unity trust bank

Unity Environmental Impact Grant

2026

Grant Application Guidance 2026

Contents

Unity Environmental Impact Grant 2026

Introduction 03

1. Grants available 04

2. Eligibility criteria 05

3. What the grant can be used for 06

- Project funding / Direct funding
- Restricted capital expenditure / Capital funding

4. Impact criteria and assessment 07

- Clear definition of beneficiary group / customers
- Evidence of impact need
- Impact evidence
- Sustainable practices

5. How to access the grant application form 08

6. Conclusion and application access 10

Applications must be made via the link available for customers within Unity's Online Banking page, or by clicking here:

Unity Impact Grants Application Form

Introduction

We launched our Unity Impact Grants programme in 2024 to mark our 40th anniversary.

Six £5,000 grants were awarded to socially-minded customers to support projects making a positive difference in local communities.

In 2025, we increased the funding pot to £50,000 – helping 10 customers to address social, economic or environmental needs around the UK.

This year we're doubling that amount and offering £100,000. A total of £60,000 will be distributed in Unity Social Impact Grants and £40,000 in Unity Environmental Impact Grants.

Unity Social Impact Grants - 12 customers will receive £5,000 each to help them maximise the social impact they're creating in their local communities.

Unity Environmental Grants - Four customers will be awarded £10,000 each for specific 'green' projects that will have a positive impact on the environment.

This guidance document provides information on the Unity Environmental Impact Grant. For further details on the Unity Social Impact Grant (USIG) please follow this link:
USIG Application Guidance

The programme is open to Unity customers who have banked with us for at least one year.

The grant must be used to enable the awardee to continue delivering positive environmental impact in their local communities.

You can access the Unity Environmental Impact Grant application form from **midnight on Tuesday 1st September 2026**, either via your Online Banking account or by visiting:

www.unity.co.uk/impact/grants

This guide provides details of:

1. Grants available
2. Eligibility criteria
3. What the grant can be used for
4. Impact criteria and assessment
5. How to access the application form
6. Application form guidance

Thank you for your interest in the Unity Impact Grants programme, please continue with this guidance to understand if you are eligible.

1. Grants Available

In 2026, Unity has established a total funding pot of £40,000 for our Unity Environmental Impact Grants (UEIG).

Four UK-wide grant of £10,000 will be available for customers who have specific "Green" projects which require funding.

These Grants must be used to enable the recipient to promote and enhance positive changes to environmental impact. Examples include, but are not limited to:

Energy & Renewables

- Solar PV & Battery Storage: Installing solar panels and battery systems on business or community premises to reduce carbon emissions and protect against rising energy costs
- Building Retrofits: Upgrading a building's "fabric" with solid wall, loft, or under-floor insulation and replacing single-glazed windows with energy-efficient double glazing
- Low-Carbon Heating: Replacing old gas boiler systems with Air Source Heat Pumps or biomass boilers to decarbonise heating
- Smart Energy Systems: Installing smart thermostats, zone controls, and high-efficiency LED lighting systems with motion sensors to automatically reduce energy waste
- Community energy projects – creating positive impact through community-owned initiatives

Biodiversity & Nature Restoration

- Urban Micro-Rewilding: Converting "grey" urban spaces into "green" spaces that improve air quality
- Pollinator Pathways: Creating wildflower corridors and "insect highways" to support local bee and butterfly populations
- Nature-Based Flood Management: Installing rain gardens, permeable paving, or small wetlands to manage local flood risks naturally
- Wildlife Habitat Installation: A coordinated project to install bird boxes, bat boxes, hedgehog houses, and insect hotels across a community or school site

Circular Economy & Waste

- Community Sustainability Hubs: Converting an underused space into a hub for sustainability, for shared resource use
- Zero-Waste Food Projects: Investing in community estate composting systems or DIY food-growing equipment, like polytunnels and rainwater harvesting tanks, to reduce food miles and waste
- Waste Reprocessing Equipment: Buying machinery for small businesses to transform waste into new products, such as equipment to turn agricultural by-products into sustainable packaging

Sustainable Transport

- Community EV Infrastructure: Installing shared electric vehicle (EV) charging points at community halls or small business parks.
- Active Travel Hubs: Creating secure, weather-proof cycle storage and e-bike charging stations to encourage staff or residents to ditch cars for shorter journeys

Educating & Engaging for Climate Action

- Community engagement programmes, accessible education and engagement for green projects

2. Eligibility criteria

- You must have been a Unity customer for at least **one year prior to 1st September 2026**.
- You can be a lending customer, transactional banking customer with transactions within the last 12 months or deposits-only customer but you must have an 'active' account with Unity.
- Unity will accept applications for both the Unity Environmental Impact Grant and Unity Social Impact Grant. However, applicants are only eligible to be selected to receive one grant as we aim to support as many of our customers as possible.
- Applications can be made by individuals who are not Key Contacts or Signatories on their Unity account. However, in doing so, must attest on the application that they have the permission to act on their behalf, receiving all correspondence in respect to this application.
- The UEIG grant will be available to all entities and is not restricted to the Volunteer Community, Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector.
- The grant must be no more than 30% of your organisation's previous year's income (e.g. your income must be greater than £33,500 in the previous period where applying for a £10,000 grant).
- The organisation must be based in the UK and must deliver impact in the UK. For clarity, the organisation must be registered and operating in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland or Wales.
- Unity will not fund pre-dated match funding requirements. Unity will consider both standalone projects and contributions to larger ones. Supporting evidence must be provided to confirm that funds are available to complete the project in full, or that you are able to leverage our grant to obtain the remaining project costs.
- The project must be completed within the following calendar year.
- Your organisation should be the direct delivery agent of the environmental good that the application is for. For example, a UEIG will fund the following:
  - A charity responsible for the maintenance and / or providing access to green spaces to protect biodiversity and promote wellbeing.

The UEIG programme will not fund (for example but not limited to):

- Charities providing grants to other organisations delivering services.
- A Community Interest Company which subcontracts its service provision to a third party to deliver services to vulnerable group

3. What the grant can be used for

The Unity Environmental Impact Grant funding must be used to create and enhance positive environmental outcomes.

We aim to ensure that our funds are providing the greatest possible benefit to the successful customer and their communities and will therefore require grants to be spent in the following way:

Project funding/Direct funding

Funding can contribute to delivery costs of projects, services or products delivered by the organisation.

Restricted capital expenditure/ capital funding

Funding can be used to contribute towards the cost of purchasing, maintaining or improving capital assets. The fund usage must be specifically defined with clear justification for how the capital expenditure supports the environmental outcomes of the organisation.

Unity Customer:
Sheffield & Rotherham Wildlife Trust

4. Impact criteria and assessment

Unity is a ‘double bottom line’ bank. This means that we aim to support organisations delivering a benefit to society, as well as achieving commercial success.

The following criteria will be applied as a key factor of the successful grant recipient:

- **Clear definition of beneficiary group/ customers:** The successful applicant will have a clearly defined beneficiary group. Alongside this, there will be a clear articulation of the disadvantage, vulnerability or exclusion faced and how their organisation supports this group, if applicable.
- **Evidence of impact need:** The successful organisation will have a clear articulation of the environmental need for their organisation which must align with one of the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- **Impact evidence:** Demonstration of quality monitoring & evaluation (M&E), impact management or customer quality assurance to ensure the work the organisation delivers contributes to meaningful and sustained change.
- **Sustainable practices:** Organisations that demonstrate sustainable practices and a commitment to reducing their environmental and carbon footprint. Those that can evidence responsible environmental practices will receive additional scoring.

Entities that integrate community benefit into their core business objectives will have a distinct advantage.

Unity expects this to be a highly subscribed programme, therefore we cannot provide feedback to all applicants.

We expect to respond to all applicants by the end of **Monday 30th November 2026**.

5. How to access the grant application form

Applications must be made via the link available for customers within **Unity's Online Banking page** or at **www.unity.co.uk/impact/grants**

The application form will take you through a series of questions confirming your eligibility, relating to the use of funds and proposed impact.

Figure 1: Screenshot of landing page for Unity Impact Grant application

Once you have reviewed the details of the grants, page 3 asks you to confirm your eligibility for application.

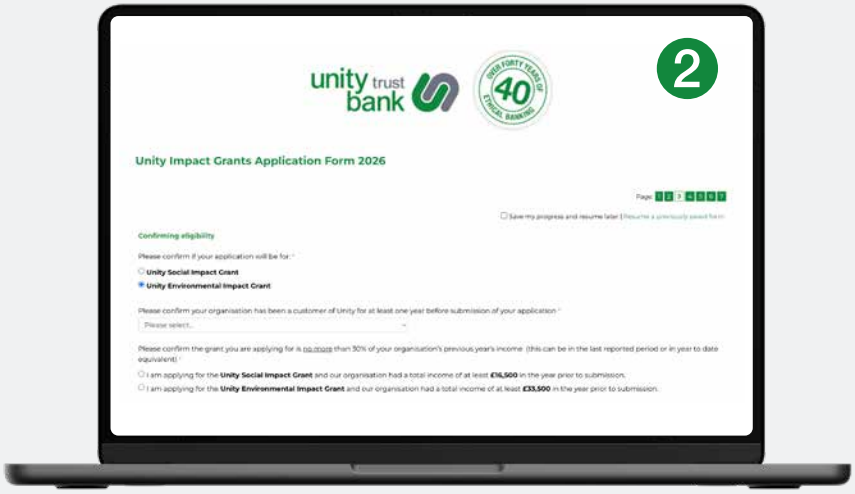


Figure 2: Confirming eligibility for the Unity Impact Grant

Following your confirmation of eligibility

Your application will support Unity to assess your suitability for a Unity Impact Grant. There is an opportunity to upload supporting materials for your application.

Please note, clarity of grant budgeting and evidence of impact will be taken into consideration in the application of awards. Please provide costings for your intended project where applicable.

At any point during your application, you can **‘save and resume’** later by clicking ‘save my progress and resume later’. Set your own password and email address to use this function.

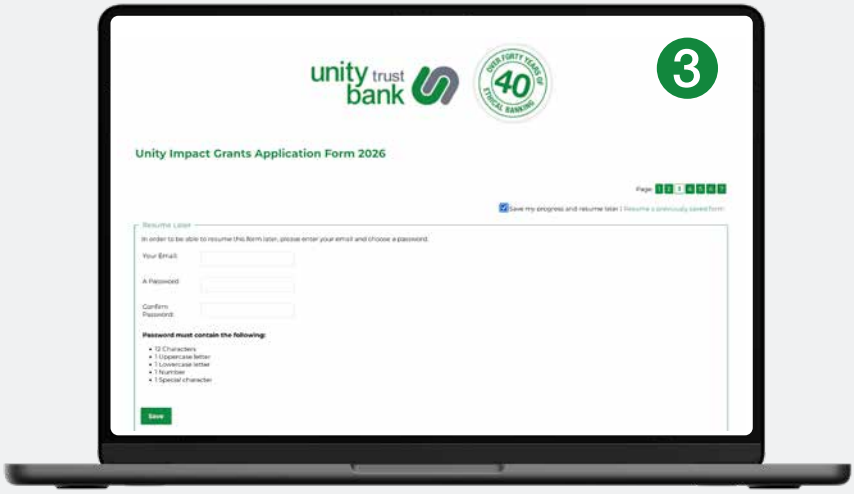
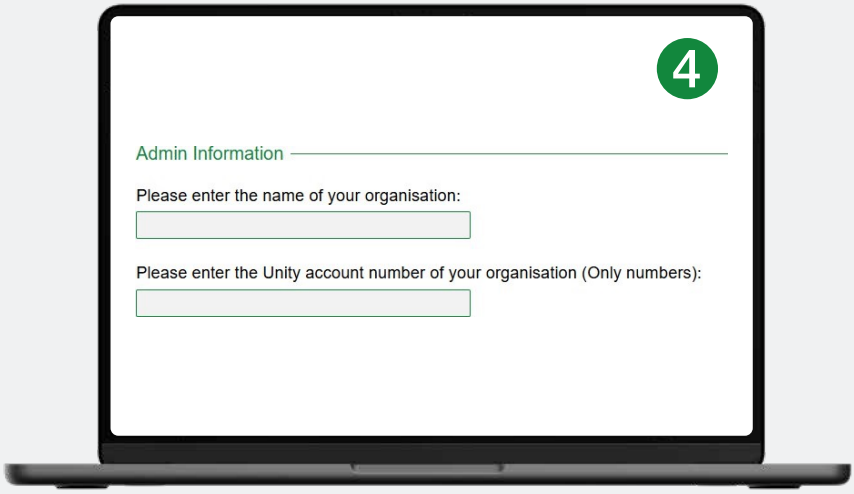


Figure 3: Save and resume function for applications

You will be required to input one of your **Unity bank account numbers**, so that we can easily verify your details, and eligibility to apply.



Once you have completed and are satisfied with your application, please ensure you select **‘Submit’** on the final page to ensure your application is submitted for assessment.

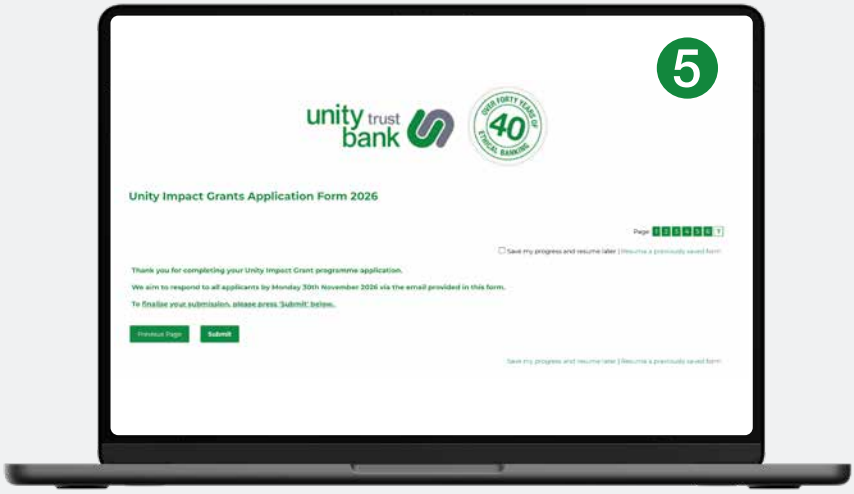


Figure 5: Final page and ensure that you click ‘**submit**’.

6. Conclusion and application access

If you are ready to start your application, please log into your Online Banking account where, from **1st September 2026**, you will find the Unity Environmental Impact Grant banner and a link to the application form. The closing date for applications is 00.00am 30th September 2026.

If you are unable to access your online banking with Unity but would like to apply, please use the link below to access your Unity Environmental Impact Grant form:
Unity Impact Grants Application Form

If you have any questions about either of the two Unity Impact Grants, or the application process itself, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Email the team at **donationspanel@unity.co.uk**. We will aim to respond within three working days.

Please note, the donations team can only offer guidance on the Unity Impact Grant programme. If you have a general banking query, please contact the Unity Customer Service team using the details at the foot of this page.

0345 140 1000*
us@unity.co.uk
www.unity.co.uk
Follow us on **LinkedIn**

unity trust bank

*Our call centre opening hours are 9:00am to 5:00pm, Monday to Friday, excluding bank and public holidays in England and Wales. Calls are charged at local rate.

Unity Trust Bank plc is authorised by the Prudential Regulation Authority and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority and the Prudential Regulation Authority. Unity Trust Bank is entered in the Financial Services Register under number 204570. Registered office: Four Brindleyplace, Birmingham, B1 2JB. Registered in England and Wales no. 1713124. © Unity Trust Bank. All Rights Reserved. U1428_0626