small team by operating two independent sites. The ability to expand storage is currently curtailed as the footprint cannot expand and as more businesses and organisations move to digital record keeping, more and more historic paper archives are passed to the officers for safe-keeping. We would expect this to accelerate as businesses close and/or downsize.

Following a feasibility study, it is expected to build a clear business case for internal and external funding to achieve the recommendations of the report and invest in the city and shire’s approach to its important heritage records and primary source material.

7. Aberdeen City Council - Aberdeen Archives, Gallery and Museums – Audience Evaluation & Acquisition – Feasibility Study - £150,000 request

The aim is to deliver a transformative project which will have short, medium and long-term benefits not only for visitors Archives Gallery & Museums venues, also for the culture and heritage sector across Aberdeen. The project will provide essential baseline information for Aberdeen's culture and heritage sector to build on. This is particularly important post-pandemic, at a time when work and leisure habits have changed significantly, alongside major events including the cost of living crisis, and the increased importance of wellbeing, equality, diversity and representation in the work of cultural and heritage organisations.

The project will help organisations understand their own audiences and inform planning and delivery of their services and programmes, it will also provide essential evidence to support a healthy ecosystem for culture and heritage in the city. Longer term, it will lead to an increase in city centre dwell time and return visits for local audiences, and increasing incoming tourism spend with overnight stays. Project's stakeholders are Aberdeen City Council - Archives, Gallery & Museums (project lead); VisitAberdeenshire – the destination marketing organisation; Culture Aberdeen network – a partnership of the city's cultural organisations with support from ACC; Aberdeen City Visitor Attraction Forum – a new network and North East Scotland Heritage Network – a recently-established network supported by Museums Galleries Scotland.

In summary the project will help to:

Take stock: Understand who our audiences are and what we already know about them.

Identify challenges: Identify where our offer could resonate better with audiences how to overcome engagement barriers.

Find new faces: Learn about untapped potential within audiences in our area and how to start engaging them.

Embrace differences: Consider how to cater for a broad range of communities / audiences / visitors with diverse needs.

Implement change: Develop a robust and resilient strategy for continuing to engage new audiences.

Tasks:

1. Establish a paid post to support this project
2. Work with a consultancy such as The Audience Agency to scope out and agree a 2-year programme of research to include:
 - Data audit: benchmark local audiences across organisations in Aberdeen, identify opportunities for data capture and analysis
 - Engaging audiences: planning, training, delivery
 - Community consultation toolkit delivery
 - Drive time and distance report
 - Detailed local area and engagement reports
 - Digital engagement benchmarking and development
 - Identify, develop and delivery collaborative opportunities for cross promotion, testing and analysing campaign activity.
3. Deliver a programme of training and development through the lifetime of the project.
4. Deliver a final report and associated toolkit and action plan for audiences.

- Measures of success will include increases in:
- visitor figures at partner venues (counted admissions)
- city centre footfall (IOT)
- spend/head at venues (income generated during period/counted admissions)
- dwell time in city (surveys)
- levels of awareness of culture and heritage in Aberdeen
- levels of engagement and participation in culture and heritage activities