

Workplace Equality Fund 2018 - 19

Voluntary Action Fund (VAF) is inviting applications for the £500,000 Workplace Equality Fund, which it is managing on behalf of the Scottish Government. This fund is open to private sector and third sector organisations.

The fund will have two rounds – round 1 closing on 29th March 2018, and round 2 closing on 30th August 2018.

The aim of this fund is:

To support Scottish Businesses to identify and promote practice that works to reduce employment inequalities, discrimination and barriers. A diverse workplace is indicative of a business that is drawing from the broadest possible talent pool. Workplace diversity also signals to talented employees that your business is open to new experiences and ideas.

Applications must work towards a minimum of one of the fund outcomes below:

- Employment opportunities and progression in the workplace are improved for participant groups and consideration is given to how this can be embedded into the workplace to ensure lasting change
- Knowledge, skills, policies and practices are improved in order to address employment inequalities, discrimination and barriers/challenges within the workplace
- A more inclusive working environment is created through employees and employers working in partnership

Applications must:

- Focus on one or more participant groups from the following list: **minority ethnic people; women; disabled people; and older workers (those aged over 50)**
- Clearly demonstrate how they will achieve a reduction in employment inequalities, discrimination and barriers in Scottish businesses
- Demonstrate that they are working toward one or more of the five Fairwork Framework Principles - Effective Voice, Opportunity, Security, Fulfilment, Respect

Who can apply?

This is an open and competitive fund for:

- Any private business currently operating in Scotland
- Any third sector organisation whose Board of Trustees or Management Committee are predominantly volunteers and whose project proposes to work with private business. It is preferable that third sector organisations have concrete plans in place to work with specific businesses prior to application.
- Those who can demonstrate that they will finish their projects by 31st March 2019 and all funding will be expended by this date
- Have a bank account in the name of the applicant organization

How much can organisations apply for?

The minimum grant amount is £5,000. We anticipate the majority of awards to be between £5000 and £50,000 but in exceptional circumstances, applications of up to £100,000 will be considered.

What type of projects will the fund support?

The Fund will support different types of interventions that work to reduce employment inequalities, discrimination and barriers for the participant groups (minority ethnic people, women, disabled people, and older workers aged over 50)

The Fund will consider the expansion of existing activity as well as new or pilot activity.

We would welcome applications which focus on one or more of the participant groups and:

- open up work opportunities for participants to be better prepared for (re)entering and progressing in employment
- help businesses/employers/line managers/workers develop their knowledge and skills around fair work principles and show how support through Positive Action will support participants and lead to a more inclusive workplace
- encourage businesses/employers/line managers to understand the employment challenges faced by participants and become better equipped to address these challenges and demonstrate the practical steps they will undertake to address these issues within the workplace
- help businesses/employers/HR departments to become more transparent in their practices around recruitment and progression
- create more inclusive working environments, for example by encountering unconscious bias, promoting a positive culture towards pregnancy and maternity/or introducing family friendly practices in the workplace, by employers working in partnership with employees

More information including the online application form will be available on the [VAF website](#) from the 8th February 2018. Please refer to the website for information on items that are ineligible for support.

Please email enquiries to workplace@vaf.org.uk

About Voluntary Action Fund

Voluntary Action Fund is a long-established, independent fund manager in Scotland. VAF distributes over £15 million annually to over 500 organisations in Scotland: from grassroots community groups with limited income to national organisations with income in excess of £5 million per annum.

Voluntary Action Fund manages the Workplace Equality Fund on behalf of the Scottish Government.

Voluntary Action Fund distributes funding on behalf of the Scottish Government. www.voluntaryactionfund.org.uk

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