

South Ayrshire Council

REGENERATION CAPITAL GRANT FUND (RCGF)

Submitting Your Expression of Interest (EOI)

The deadline for completed application forms is **5pm on Thursday 23rd July 2026**.

To complete the following EOI form you must meet the following eligibility criteria:

Eligible Projects

You **must** be able to demonstrate that your project:

- meets the fund aims/objectives (page 2 of guidance), including alignment to a shared vision/plan for the relevant local place
- has been costed with an advanced funding package in place
- can spend or commit any funding by end March 2028

You project must be at RIBA stage 4. Do not include projects that are still at feasibility stage.

Organisation Name	Ayr Gaiety Partnership (SCIO no. SC041464)
Project Title	External Refurbishment and Resilience (Phase 3)
Lead Contact	Sally Rennie
Position in Organisation	Executive Director
Full Postal Address including Postcode	The Gaiety, Carrick Street, Ayr, KA7 1NU
Project Start Date	April 2027
Project Completion Date	February 2028

Has this project been submitted to previous call of RCGF or the Vacant and Derelict Land Investment Programme (VDLIP)? NO

Previous refs/call:

e.g. RCGF-22-INSERT or
VDLIP-01-INSERT or N/A

1. Total Project Costs

	2027/28
Total RCGF Grant Requested	£913,809
Total Match Funding (costs funded by other sources)	
Overall Total Project Costs	£913,809

2. Match Funding - Please detail any sources of funding other than RCGF

	2027/28
Total	

(The Total amount should be the same as the Total Match Funding amount in Table 1 above)

Project Proposal Summary

- Please complete the **full** Project Proposal Summary below.
- Maximum 3 Page – minimum font size 12.
- You may delete the prompts from each text box.

1. Full project proposal summary

1.1 WHAT WILL THE PROJECT DELIVER

- The Gaiety is the pre-eminent theatre in South West Scotland. It has operated from its 1902 auditorium on Carrick Street, in the heart of Ayr town centre, for over 120 years, and is owned and run by Ayr Gaiety Partnership, a community charity and social enterprise (SCIO no. SC041464). The 500-seat theatre welcomes over 70,000 audience members each year.
- This project (Phase 3) completes the restoration of the building by tackling its external fabric, which was not addressed in the 2016 interior refurbishment. The Partnership's own business plan names the building's externals as its main physical weakness.
- Using RCGF grant, the project will deliver: full repair of the external fabric (masonry, render, roof coverings, rainwater goods and windows); reinstatement of the main and side entrance canopies; restoration of the Art Deco frontage, illuminated "Toblerone" sign and canopy lettering; improvements to insulation and upgrades to heating to reduce carbon consumption, and associated site works.
- The result: a weathertight, energy-efficient, better-looking building, with a restored landmark frontage that lifts the whole street.

1.2 PLACE BASED APPROACH

- **Long-term vision for the place.** The project supports South Ayrshire's ambitions around place, culture and the arts, the Ayr town centre agenda, and the Council's regeneration and 20-minute neighbourhood aims. The Gaiety is a cultural anchor in the town centre.
- **A statement in the townscape.** Restoring the Art Deco frontage and signage will make a bold, positive statement, improving the look and feel of the town centre and helping to draw footfall to nearby businesses.
- **Fit with the theatre's own plans.** The Partnership's 2025–28 business plan identifies a need for capital investment, and states that improving the external attractiveness of the theatre will help attract audiences and cut energy costs. This project delivers the external and some low-carbon elements of that ambition.
- **Other investment.** This builds on the 2016 interior refurbishment and will coordinate with other works under development to further reduce the carbon impact of the heating and ventilation system.

- **Partnership working.** The project brings together Ayr Gaiety Partnership, South Ayrshire Council and the theatre's community and audience base, alongside the Partnership's wider partners – the University of the West of Scotland, Creative Scotland and a wide range of local groups and organisations.
- **Economic outcomes.** The theatre supports 20 staff and over 100 volunteers and draws large audiences into the town centre – over 250 performances of 102 productions a year, plus a five-star annual pantomime seen by over 27,000 people. A better-looking, more sustainable theatre supports visitor spend, the evening economy and the theatre's long-term financial sustainability.
- **Town centre and 20-minute neighbourhood.** The Gaiety is a well-used cultural venue within walking distance of homes, shops and public transport.
- **Net zero by 2045.** Building on the Partnership's Theatre Green Book work, its audiences already rate it above average on climate action. Fabric repairs improve the thermal performance of a poorly insulated 120-year-old building. And the work that will be coordinated with this initiative to install Solar PV, battery storage and air source heat pumps and to replace gas heating and cut carbon and energy use will directly support the Council's net-zero target.

1.3 WHY THE PROJECT SHOULD BE UNDERTAKEN

- **Evidence of need.** The external fabric was left untouched in the 2016 interior refurbishment and is now deteriorating, with damp and plant growth on the outside of the building. The Partnership's own SWOT analysis lists the building externals as a key weakness. Left unaddressed, this will cause worsening damage and far higher repair costs in future. The project stops that decline before it becomes a major problem.
- **A twin benefit.** On one hand it prevents deterioration – damp, vegetation and fabric failure. On the other it creates a positive uplift: a restored frontage, a better audience experience, higher visitor numbers and an improved townscape.
- **Target groups and geography.** Theatre audiences from across Ayrshire and beyond, and the wider Ayr community, with benefits felt across the town centre and South Ayrshire.
- **Community involvement and support.** The Gaiety is community-led. Ayr Gaiety Partnership is a charity and social enterprise that saved and reopened the theatre around a decade ago and now runs it with over 100 volunteers. Its creative engagement work reaches thousands of people each year, including around 300 young people directly and links with more than 50 local schools.
- **Tackling disadvantage and inclusive growth.** The project keeps affordable, accessible culture in the town centre and supports local jobs and the economy. The Partnership's core purpose is to enhance individual and community wellbeing through the performing arts, with a strong record of work in Ayrshire's most deprived communities.

2. Project costs and deliverability

PROJECT COSTS AND ANY OTHER FUNDING

Deliverability. The design and cost plan were developed in 2020. A design team is in place, led by ASL architects, with detailed knowledge of the theatre and able to deliver detailed plans for the application. Drawings and a full cost plan are attached. As these were completed in 2020, the QS involved has advised on the appropriate uplift required for a contract in 2027-28 and this is used in the summary table below. Once funded, delivery will take place within 2027/28. We have already demonstrated (with the same team) the ability to deliver major works on time with the £3million refurbishment we completed in 2016 (in a 7 month period).

Costs summary (see detailed plan attached)			
Costing estimated 2020			£487,704.96
Costing estimate updated for inflation to 2027 (see below)			£662,180.48
Professional fees (conservation architects etc) @ 15% (excl earlier feasibility work)			£99,327.07
VAT at 20%			£152,301.51
TOTAL			£913,809.06
Stage 2 Cost Plan 2020 Inflation uplift calculations			
	Original Cost Plan (Base 2Q 2020)	A - Strict rebase (Q3 2026)	B - Rebase to mid point of Construction
External Fabric Improvement Works	£478,374.63	£621,887.02	£645,805.75
Site Works	£9,330.33	£12,129.43	£16,374.73
	£487,704.96	£634,016.45	£662,180.48

We are in the process of securing funding for some additional works including Solar PV and Air Source Heat Pumps which we expect to deliver at the same time as this project.

Once complete please save as a pdf document and upload to the Your Area Your Voice Your Choice portal.

Email a note of your contact number and email address to grants@south-ayrshire.gov.uk