

Applying for an O₂ It's Your Community award

What's it all about?

Since launching in 2007 we have seen a real trend in projects applying for an award that are built around young people. We've helped thousands of young people reconnect with their communities and have decided to focus on this issue through helping people make real change, with community awards of up to £1,000.

Is my project eligible for an award?

Before applying, check that your project fits our criteria. We don't want to put you off, but we do have to be strict.

Does your project help young people and benefit your community?

If your project is:

- Involving young people (11 – 25 years)
- Sustainable (it will keep going once this money is spent)
- Non-political and non-religious
- Based in the UK
- On public or accessible land
- Ready to go (awards are made every month, so only apply when you're set to spend)
- Small enough that £1,000 will make all the difference

Then an It's Your Community award could be for you.

We try to help wherever we can, but unfortunately we can't fund:

- One-off events and fundraising
- Professional fees
- School projects that don't involve the wider community

Here are some examples to help you decide if your idea is suitable (there are heaps more in the 'See what they did' section of our website):

Rebuild and restore: Clean up and paint your youth centre, create a meeting place restore your bus shelter.

Culture: Providing art materials and computers for your group, equipment for your band or a new music system. Plays, musicals, dances, readers, writers, artists and choirs – we could help you.

Activity: Whether you're into football, cricket, rugby, rowing or BMXing we can help with equipment (although we can't kit out individuals).

Clean and green: Setting up, supporting and supplying your community gardens, woodlands, beaches and paths. Improving public access to river banks and green space; conserving your environment – if you need materials and equipment we can help.

These are just a few examples, but we're always open to new ideas.

Completing the form

Start by printing off this guide and talking about it with the other members of your group before you start your application. Think carefully about what you write as you won't be able to change it once you've sent it in, and you can only apply for the same project once every year.

The application form is online and has five sections. You don't have to fill out every field, but you do have to complete the ones with a white asterisk (*).

If you don't understand a question, just roll your mouse over the '?' symbol. A handy tip will pop up giving you a few more details. If, after you hit 'next', an error message appears, that's because you've left a field with an asterisk blank. You won't be able to get to the next page until you've filled it in.

You can save your application as a draft so that you can go back and change it as you wish – we would recommend you do this regularly whilst you are filling in your form. But remember; once you have submitted your application form you can no longer make any changes.

Logging in and personal information

Your email is the most important bit – it's how we'll contact you if you're successful. We'll also ask for a password, with at least seven characters. After this, you'll be asked to fill in your basic details – your name, address, etc.

Section 1 – About your project

Tell us your project name, location, the budget for your project and the award amount you would like to request. To save time, make sure you have all this information before you start. We also ask you how you heard about It's Your Community.

Section 2 – Project details

Inspire us. Tell us a bit about your project. Then give us a short outline of what you do and how you help your community and how young people are involved. Provide a referee – someone who isn't a member of the project but who knows you well.

Section 3 – Benefits to the community

Tell us how this award could change your community; how many people will directly benefit; and how the award would be spent. It doesn't have to be long – up to 300 words will do. If we need to know more, we'll call you.

Section 4 – Working with children

Here we ask you to answer a couple of simple questions about the involvement of young or vulnerable people in the project and child protection policies.

Section 5 – Volunteers

We have groups of people available to help from time to time. So tell us if you're interested in help from O2 volunteers. This can be physical challenges, or skill swaps – so if you are looking for gardeners to some help with you accounts – do let us know.

Share your good news

If your application is successful, we'll give you your own web page on the It's Your Community website. You'll be able to share the story of your project, and post updates and photos as you go.



You don't have to make your project public on the site, but it's a great way to publicise your achievements.

Let us share ours

We'd also love to keep you updated with It's Your Community news. We'll only send you emails that are relevant to your project, and won't share your address with anyone.

And finally

You can save your application as a draft so that you can go back and change it as you wish. But remember; once you have submitted your application form you can no longer make any changes.

Once you've submitted your application form, we'll get back to you within 28 working days to let you know if you've been successful. If you're still feeling nervous and want to talk to us before you take the plunge, email us at hello@itsyourcommunity.co.uk or call the helpdesk on 0800 902 0250.

Good luck.