unity trust bank

Unity Social Impact Grant 2026

Grant Application Guidance 2026

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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.

We will be awarding a £5,000 grant to 12 customers to enable them to maximise the social and economic impact they are creating in their local communities. We will also be awarding four £10,000 grants to customers who have specific "Green" projects that will enable them to create positive environmental impact. For further information on the Unity Environmental Impact Grant (UEIG), please follow this link: **UEIG Application Guidance.**

The programme is open to customers of Unity Trust Bank who have banked with us for at least one year. The grants can be used for projects, operational or capital spend. The grant must be used to enable the awardee to continue delivering societal or economic impact or inclusive community growth.

You can access the Unity Social 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 Social 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 £60,000 for our Unity Social Impact Grant programme.

There are 12 grants of £5,000 each which can be used for projects, operational or capital funding but not unrestricted funding.

The Grant must be used to enable the recipient to maximise the social impact they are creating in their local communities.

This year's grants will be split regionally, with 4 grants for each of our 3 regions:

Region 1

Scotland, North East and North West

Region 2

Wales, East Midlands and West Midlands

Region 3

London, South East and South West

2. Eligibility criteria

- You must have been a Unity customer for at least 1 year prior to 1st September 2026.
- You can be a lending customer, transactional banking customer with transactions within the last 12 month 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, you may only 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, but in doing so must attest on the application that they have the permission to act on their behalf,

and will receive all correspondence in respect to this application.

- Your organisational incorporation should be within the recognised Volunteer, Community, Social Enterprise (VCSE) () sector and therefore one of the following:
  - Charity Commission (or nationally relevant equivalent) registered.
  - A Community Interest Company (CIC) (incorporation can be by shares or guarantee if the organisation is on the CIC register).
  - Registered with the FCA Mutuals list as a co-operative or mutual with clear social, environmental or community purpose.
  - Part of a registered Trade Union
- Local Councils will also be eligible to apply this year – a grant could be award to allow them to deliver a special project, not already funded by precepts or public monies
- The grant must be no more than 30% of your organisation's previous year's income (e.g. your income must be greater than £16,500 in the previous period where applying for a £5,000 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.
- Where applications are received from national charities (with a regional presence), the region where the money will be spent must be selected, as opposed to the region where the head office is based (if this differs) e.g. Head office in London, project in Newcastle, so 'Region 1' (for North East) must be selected.
- Unity will not fund pre-dated matched funding requirements.
- Your organisation should be the direct delivery agent of the social, economic, environmental or community good that the application is for. For example, a Unity Social Impact Grant will fund the following:
- A charity responsible for the maintenance and / or providing access to green spaces to protect biodiversity and promote wellbeing.
- A CIC specialising in mental health support services directly to young people.
- A housing association delivering employment and therapeutic services to vulnerable tenants.

The Unity Social Impact Grants programme will not fund (for example but not limited to):

- Charities providing grants to other organisations delivering services.
- A CIC which subcontracts its service provision to a third party to deliver services to vulnerable groups.

3. What the grant can be used for

Unity aims for our grants to be as flexible as possible for the successful applicants.

We also 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:

Project funding/Direct funding

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

Restricted operational and overheads/ Indirect funding

Funding can contribute to indirect / operational costs associated with but not directly contributing to services. This could include (but is not limited to) back-office functions, communications, business development, office costs and refurbishments. The use of funds must be specifically defined.

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 impact delivered by the organisation.

Unity Customer:
Twisting Ducks
Theatre Company

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 USIG is ‘outcome area agnostic’; therefore, Unity will be openminded and has no attachment to the outcome. However, 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.
- **Evidence of impact need:** Whether it is nature restoration in environmentally depleted areas, specialist care services to a particular user group, affordable housing or education for marginalised young people, the successful organisation will have a clear articulation of the environmental, economic or societal need for their organisation. Must align with one of the 17 the 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.

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

We expect to respond by the end of November with all applicants informed by close of business on **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 Unity Impact Grant, page 3 asks you to **confirm your eligibility** for application.

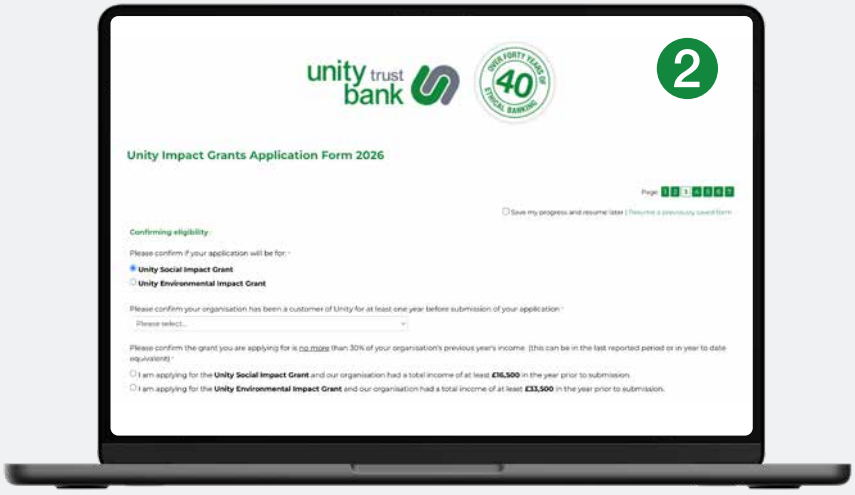


Figure 2: Confirming eligibility for the Unity Impact Grant

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.

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:

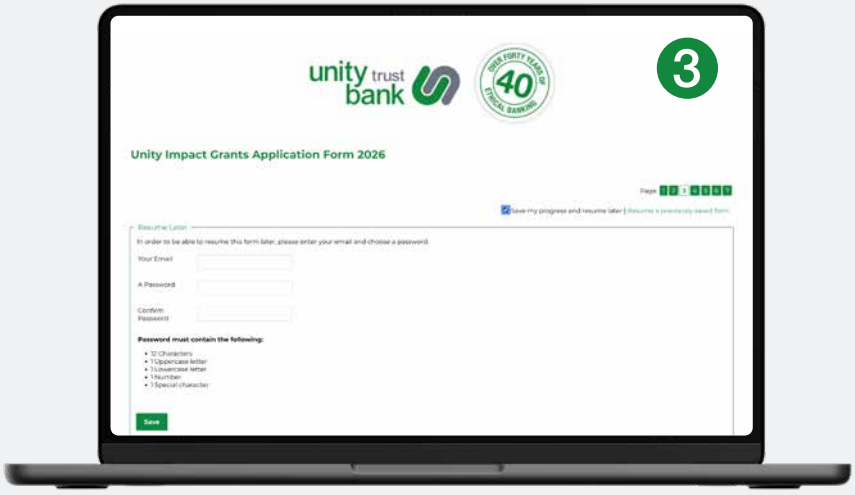
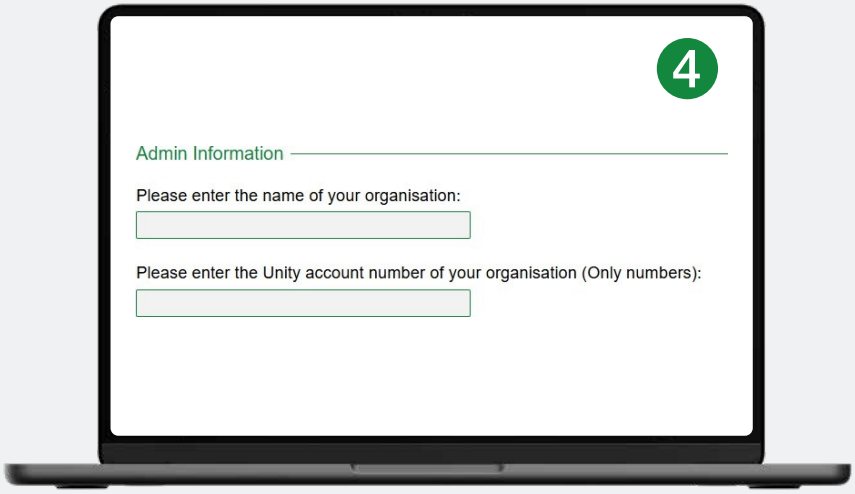


Figure 3: Save and resume function for applications

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.

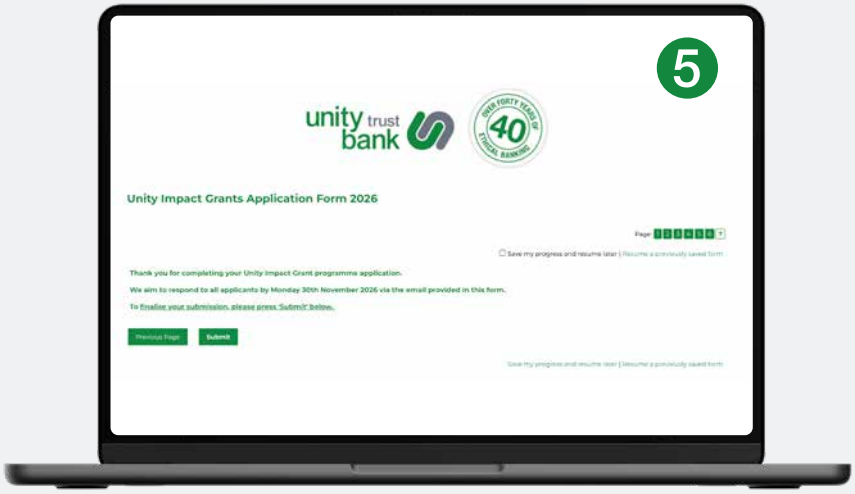


Figure 5: Final page and ensure that you click ‘**submit**’.

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 Social 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**

*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.

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