
The Short Breaks 'Small Bids Programme' - Information and Application Guidance

1. Background Information

The 'Small Bids Programme' forms part of the budget within Dudley MBC for 'Shorts Breaks for Disabled Children'. The Small Bids Programme has a budget of £40,700 per financial year at present (2018/19), though this is always under annual review.

The remainder of the Short Breaks budget is committed to contracts to organisations that are external to the Council, to provide short breaks services.

2. The Small Bids Panel

The Small Bids Panel makes decisions to approve or reject applications to the Small Bids Programme.

The Panel is chaired by a Commissioning Officer from Dudley MBC and members of the Panel are four parent carers. The parent carer members are involved on a voluntary basis and collectively, they possess a wide knowledge and experience of services for children with disabilities and parent/carers needs. The Panel is supported and co-ordinated by an officer from within Dudley Disabilities Service.

Any Panel members involved in funding applications from organisations in which they hold an interest, are required to declare an interest and if deemed necessary by the Chair, withdraw from making a decision on the application.

The Panel Chair holds the casting vote in cases where a consensual decision cannot be arrived at.

3. When to submit a bid

The Small Bids Panel meets once a month to approve or reject bids received, usually on the last Thursday of the month.

Applications can be received on a rolling programme where there are no specific deadlines however, bids need to be received at least 5 working days before a Panel is due to meet. So, if a Panel meeting is on a Thursday, the bid needs to be received by the previous Thursday.

Bidders should submit applications well before an activity is due to take place in order to guarantee that a decision can be made before the activity takes place. This allows for any lapse in time for example, if the Panel is unable to make a decision due to requiring additional information and it is deferred to a later Panel meeting (this is known as a 'pending bid').

Please note that due to the volume of applications received for summer activities, applications for summer activities should be received no later than the May Panel meeting, to allow the Panel to assess the applications collectively.

The Panel will not approve bids for activities that have already taken place either before the application is received or before the funding for a successful bid is paid to the applicant. These are known as 'retrospective bids'.

4. What the Small Bids Programme will Fund

The Small Bids Programme invites applications from organisations, groups and departments (not individuals) to provide *social activities that are outside of school / school hours* for disabled children or for disabled children and their families. To follow the ethos of ‘short breaks’, activities bid for should be fun, safe and life enhancing for the child or young person.

Some examples of activities funded and not funded are below – the lists are not exhaustive.

Examples of activities funded:	And why:
The costs of group transport (eg a coach) to a weekend activity for disabled children and their families, where the families and/or the applicant have paid for the activity itself.	The activity is for disabled children out of school time and Small Bids are not funding the totality of the activity as a contribution is being made by the families,
The costs of providing an activity for disabled children, such as staffing for a one-off play scheme, where the parent/carers are paying a subsidised fee.	The activity is for disabled children out of school time and it is not an ongoing-cost and the parent/carers are contributing.
The hiring of a venue for appropriate and supported activities open to all disabled children of the Dudley Borough	The activity is out of school time, for disabled children and is essentially a ‘private hire’ to benefit all disabled children of the bough and is suitably co-ordinated and managed.

Examples of activities not funded:	And why:
A contribution towards the costs of a school trip to the theatre for disabled children.	Small Bids expects the school and/or parents/carers will meet these costs.
The full costs of a group of disabled children and their families taking a trip	Small bids expects that the families will make a contribution.
The full costs of hiring of a facility for children with disabilities from Dudley and surrounding areas to access openly and being expected to pay an entry fee.	Small Bids expects the funding to support Dudley children only and would not expect an entry fee to be paid if hiring of a facility is fully funded.
Applications for activities from organisations where there is any outstanding safeguarding concerns or where risk assessments have not been undertaken appropriately.	Small Bids considers that the safety of children is of the upmost importance.
Ongoing staffing costs or running costs, on a regular basis.	Small Bids expects that the applicant should be raising funds from a variety of other sources.
The purchase of a piece of accessible play equipment.	Small Bids cannot be used to purchase capital, ie equipment/materials
Catering for a celebration event for disabled children.	Small bids cannot be used to purchase meals/refreshments.

5. The amount of funding that can be bid for

The maximum amount of funding that can be applied for in each application is £499.

Multiple applications can be accepted by individual organisations throughout the year however, they will receive greater scrutiny by the Panel and more supporting information will be sought prior to a decision being made.

There is no maximum amount of funding any one organisation can bid for in a financial year however, if cumulative applications exceed £5,000, a higher level of scrutiny will be taken and additional information requested.

The Small Bids Programme should be considered as 'funding of last resort' i.e. the activity will not go ahead without funding from the Small Bids Programme. It is expected that bidders will seek funds from elsewhere including contributions by participants or the applicant's funds itself to part fund the activity so that the small bids programme is considered to be a 'subsidy'.

If applications are received from organisations that hold one or more contracts with the Council, clarification needs to be given that the small bids funding is additional and reasoning as to why the activity that small bids funding is applied for, cannot be undertaken within the contractual costs.

6. Making a Bid

An application form is to be fully completed. Download an application [from this link](#) or go to <https://www.dudley.gov.uk/residents/care-and-health/children-and-family-care/children-with-disabilities-services/short-breaks/>.

Provide all information requested in the application form and all supporting information, if relevant. Without this information, a decision will be deferred until the information is received.

An application will not be considered from any applicant where there is a known safeguarding concern, until this is satisfactorily resolved.

The applicant will be asked to supply Health & Safety Policy, Safeguarding & Disclosure Policy and Public Liability Insurance if the bid is successful, so ensure you have these in place.

When the application is completed, press the submit button and it will be automatically sent to short.breaks@dudley.gov.uk. In the case of any failure to send, email the form to this address.

7. Following the Small Bids Panel meeting

Occasionally, the Chair of the Panel may contact the applicant before a Panel Meeting takes place, to clarify information submitted. The Small Bids Panel will meet to discuss the applications and make a decision whether to approve or reject each one.

If the bid is pending:

- Sometimes the Panel cannot make a decision because more information is needed.
- The bidder will be contacted for more information, before the bid can be considered again. There is no guarantee at this point that the bid will be approved, until the information is received and considered and then a decision can be made.

If the bid is rejected:

- The bidder will receive correspondence stating why the Panel could not approve the bid.

If the bid is successful:

- The bidder will be informed of the successful outcome from the Panel Decision.
- The bidder will be asked to supply Health & Safety Policy, Safeguarding & Disclosure Policy and Public Liability Insurance
- The bidder will be asked to sign a funding agreement.
- The bidder must supply information following the activity taking place such as details of the people involved (a form will be supplied that conforms to General Data Protection Regulation) and feedback from participants.
- Following notification of a successful bid, the applicant must invoice the Local Authority for the agreed funding amount to short.breaks@dudley.gov.uk
- If the requested information is not submitted, payments may be with-held and no future applications from the applicant will be considered, until all information is received.
- The applicant should advertise the activity to an appropriate audience, if relevant, and state that it is (part) funded by Dudley Short Breaks.

Date: 12.12.18

Compiled by the Small Bids Panel