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Guidance

Condition Improvement Fund

Information for eligible academies, sixth-form colleges and voluntary aided (VA) schools about the Condition Improvement Fund (CIF).

From: [Department for Education](#)

Published 16 October 2014

Last updated 7 November 2022 — [See all updates](#)

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Applies to England

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Eligible academies, sixth-form colleges and voluntary-aided (VA) schools can apply for capital funding from the Condition Improvement Fund (CIF) in an annual bidding round.

The priority for the Department for Education (DfE) in administering the fund is to address significant condition needs – that is, keeping education providers' buildings safe and in good working order. This includes funding projects that address health and safety issues, building compliance and buildings in poor condition.

The fund also supports a small number of expansion projects. These are for academies, sixth-form colleges and VA schools rated good or outstanding by Ofsted that can demonstrate a need to expand.

CIF applications: 2023 to 2024

[Condition Improvement Fund 2023 to 2024: information for applicants](#) (PDF, 488 KB, 64 pages) sets out the details of projects that are considered appropriate for funding, and the assessment criteria for 2023 to 2024.

How to apply

To bid for CIF, you need to submit your application via the [CIF portal](#). The 'Apply to CIF' section of the [Condition Improvement Fund 2023 to 2024: information for applicants](#) (PDF, 488 KB, 64

Related content

[Condition Improvement Fund: 2021 to 2022 outcome](#)

[School capital funding](#)

[Condition Improvement Fund: 2022 to 2023 outcome](#)

[Condition Improvement Fund: 2020 to 2021 outcome](#)

Collection

[Academies: compliance, funding and payments](#)

pages) gives further guidance.

Who can apply

Schools are either part of bodies eligible for a [school condition allocation \(SCA\)](#) or eligible for CIF, depending on their size and type.

Local authorities, larger multi-academy trusts (MATs) and larger VA school bodies receive direct SCA to invest in priorities across the schools for which they are responsible. Smaller academy trusts, smaller VA bodies and sixth-form colleges are able to bid for CIF.

To be eligible to apply, by the start of September 2022 you must have been one of the following:

- a stand-alone academy
- a school in a MAT with fewer than 5 schools or fewer than 3,000 pupils, as counted in the spring 2022 census or the 2021 to 2022 individualised learner record (ILR)
- a VA school in a VA body or VA group with fewer than 5 schools or fewer than 3,000 pupils, as counted in the spring 2022 census or the 2021 to 2022 ILR
- a sixth-form college
- a school with a signed academy order as of 1 September 2022 that DfE expects to convert by 1 April 2023

CIF-eligible schools have been invited to apply to the fund for 2023 to 2024. If your school has been invited to bid, your responsible body will not receive any SCA funding on your behalf. If you have condition investment requirements, you should therefore apply direct for funding.

To receive direct SCA in 2023 to 2024, MATs and VA bodies must meet both of these eligibility criteria:

- they must have had 5 or more open schools at the start of September 2022
- those open schools or their predecessors must have had at least 3,000 pupils, as counted in the spring 2022 census or

the 2021 to 2022 ILR

Pupil count

When assessing the eligibility of special and alternative provision schools (including pupil referral units), we multiply the count by 4.5 for the purposes of determining either CIF or SCA eligibility. For example, we would count a MAT with 1,000 pupils in special schools as having 4,500 pupils.

If pupils are registered at more than one institution, we divide the count by the number of institutions at which they are registered. For example, those dual-registered at a mainstream school and a pupil referral unit would have their count divided by 2 at both institutions.

For nursery schools and sixth-form colleges, we use the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) pupils rather than the count to assess eligibility.

Loans

Academies and sixth-form colleges can take out a loan for all or part of the project costs referenced in their application to demonstrate their commitment to the scheme.

You can use the [Condition Improvement Fund 2023 to 2024: loan repayment calculator](#) (MS Excel Spreadsheet, 36.4 KB) to determine the annual and total repayments that will be incurred.

Loans are offered at PWLB rates of interest – the same rate local authorities can access to invest in their schools. You'll make loan repayments through an abatement of the revenue funding paid to you, which will be reinvested in future capital budgets.

CIF applications: 2022 to 2023

The [Condition Improvement Fund: 2022 to 2023 outcome](#) has been published.

Urgent capital support

Urgent capital support (UCS) is specifically for urgent condition issues that pose the threat of immediate school closure.

Who can apply

You can apply if you are an academy, sixth-form college or VA school and you meet both of these conditions:

- you do not receive SCA
- you need funding assistance to address urgent building condition issues that either:
 - put the safety of your pupils or staff at risk
 - threaten the closure of the whole or a significant part of your school

Your application will be considered only if there is a genuine and immediate need for UCS and you cannot wait until the next round of CIF.

How funding is offered

UCS funding is offered primarily as a loan, subject to an assessment of finances. Trusts may also be required to contribute. Grant funding will be provided only in exceptional circumstances.

How to apply for UCS

Make sure that you read the guidance and application form carefully. Your application may be delayed if you do not provide the right documentation.

1. Read [Urgent capital support: how to apply](#) (PDF, 295 KB, 18 pages).
2. Fill out the [Urgent capital support: application form](#) (MS Word Document, 221 KB).

3. Fill out the [Urgent capital support: finance template](#) (MS Excel Spreadsheet, 71.2 KB).
4. Email your application form and finance template to academy.questions@education.gov.uk, with 'Urgent capital support application' and your institution name in the subject line. Make sure that the size of your email does not exceed 9MB.

More information

If you need further advice, contact us using the [ESFA enquiry form](#).

Published 16 October 2014

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