

Northern Community Rail Station Adoption Fund Application Process

Introduction

As part of its successful bid for the Northern Franchise, Arriva Rail North (Northern) has committed £100,000 to a 'Station Adoption Fund' in the first year of the franchise. This sum may change in future years based on guidance from the Community Rail Executive Group (ComREG) and the successful take up of the fund, but it is currently planned that the fund will exist for the duration of the franchise. Unspent money in previous years will roll over, up to the end of the franchise.

The Fund is provided to facilitate the activities of Station Adoption Groups. It will also provide Personal Protective Equipment and may, in the future, be used to help fund larger items on stations subject to guidance from ComREG and to take up of the fund as it stands. It can be used as match funding but this is not a requirement.

We are asking all Station Adoption groups to produce a simple annual plan. We expect no more than an outline of what the group hopes to achieve through the year and how much it is likely to cost. We are not expecting a sophisticated project plan but we do want groups to be able to monitor their own success.

Payments from the Station Adoption Fund will only be made against items identified in the Station Adoption Plan. If that means the plan needs to be re-written part way through the year to note a particular item or activity that the group would like to undertake, that is not a problem. We just want to see that it has been thought through, any risks identified and the costs have been considered in advance.

The Fund must be properly accounted for. However, it is recognised that the sums involved may be relatively modest and groups have limited administrative resources so the aim is to keep the administrative effort involved in applying for and then accounting for the funds claimed to a minimum.

There is no upper limit on the size of applications except that no one project should take more than 20% of that year's total allocated funding (i.e. in 2016-2017, £20,000): most grants are expected to be much more modest and large grants, certainly in the early years, will be exceptional.

For larger projects whilst there will be no absolute requirement for match funding, preference will be given to projects that have a match element. It is also expected that larger bids would have clear passenger benefits that have a reasonable probability of translating to increased passenger numbers.

The Fund is available to all CRPs and Station Adoption groups: there is no requirement for Line or Service Designation.

Planning for Success

No application may be made to the Station Adoption Fund unless that claim is clearly in support of the aims set out in the Route or Station Adoption Plan for that financial year.

There will be no grant given for producing a designated route plan or any other plan or document in support of the application to the Station Adoption Fund.

Route Plans and Station Plans themselves may include reference to the Station Adoption Fund, but the success of those plans should not rest completely on the assumption that an application will be approved.

All grants under the Fund will be subject to satisfactory progress or close-out of previous projects supported by the Fund. "Satisfactory progress" will be determined by reference to a dated plan with a level of detail appropriate to the project.

What can the grant cover?

There is considerable flexibility over what can be paid for by this fund - but six tests will be applied:

- 1 Does the project benefit passengers and/or the local community?
- 2 Does it make the station a more attractive and/or more secure place to be?
- 3 Is it likely to increase sustainable footfall at the station?
- 4 Does the project further the aims of the Community Rail Development Strategy? (i.e. increase revenue, reduce costs, increase community involvement or facilitate regeneration)
- 5 Is the project in line with the Route Plans, Station Plans or any other previously agreed plan?
- 6 Is there any element of match funding?

Not all tests will need to be met in all cases: judgement will be used based on the level of grant. There is an expectation that more of the tests would need to be met for more substantial grants.

It should be stressed that these tests are NOT to be considered onerous. Simply planting more flowers in tubs and maintaining them through the growing season would meet four out of the six tests and be completely acceptable.

By contrast, if the idea was to include say a children's play area as part of the station, we would consider each of those tests a lot more carefully as potentially local experience might (not necessarily would) suggest such an area could act as a magnet for less desirable elements amongst the local population.

What will not be covered by a grant?

The fund will not cover costs which are the contractual responsibility of the Station Facility Owner nor the cost of CRP or local authority officer time.

Who can apply?

Applications should be made by Station Adoption Groups or CRPs within the Northern franchise area.

How can the Group or CRP apply?

All formal applications must be made on the Application Form (Annex A).

How much can be applied for and what are the match funding requirement?

There is no limit to the number of applications which can be made.

If the fund is to provide the biggest possible impact, we would encourage an element of match funding for all funding bids. However, it is recognised that finding match funding can be time consuming and for small grants may not be best use of time.

Volunteer time can be charged out at £15/hour.

Volunteer time cannot include any officer time for the calculation.

In the case of multiple applications on a station, we reserve the right to request a level of match funding.

How will applications be judged?

Assuming that the application is eligible, the application will be judged against:

- In 'the plan'** - we will check the project is in the Station Adoption Plan.
- Deliverability** - we will look to make sure it's a sensible and deliverable proposal. The constraints of railway safety sometimes make good ideas very difficult to do.
- Planning** - if it's a larger sum of money, we will look for a bit more of an outline project plan and budget. The more money you want, the more detail we will usually require to make sure it can be delivered and that it will benefit passengers and/or local communities.
- Scale of benefits** - you will be delighted that we will not be carrying out a formal economic appraisal! We will assess whether the outputs benefit passengers and/or local people and with the larger sums we will be hoping that your work will translate into more passengers.
- Innovation** - we will give preference to projects which represent a new initiative for your Group and which may provide lessons for other Groups.

Community Art

If the proposal is for the area of the railway which forms part of our "TOC leased area" (generally the station and its immediate surroundings), any proposal will be subject to approval from Northern and possibly the "landlord consent process"; put simply we may have to seek approvals elsewhere.

If the area being considered is outside the TOC lease area Northern and Network Rail must be consulted before any commitment is made or work started. For further information, please contact your Route Communities and Sustainability Manager (RCSM).

Best Practice

We will share details of projects between Station Adoption Groups and CRPs, and potentially with a wider audience. If there are potential issues around intellectual property rights (IPR), the project should be discussed with the Communities and Sustainability Director before an application is made.

As far as possible we will attempt to balance the award of grants across the regions to achieve “regional equity”.

We want to help you celebrate success and we will assist you with publicity for the work you undertake on our stations.

Decision process

This process, including the decision limits, has been agreed with ComREG and with the Northern Executive.

- The Station Adoption Fund will be made available through the RCSMs.
- Of the total fund, 20% will be retained by the Communities and Sustainability Director (CSD) for larger projects. If later in the year such projects are not coming forward, the funding may be released to RCSMs.
- The balance of the fund will be divided between the RCSMs in proportion to the number of stations in their region. If that proves too coarse, we may take into account the station classification (A – E), where A is a major city centre station (such as Leeds) and E is a request halt. These are national classifications.
- The RCSM is free to make a grant of up to **£500** without further reference.
- For sums between **£501 and £1,999** the RCSM will seek approval from the CSD by email.
- For sums of **£2,000** and above the RCSM will submit a formal application for consideration by the CSD. The CSD will refer sums in excess of **£5,000** to ComREG for consideration,

Any applications which are unclear or which do not meet these criteria (or any criteria determined subsequently by ComREG) will be discussed with the group submitting the application. The aim will be a successful application with rejection only as a last resort or where there is insufficient funding available in the current year.

These sums are net of any match funding. ComREG’s decision is final but if it is a rejection we would expect to explain why to the applicant.

Payments and follow-up

Where the group or organisation is registered as a supplier with Northern (such as Community Rail Partnerships) payment will be made via the usual invoicing process, including a purchase order number supplied by Northern. If the applicant is not registered as a supplier payment will be made via cheque (up to the value of £1,999) and by specific arrangement (value of £2000 and over) to the applicant, where the organisation or group has a registered bank account. For any applications not covered by the above, Northern will agree payment terms directly with the applicant.

Northern will endeavour to make payments within 28 days on receipt of invoice (if applicable) or the funding application being approved.

Communities and Sustainability Director, Northern

April 2016

- 9 When do you intend to implement the project/proposal?
(For more complex proposals ONLY: attach a dated indicative work programme. Any significant change in the programme (for example, slippage of more than a month) must be notified to Northern)
- 10 How do you propose to publicise that the project/proposal?
- 11 *(For more complex proposals ONLY).* What are the success criteria off the final project?
- 12 *(For more complex proposals ONLY).* For projects involving infrastructure, shelters, CiS etc have you consulted with

Network Rail locally? Yes/No And with whom?

Finance

- 13 What is the total cost of this project proposal?
- 14 How much are you asking for from the Station Adoption Fund?
- 15 What match funding is being provided?
- 16 Who is providing that match funding?

Other information (optional)

Please continue on an additional sheet if necessary

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Your commitment to the scheme

We confirm that we have read and understand the *Northern Community Rail Station Adoption Fund* process document and that to the best of our knowledge this application is in line with their requirements.

We confirm that, if the application is successful, we will keep appropriate records of expenditure and other financial aspects of this application and make them available to the Northern and ComREG as required. We will retain these records for six years after the grant has been awarded.

We will comply with any additional conditions stipulated in the grant offer letter.

We acknowledge that failure to comply with these conditions may lead to a requirement to return any grant.

Signed

Signed

Position

Position

On behalf of

On behalf of

Date

Date

Note all applications need to be signed off by the leader of the Station Adoption Group or the Chair and CRPO for a CRP.

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What next?

Please send a copy of the completed form including scanned or e signature to your Regional Community and Sustainability Manager:

North East – marie.addison@northernrailway.co.uk

East – richard.isaac@northernrailway.co.uk

Central – matthew.worman@northernrailway.co.uk

West – martin.keating@northernrailway.co.uk

Electronic versions of the form and any attachments or supporting information are our preferred method of receipt but if you prefer you can send the completed application to:

Northern Station Adoption Fund Administration
Communities and Sustainability Director
6th Floor, Northern House
9 Rougier Street
YORK
YO1 6HZ

We will endeavour to give you an answer within 4 weeks of your application being received.

Many thanks for your interest