

Gaelic as an Economic Asset: Funding

Revenue and capital funding come from Scottish Government Gaelic Specific Grants, Bòrd na Gàidhlig Grants, Gaelic tourism, heritage, media and public service salaries, with a significant percentage of this spent in communities.

National: Gaelic Specific Grants (GSG) are:

- designed to promote the use and learning of Gaelic
- allocated annually by the Scottish Government
- worth £5.5 million for 2025/26
- divided into revenue (running / staffing costs) and capital (building / infrastructure) streams
- awarded to developments and activities designed to increase the use and learning of the language across Scotland
- distributed directly from Scottish Government or through Bòrd na Gàidhlig
- evaluated annually to ensure best value in terms of promoting the use and learning of Gaelic

Local: Gaelic Specific Grants (GSG) are:

- worth £970,000 annually to the Comhairle, allocated to Education and Children's Services
- awarded to e-Sgoil annually: £140,000
- awarded as revenue grants to local organisations: c. £15,000
- supplemented by Comhairle Gaelic project grants annually: c. £40,000
- supplemented by Bòrd na Gàidhlig (Strategic Stream Funding): £157,500 over three years
- supplemented by Gaelic trusts e.g. Dileab an t-Siorraidh: £50,000

Accountability

Organisations in receipt of GSG can utilise funding for staffing, activities and events, materials or building projects in accordance with approved funding applications.

Whether these initiatives or elements are designed to promote or preserve culture, heritage, music or the economy, the litmus test for interim or end-of-year reports is, **have they resulted in increased use or learning of the Gaelic language?**

It is therefore vital that organisations in receipt of GSG make every effort to ensure that Gaelic is used as frequently as possible in formal and informal oral, aural and written communications, in both administrative and community contexts.

Competitive Context

In all likelihood, bidding for GSG funding will become increasingly competitive, with communities and local authorities striving to ensure that they benefit from Area of Linguistic Significance designation.

It is therefore urgent and imperative to focus on:

- promoting the use of Gaelic as the language of delivery in all GSG related scenarios

- raising public awareness and appreciation of the importance of Gaelic to the local economy
- planning and budgeting use of Gaelic funding strategically across the Western Isles
- demonstrating evidence of increased usage and learning of Gaelic across organisations and the wider community through clear narrative and robust data.