

Application Guidance Notes 2025

The Scottish Mountaineering Trust (SMT) is a charity which provides funds to projects and organisations that promote and support the health, education and recreation of members of the public by encouraging their safe participation in mountain activities in Scotland and elsewhere. Mountain activities are principally hillwalking, rock climbing, winter mountaineering and ski touring

These notes are designed to help applicants by explaining the criteria that Trustees of the SMT use in the evaluation of requests for funds.

Trustees need to know:

- About the organisation and people applying for the funding.
- Does the project have a charitable aim supported by the SMT?
- Will the project be successful?
- How much money is required from the SMT?

The applicant is encouraged read these notes carefully and focus the applications on providing the information the Trustees require. Clearly presented, relevant information presented in a concise and consistent way is valued by the Trust.

The Applicant

The Trust will consider applications from charities, other voluntary bodies, commercial organisations, public bodies and private individuals.

The type of organisation is less critical to the Trust than the nature of the project for which the funds are required.

Does the Project meet the charitable aims of the SMT?

In summary the Trust believes that participation in the mountain activities, principally hillwalking, rock climbing, winter mountaineering and ski touring, can provide a wide range of benefits to people. As well as the improved physical fitness from the exercise, enjoyment of these mountain activities can also improve people's mental wellbeing, social skills, self-worth, and life skills. The Trust also recognises that these activities can have an element of risk and so there is a need to ensure that participants are aware of the dangers and have the skills to deal with the situation safely.

Further details can be found in the Trust's Constitution and Rules on the 'About the SMT' page on our website.

The Trust will consider projects that promote improved access so that people can safely enjoy the mountains and crags.

The sort of projects the Trusts support includes: -

- Publishing books and information about the mountains, mountain activities and people that inform, inspire and educate
- Developing and maintain footpaths, huts and other infrastructure to enable safe access to the mountains in an environmentally friendly way.
- Training and education that develop the skills and knowledge to safely participate in mountain activities
- Providing support to overcome barriers and enable people from all communities and backgrounds to take part in the mountain activities
- Providing equipment, facilities, and training to organisations that respond to emergencies, save lives and ensure the safety of people in the mountains
- Undertaking research, exploration and investigation into the mountains and mountain activities that contribute to the safe participation in mountain activities

The applicant should also consider:-

- A key part of the concept of being charitable is that it is of public benefit, and so the benefits of the project must be available to the public.
- The mountain environment is delicate, and the project should seek to minimise their adverse environmental impact.
- While projects out with Scotland are eligible, the SMT will normally expect a clear and relevant connection to Scotland.
- Hillwalking, rock climbing, winter mountaineering and ski touring are not in themselves charitable activities. It is the act of promoting the activity with the public that is charitable.
- Private clubs can apply, but it must be clear that their projects will benefit the general public. For example, a club hut should be available to the general mountaineering public, or club activities should be available to non-members.

Will it be successful?

It is important that the applicant demonstrates to the SMT that their project will be successful.

The SMT will look for:-

- Clear objectives and a credible plan that sets out what is going to happen.
- Clear and strong management.
- The applicants have access to the necessary funding, skills, experience and other resources to complete the project successfully.
- Realistic assessment of the risks.

The applicant should also note:-

- It is helpful for the SMT to see supporting documentation such as designs, or quotations from subcontractors who will be working on the project. Appendix 1 lists the information required for Building / Capital projects.
- For Expeditions the SMT expects to see information about the members of the expedition which will demonstrate that they have the skills and experience that match the scale of the objectives.

- The SMT will not normally provide more than 50% of the total cost and looks for a significant part of the funding to be provided by the Applicant or from other supporters, as a sign of commitment and engagement in the project.

How much money is required from the SMT?

The SMT need to know the full cost of your project, how the money will be spent, how much money you require from the SMT, when it is required, and how you plan to generate other money required.

The SMT can provide money as a grant, a loan or as a combination of both. Loans are often available for the purchase/renovation of huts.

Funds are not provided unduly in advance.

All grants will lapse if not taken up within a period of two years of the SMT Meeting awarding the grant.

Where a project is cancelled any monies advanced by the SMT must be refunded without undue delay.

General points

The project must not vary from its outline in the application.

The SMT's data protection policy which governs when and why the SMT collects personal information, how it is kept secure, and how it is used, can be found in the SMT Privacy Notice (<https://thesmt.org.uk/smt-privacy-notice>) .

Where a grant is made, the SMT requests acknowledgement of its support in any published material. The SMT reserves the right to attach such conditions to any grant as may be deemed appropriate.

All information provided to the SMT must be true and honest.

All decisions made by the SMT are final and not subject to appeal.

Appendix 2 – Documents required for Building/ Civil Engineering Projects

1. Building and works plans/blueprints
2. Copy of the timeline and delivery plan with milestones and activities.
3. Cost estimates
4. The contractors names and quotations/contracts
5. Planning permission certificates (if granted)
6. Building warrant (if granted)
7. Copy of deeds/security on the building (i.e. is the building owned or long lease),
8. Copy of the organisation's constitution
9. Copies of the last three years accounts for the organisation.