

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

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

Organisation Name	Curl Ayrshire Charity
Project Title	Curl Ayrshire Ice Rink
Lead Contact	Colin Naismith
Position in Organisation	Commercial and Community Director
Full Postal Address including Postcode	24 Beresford Terrace, Ayr KA7 2EG
Project Start Date	March 2027
Project Completion Date	March 2028

Has this project been submitted to previous call of RCGF or the Vacant and Derelict Land Investment Programme (VDLIP)?

Previous refs/call: e.g. RCGF-22-INSERT or No VDLIP-01-

INSERT or N/A

1. Total Project Costs

	2027/28
Total RCGF Grant Requested	£1,400,00
Total Match Funding (costs funded by other sources)	£1,400,000
Overall Total Project Costs	£2,800,000

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

	2027/28
Sport Scotland	£250,000
Identified Grant Funders	£550,000
Loans	£500,000
Members donations	£100,000
Total	£1,400,000

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

Project Proposal Summary

1. Full project proposal summary

1.1 WHAT WILL THE PROJECT DELIVER

- Curl Ayrshire Charity will deliver a transformational community regeneration project in Ayr North through the construction of a purpose-built, multi-use community hub on 1.5 acres of previously derelict land. Located within one of Scotland's most deprived communities (SIMD 1–2), the development will provide an international-standard four-sheet curling facility alongside flexible community spaces that support health, wellbeing, learning, volunteering and community activity throughout the year.
- The project is fundamentally a regeneration initiative rather than simply a sporting development. Winter operating income generated by curling will subsidise affordable and free community use throughout the remainder of the year, creating a financially sustainable community asset that addresses health inequalities, social isolation and economic inactivity.
- The closure of Ayr Ice Rink ended over 70 years of local curling heritage and removed an important sporting and social hub for the community. This project will create a sustainable ice facility and unlike the former facility, which had become financially unsustainable due to its age, design limitations and high energy consumption, will be purpose-built following World Curling specifications, using modern energy-efficient technology, improved insulation and advanced ice management systems to deliver a financially and environmentally sustainable facility. During the summer months the energy produced by solar panels and heat pumps will be made available to the local community.
- The facility will be developed to meet the needs of the local community and also current needs of Curl Ayrshire's existing 340 members. The venue will be designed with accessibility and inclusion at its core, ensuring that people with disabilities can fully participate in, and enjoy' the sport and facilities. It will serve as a welcoming community hub, incorporating spectator seating, hospitality, bar and catering facilities, and flexible social spaces. The total site will be 1.5 acres in size and will contain an ice pad, car parking and a community meeting space, café and social facilities and flexible accommodation capable of supporting community activities beyond curling. The ice pad can be melted during the summer months and with a size of 50 metres by 20 metres gives a valuable and flexible space for a variety of community uses.

1.2 PLACE BASED APPROACH

- The project will transform a former derelict site into a vibrant community destination that supports the physical, social and economic regeneration of Ayr North. Located alongside Ayr United Football Club and existing leisure facilities, the development will create a multi-sport and community campus that increases activity throughout the year, improves perceptions of the area and provides local people with accessible opportunities to participate in sport, learning, volunteering and community life. The project directly supports the Scottish Government Place Principle by regenerating a long-term vacant site into a community destination that promotes health, active travel, participation and local economic activity. It also contributes to the Ayr North Place Plan, South Ayrshire Community Plan, National Planning Framework 4 and Scottish Curling's national facility strategy.
- There is evidence of the direct impact of the sports sector on the economy (in terms of gross value added or job creation). More evidence exists on the indirect impact of participation in sport and physical activity on the economy (reduced healthcare costs due to a healthier population, reduced

crime, reduced sickness absence, improved productivity and improved employability). The development will generate significant economic benefits by achieving the following outcomes:

Economic Outcomes

- a. Creating 15 local construction jobs during delivery
- b. Creating 6 permanent operational employment positions
- c. Increasing visitor numbers to Ayr through competitions and events
- d. Retaining sporting expenditure currently lost to neighbouring authorities
- e. Local procurement
- f. Regenerating 1.5 acres of previously derelict land

Community Outcomes

- g. Creating 25 volunteering, coaching and skills development opportunities
- h. Benefiting 340 existing members
- i. Engaging with 100 local young people annually
- j. Engaging with 30 disabled participants annually
- k. Creating a £10,000 Community Access Fund
- l. Engaging with 3 local schools

- The need for place-based approaches to public health is well documented. Physical activity is integral to the development of many dimensions that form a 20-minute neighbourhood including sport and recreation facilities. The Ayr North Locality Plan April 2024 has five main priorities which include *“Improving outcomes for young people”* and *“Building healthier communities”*. Priority One of South Ayrshire Council Community Plan 2023-2028 states that within *“Play, Sport and Recreation”* everyone can access a range of high quality, safe, well maintained, accessible places with opportunities for play, sport and recreation. Community led local economic development, and a place-based economic strategy is a core driver in the SAC Strategic Economic Plan. The project fits with the five pillars of the Community Wealth Building (Scotland) Act 2026. Whenever possible, goods and services will be bought from local suppliers. We will employ local people and promote fair pay and secure employment. We will be utilising land which has been under used. As a charity with no shareholders, all wealth will be kept locally. Scottish Curling is committed to promoting the sport and increasing participation levels among all ages, sexes and abilities. Its mission is to develop a robust infrastructure of clubs and facilities to support the growth of the sport. According to Public Health Scotland there is robust evidence that regular physical activity provides a range of physical, mental, social, and environmental economic benefits, including reducing the risk of many long-term conditions and, developing and maintaining physical and mental function, enabling people to retain independence in later life. In addition to the multiple health benefits of physical activity, societies that are more active can generate additional returns on investment. More specifically, physical activity can positively contribute to several policy areas including Education and Children’s Services, Strong, Safe and Sustainable Communities, Health and Social Care, Local Economies, Inclusive Growth and the Environment.
- Environmental sustainability has been a fundamental principle in the design of the proposed purpose-built curling rink. Drawing on proven technologies used in modern curling facilities worldwide, the building has been designed to minimise energy consumption, reduce carbon emissions and provide a financially sustainable facility for future generations. Key environmental features include: high-efficiency concrete ice pad, computer-controlled refrigeration plant, solar photovoltaic (PV) panels with battery storage, energy-efficient heating system, high-performance insulation and modern building fabric together with a compact building design. There is also a commitment to purchasing renewable electricity wherever practical.

1.3 WHY THE PROJECT SHOULD BE UNDERTAKEN

- The need for the project is significant. Ayr North experiences some of the highest levels of deprivation in Scotland. Eleven data zones fall within the 10% most deprived nationally, while Wallacetown contains three data zones within the 1% most deprived. Residents experience significant health inequalities, including a 13-year gap in life expectancy compared with parts of Ayr South only a few miles away. Levels of unemployment, inactivity and social isolation remain persistently high.
- Participation in sport is widely recognised as improving physical and mental wellbeing, and curling is particularly well suited to reducing social isolation due to its highly social and intergenerational nature, enabling participants of different ages and abilities to engage in meaningful physical activity together. In addition the site is formerly vacant/derelict railway land now being brought back into use and Ayr United's investment in an Astro pitch and gym already establishes momentum. This project will result in a genuine multi-use community hub by creating a highly accessible, year-round destination for sport, recreation and community interaction. Its location directly supports the ambitions of the Ayr North Place Plan, Ayr North Locality Plan, South Ayrshire Community Plan and Scotland's wider 20-Minute Neighbourhood agenda by providing high-quality local opportunities for physical activity, wellbeing and social participation.
- A key element of our community engagement strategy will be the establishment of a dedicated Community Access Fund of £10,000 per annum. This fund will remove financial barriers to participation by supporting free introductory sessions, coaching programmes, school engagement activities and community-based initiatives for individuals and families who may otherwise be unable to access the sport. Youth engagement will be a particular priority. With primary schools, Ayrshire College and the University of the West of Scotland all located within close proximity to the site, Curl Ayrshire is ideally positioned to support educational engagement, youth development and lifelong participation in sport. We will work directly with the three local primary schools and aim to work with at least 100 children each year through structured coaching and participation programmes. Prior to losing the facilities at Ayr Ice Rink we worked with 17 of the 41 local schools with 6 of them having regular curling sessions throughout the school year.
- Inclusivity and accessibility are central to the project's vision. The facility will be fully accessible and designed to support participation by disabled people through initiatives including Wheelchair Curling and other adapted formats of the sport. Working alongside Scottish Curling and specialist delivery partners, Curl Ayrshire will actively seek to remove barriers to participation for individuals with physical impairments, sensory impairments, learning disabilities and neurodiverse conditions. Working closely with a variety of partners we plan to work with 30 disabled people each year who, in the past, have been excluded from this and many other sports.
- Curl Ayrshire has established charitable governance, an experienced Board of Directors, a 50 year site lease arrangement and a comprehensive Business Plan. This project has been developed to provide a financially and environmentally sustainable community asset with the revenue generated in the winter months providing a community space available during the summer months at little or no cost. The project will create a permanent community asset that will remain in charitable ownership, ensuring that all surpluses are reinvested locally to benefit future generations. The facility has been designed to operate sustainably both financially and environmentally, providing long-term community benefit rather than requiring ongoing public subsidy.

2. Project costs and deliverability

PROJECT COSTS AND ANY OTHER FUNDING

The £1,400,000 match funding will be from;
£250,000 loan from the World Curling Federation December 2026
£250,000 loan from commercial lenders March 2027
£250,000 grant from Sport Scotland March 2027
£250,000 members donations £50,000 already secured £150,000 during 2027
£550,000 identified grant funders December 2026 to July 2027

The capital expenditure costs are as follows

Building (<i>fully clad to World Curling Specification</i>)	£725,000
Ice Pad Installation	£350,000
Refrigeration / Chiller (<i>Trane design</i>)	£300,000
Heating, ventilation and air conditioning	£100,000
Car parking and site landscaping	£200,000
Utilities and power connections	£150,000
Off-ice facilities (<i>including bar, catering and social areas</i>)	£600,000
Architectural, engineering and professional fees	£150,000
Inflation allowance (<i>5%</i>)	£125,000
Solar panels, battery storage and specialist ice making equipment	£250,,000
Total Estimated Capital Cost	£2.9050,000