

The application process

How can I apply for VocTech Now funding?

This call has a one stage, online, application process. Applications are made through your MyUfi account.

You need to register and create a MyUfi account – then you can save your application and return to it at any time while the funding round is open. If you do not have a MyUfi account you can register for one [here](#).

If you experience technical problems please contact us as soon as possible via applicationqueries@ufi.co.uk

How can I track the progress of an application?

You can track the progress of your application via your MyUfi account.

All application forms successfully received are acknowledged with an automated email. All complete, eligible applications go forward into our evaluation process.

How can I get help with my VocTech Now application?

We encourage applicants to attend or listen to the recording of the VocTech Now application webinar on-line and to read the supporting information provided on the website. This will help you better understand our funding priorities, and help you present your project so it has the greatest chance of success.

How much project information is required?

Our assessment is focused on whether the project is a good fit with the Ufi mission and the objectives of the funding call.

As this is a rapid response fund, focussed on the deployment of existing technologies, we are primarily interested in the needs of your current learner base that have been disrupted by the COVID-19 restrictions and the immediate deliverability of the project you propose.

We expect projects to be clear about the vocational learning problem, caused by the COVID-19 restrictions, they are trying to address and explain why their chosen solution is most likely to succeed.

We appreciate that at this stage you may need funding for expert advice to help you choose the final solution, but you should be able to articulate the learning needs if not the precise technologies that you think will help to meet those needs.

Generally, we look for a project to be sufficiently well defined to enable us to understand what it is aiming to do and the outcomes it will achieve.

Do you meet applicants as part of the VocTech Now application process?

Given the very short timescale for this call, we are not able to offer an opportunity to meet members of the Ufi team and discuss project ideas in person as we usually do.

Can we apply for funding for more than one VocTech Now project?

No. We will only accept one application per organisation for VocTech Now funding rounds.

Can we submit an application for VocTech Now for funding if we are already engaged in an active Ufi project?

We will consider an application for a new project, even if you are in receipt of funding for an existing live Ufi project, providing it is meeting the aims and criteria of VocTech Now.

However, please note that as we are looking to support organisations that are new to using VocTech, organisations already funded by Ufi may find it difficult to justify that they are new to digital learning.

How can I get support if I'm experiencing technical problems in making an application?

You should send an email to help@ufi.org.uk giving us your account name, the time and date of the issue, a description of the browser and its version number you are using to apply for funding and a description of the issue.

If our application is rejected will you tell us why?

Ufi receives a large number of applications each year and has limited resources for providing feedback on unsuccessful projects. However, we can provide broad feedback to all unsuccessful applicants.

If you run further rounds of VocTech Now can I apply if my project was rejected in a previous round?

It is possible that we will run a second round of VocTech Now funding in few weeks' time. We will make a decision about the fund criteria at that time.

What is different about VocTech Now compared to your normal approach to grant funding?

Whilst this is a responsive call to help our community with the challenges we all face, it is also an opportunity for people to innovate and to adopt VocTech as a long-term part of their working practices.

We have designed this funding to operate in a different way to our normal grant process in order to ensure that it can quickly reach those organisations who need it. The key differences are:

- a. This is an immediate use call – we are looking for roll-out and implementation to as many learners as possible.
- b. It is a 1 stage application process.
- c. We will ask for a number of due diligence documents at the start of the application process in order to minimise the time between award and payment.
- d. We will ask for more evidence of expenditure with grant claims.

The Funding

Will we receive the full amount of funding we have applied for?

The level of investment awarded can be different from that requested. You may have included items in your budget that we do not fund (e.g. organisational overheads) or we may consider that your project can be delivered more cost effectively. Where we feel the amount of investment needs to be reconsidered, we will discuss this with you and review the alternative options.

Will you provide funding for the whole life of the project?

The duration of the project and of our funding is agreed on a project-by-project basis, within the criteria for the specific call.

Our funding through VocTech Now is a short term 'quick fix', but is also part of a considered, sustainable plan to encourage the adoption of VocTech more widely. We expect projects to have a vision and plans about how to sustain their momentum beyond the period of Ufi funding.

Do you fund staffing costs?

We will fund the costs of staff directly involved in delivering a project e.g. project managers, trainers, web developers. We do not set a prescribed daily rate - it is up to applicants to set out what they feel is needed to deliver the project objectives and we will take a view on whether we think the costs are reasonable. Staffing and other organisational running costs unconnected to the project cannot be covered. Our funding must only cover the minimum required to deliver the project and no more.

Do you fund hardware, software or connectivity costs?

We will fund these costs where they are necessary for successful project delivery. They need to be fully described and we would expect these costs to be appropriate to the overall scale and nature of the project.

Do you cover website build costs?

We will consider funding requests to cover website build costs where they are fundamental to successful project delivery. The project application should provide transparent details on all such costs, and the costs must be appropriate to the scale and nature of the project.

Do we need to provide 'match funding'?

There is no formal requirement for match funding. As a charity, we welcome contributions from applicants and partners, whether in cash or in kind.

How is VAT treated in Ufi projects?

Ufi funding will cover the costs of VAT where not recoverable and where this has been included in the original budgets and grant application. Grants are "outside the scope" of VAT therefore whether VAT is recoverable will be determined by any partial exemption methods applied to your organisation. You should check with your finance department/external advisors if you are not sure of your situation.

Does the grant cover ongoing costs for the future? Is there any opportunity for follow on funding?

We will cover all the relevant costs for the life of your VocTech Now project. You will need to consider how your project is sustainable beyond the period of Ufi funding.

If you chose to apply for future Ufi open funding calls please note that we do not have a 'funding ladder' and a new application would be assessed on own merits.

How long can our project last?

Funding limits vary between our calls so you need to check the specific fund criteria. Within those parameters we work individually with projects to set appropriate timescales and milestones. The limit for VocTech Now is three months.

Will you provide investment for the life of the project?

The duration of our investment is agreed on a project-by-project basis. We place very high value on projects that can demonstrate that they have scale and a sustainability plan that allows them to maintain, or increase, momentum beyond the period of our support. We hope that all projects will continue to be successful in the years that follow our investment. Therefore, we expect all organisations to identify how their project will scale and become sustainable, if appropriate, beyond the end of our investment period.

Who will own the intellectual property rights (IPR) on projects that you fund?

Arrangements for specific funding calls will vary so do check the relevant fund criteria.

As a general rule, Ufi Charitable Trust does not have a fixed policy on ownership of IPR on projects we wholly or partly fund, reflecting the wide range of projects and organisations we work with and our own flexible approach to funding. We believe that different approaches to IPR are necessary to ensure the long term success and sustainability of projects. Our emphasis is on ensuring that IP developed with the help of Ufi funding is used to improve UK vocational learning. With this in mind, we will negotiate IPRs on a case by case basis and this is described further in our funding terms and conditions (T&Cs) which are available on the Ufi website.

Who can apply?

Will you consider a new funding application if we are already working with you on an active project?

Yes, we will consider an application for a new project, even if you're in receipt of funding for an existing project, as long as it is looking at a different learning challenge. However, please note that as we are looking to support organisations that are new to using VocTech, organisations already funded by Ufi may find it difficult to justify that they are new to digital learning.

What kinds of organisations can apply to Ufi?

Ufi funding is open to all organisations, including charities, trade bodies, learning providers and employers. Ufi is involved in funding projects involving charities, private companies, community interest companies and other not for profit organisations.

Where Ufi funds a project where the partner/partners are not charities, it must exercise due diligence to ensure that any private benefit that is generated is no more than incidental to the public benefit. This **means that any benefit accruing to a non-charitable organisation does not exceed what is necessary** to generate the stated public benefit of the project, in line with Ufi's charitable objectives.

How does Ufi decide whether projects deliver 'public benefit'?

The questions we ask in our application forms help us to understand whether project proposals from non-charities have a beneficial public outcome, both immediately and in the longer term, and whether the project demonstrates sufficient public benefit to justify charitable funding. This means that we must be able to see evidence of how the project approach will benefit learners, how the community of learners is defined and evidence of the total size of the group the project could reach.

We need to look carefully at both the outputs of the project and the costs. The better you are able to describe these in your project application, the easier it is for us to determine the public benefit. We need to make sure that our funding is sufficient to deliver the project but is not being used to replace private funding. Any private benefit that arises must not be more than is necessary to deliver the public benefit that is the stated purpose of the project. We look carefully at the balance of public and private benefit, including the mix of funding being provided by Ufi and the applicant and the level of business risk.

Does the size of our organisation make any difference?

Some Ufi funding calls are particularly suitable for early stage businesses, smaller digital innovators and other organisations looking to test new digital approaches on a small scale. This includes digital innovators currently working in other markets who can see opportunities to adapt their approach to

vocational learning. It may be particularly useful to edtech businesses looking to expand their products and services to deliver to the VocTech market. Other calls are more suitable for larger organisations who have the capacity to roll out the proposed learning solution to a larger number of learners.

VocTech Now is intended to support employers and learning providers already engaged with learners and needing to support their ongoing learning. You might choose to work with a smaller ed-tech business to roll-out their VocTech product or service, but the applicant will normally be the organisation supporting the learners.

What is the geographical scope of the fund? Do projects have to be UK-based?

Ufi is a UK based charity and only funds projects which directly benefit vocational learners in the UK. The majority of applications we fund are UK-based. We will consider applications from organisations based outside the UK if they can clearly demonstrate how they will address vocational learning opportunities in the UK.

We recognise that addressing overseas markets can improve the sustainability of new approaches and projects would not be disadvantaged if this is part of a longer term business plan, but we don't include the assessment of non-UK beneficiaries when we make a funding decision.

We are keen to encourage applications from anywhere within the UK. We deliver pre-application webinars to try to ensure that potential applicants can engage with us, wherever they are based.

Does Ufi accept collaborative projects?

We welcome partnership approaches to project delivery. Applications can be strengthened by demonstrating a collaborative approach, especially where employers and digital learning specialists are working together. Collaborative working can help to ensure that your main project idea is addressing a recognised learning need and can provide a route for early stage testing with learners. We are flexible about how collaborative projects are structured but expect to see this clearly reflected in the project management arrangements and for all partners to be active project participants.

What should we enter if we don't have a company or charity registration number?

For VocTech Now you need to be a registered organisation before you apply.

What happens if we are successful?

Who will be our main point of contact with Ufi?

Ufi is a partnership funder and will maintain an active dialogue with you throughout the project. We will allocate you a Project Account Manager (PAM) who will be your key point of contact with Ufi.

We run cohorts of projects and encourage cross-pollination between them, particularly between those at different stages of development. Your Project Account Manager will advise you on this and the activities described below encourage contact between projects within cohorts.

How does Ufi arrange project management?

Once we have allocated a Project Account Manager to the project, their first step will be to work with you on a Project Plan that sets out delivery arrangements, project milestones etc. Each project is unique and we'll work with you to agree what is best and most reasonable for your project. It is for you to determine how your project is best delivered and to work with your PAM to agree a monitoring plan. The funding milestones, which we will monitor monthly, will be set as part of this process.

How is funding spent and monitored?

The schedule of milestones, quality criteria and payment gateways set out in your Project Plan forms the basis of your funding agreement with Ufi, and is used to monitor progress of the project, on a monthly basis. Ufi pays in arrears, and claims will only be paid after our Project Account Manager agrees that each milestone has been achieved to the standard we expect.

On completion of your VocTech Now project you will need to provide certified timesheets, receipts and evidence of all spending in order to receive the final grant payment. Any projects requiring capital equipment purchases may be asked to depreciate the assets over a longer period than the project and claim only a portion of the costs.

If a project can demonstrate a particular need for upfront funding to assist cashflow then this will be considered on a case by case basis through discussion with the PAM.

How do you expect projects to measure impact? Is an evaluation required?

The scope and form of this will be determined between the project and its Project Account Manager. It will be agreed in the Project Plan which forms the basis of the funding agreement.

Are there other specific obligations which come with Ufi funding?

Ufi approaches its role as funder as a partnership process. We expect our projects to reciprocate, and all projects are expected to help to contribute to a pipeline of new ideas for using digital technology to transform vocational learning. This includes:

- Attending the webinars which support the funding process and our annual Ufi Showcase.
- Becoming active members of a cohort and contributing to Ufi's aim to create a community of vocational learning developers and providers by active networking and sharing experience with other projects. Our work to date demonstrates that our projects gain significant benefit from engagement with their project cohort, and the Ufi wider network.
- Sharing and championing the Ufi mission to increase the number of people accessing learning and gaining vocational skills through supporting our work to showcase practical examples of digital delivery of vocational learning.