

## **Annex B – ATISN 26556**

### **St Davids Day 2026 Pilot Support Fund**

#### **Appraisal Panel**

#### **Minutes**

**Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> December, 12:00-2:00**

**Present:** [Official 1] (Chair), [Official 2], [Official 3], [Official 4], [Official 5] (Minute taker)

**Apologies:** [Official 6]

A summary of application data was shared by [Official 5]:

- 450 applications were received in total.
- 16 of these were rejected as they were submitted after the deadline.
- 434 applications progressed to Stage 2, where 15 were rejected as ineligible – either because the organisation or proposed activity did not meet the criteria.
- 419 applications were assessed by a total of 15 assessors.
- 100 projects are recommended for approval by the panel, with 319 recommended to be rejected.

[Official 5] outlined the approach taken to the appraisal process - all eligible applications were assessed in line with the appraisal criteria set out in the Fund's guidance notes. Due to the volume of applications received, it was agreed that any applications that received a score of 0 or 1 in any of the appraisal criteria then it would not be fully appraised as it would not meet the minimum criteria.

[Official 1] wanted to put on record his thanks for all the efforts of the team on getting this across the line.

The panel agreed to a minimum threshold of 125. All projects above that would be considered for approval, subject to an agreed budget (with over profiling) of £1.2m.

The Panel worked through each grant level in turn:

**Small grants** – 54 projects with a value of £211k.

[Official 1] queried the due diligence process to date and whether there were any applications with a high level of risk. [Official 3] confirmed 13 projects with a higher level of risk but this number is not split by grant size and mainly consisted of recently incorporated organisations. [Official 3] also explained the light touch process of due diligence checks carried out at Stage 1 i.e. credit safe, companies house, charities

commission and directors checks on due diligence hub, to check organisations are viable and trading. It was agreed that social media activity checks should be carried out on the small grant applicants and the offer letter should include the standard Welsh Government clauses on political activity.

**Action** – Social media checks to be carried out on successful applicants.

The group discussed the issue of the number of potentially successful projects and the small resource available to complete the work. The panel agreed to issue notifications of success or unsuccessful applications by the 19<sup>th</sup> December, with offer letters to follow early in 2026. [Official 3] flagged the need to add the caveat to the notification that projects will proceed at their own risk before the offer letter is received and returned.

**Conclusion for small grants** – Panel agreed the 54 projects recommended for approval, with a score of 125 or over could be funded, subject to final due diligence checks.

**Medium grants** – 32 projects with a value of £490k.

[Official 3] shared the assessors had no major concerns over the recommended projects however there were minor queries around value for money on a small number of them and would need clarification. Some projects also included 'prize money' as part of their application costs and panel agreed these costs would not be eligible. It was agreed that where there were concerns over costs that assessors should go back to organisations and ask whether they can do it for less. The panel advised a caveat in the notification email should include that certain costs may not be eligible and some applications may be subject to clarification.

**Conclusion for medium grants** - Panel agreed the 32 projects recommended for approval, with a score of 125 or over can be offered funding, subject to final due diligence checks plus further clarifications on assessor concerns where applicable.

**Large projects** – 14 projects with a value of £513k.

The panel went through each project individually due to the higher value of applications and increased risk in delivery.

- [Information redacted under Section 22] – no issues with project and have previous work with them.
- [Information redacted under Section 22] – trusted partner and sponsored body so no issues with approving.
- [Information redacted under Section 22] – Similar to [Information redacted - Section 43(2)] proposal but this did not reach the threshold score so not an issue for panel to consider.

- [Information redacted under Section 22] – trusted partner. Staff costs are high, so should discuss a lower figure of circa 10% with them.
- [Information redacted under Section 22] – happy to support, looks like an interesting project which will support hospitality venues.
- [Information redacted under Section 22] – no issues, happy to approve
- [Information redacted under Section 22] – legacy of digital, lots of partners involved.
- [Information redacted under Section 22] – no issues, happy to approve
- [Information redacted under Section 22] – trusted partner, not going against assessors appraisal.
- [Information redacted under Section 22] – ok, good organisation to work with
- [Information redacted under Section 22] – They are receiving funding from the Food and Drink division for another element of the event which is stated in the application. The StDD funding will enhance other aspects of the event. No issues, happy to approve
- [Information redacted under Section 22] – not a known organization. A tour going to schools, heritage sites and community venues. No issues, happy to approve
- [Information redacted under Section 22] – workshops for people with learning disabilities. No issues, happy to approve
- [Information redacted under Section 22] – Welsh fair hosted by the union. No issues, happy to approve

The panel were pleased by the breadth of projects and that the recommended projects cover a lot of other WG portfolio areas and a geographical spread across Wales.

**Conclusion for large grants** - Panel agreed the 14 projects recommended for approval, with a score of 125 or over can be offered funding, subject to final due diligence checks plus further clarifications on assessor concerns where applicable.

Panel agreed due to the levels of grant included that only the larger projects would need additional due diligence.

[Official 3] advised this work to date has been a massive undertaking, and realistically more resource may be needed for the next stage of the process. (Stage 3 – clarifications and offer letters, getting them on the system). It was agreed that those who have been involved in the assessment should be asked if they can continue to support the process as it's also helpful for applicants to have a named person to liaise with. [Official 4] suggested allocating a certain number per person.

On Stage 4 - claims and payments processing in March - [Official 1] advised the management team to have a think early Jan about what we need for Stage 4 and

feedback, this could involve sending out another request for support and to colleagues in Finance teams.

[Official 3] will need to add in text around events in the offer letter and where activities include children a clause will need to cover safeguarding and risk.

**What happens next:**

- A note to be sent to the FM summarising the panel's recommendations. Offer brief catch up with officials to run through if needed.
- Successful projects get confirmation over the coming days and unsuccessful projects also notified.
- Payment in advance – request for [Official 1] to have full delegations for the fund. ([Official 4] to draft)
- Ask original assessment team to add in a project description for each successful project to send to the FM.
- For unsuccessful – Emphasise the strength of application and that difficult decisions had to be made due to budget restriction and high volume of applications.

## Email correspondence re Panel recommendation summary

**From:** [Official 2]

**Sent:** 18 December 2025 14:57

**To:** [Official 5]; [Official 1]

**Cc:** [Official 3], [Official 4]

**Subject:** RE: StDD Recommended projects summary

Yes I'm content thanks [Official 5]

**From:** [Official 5]

**Sent:** 18 December 2025 14:56

**To:** [Official 2], [Official 1]

**Cc:** [Official 3], [Official 4]

**Subject:** StDD Recommended projects summary

Hi both

I will tidy up the formal minutes – just to summarise you are content to proceed as agreed at panel that the 100 projects above the threshold of a score of 125 recommended by the assessors are notified of the outcomes. The total value of these projects is £1,214,529 and the geographical spread and size is set out below.

	<b>L</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>No. projects</b>	<b>Budget @1.1m (score 125)</b>
<b>Mid</b>	£0	£53,463	£21,450	<b>9</b>	£74,913
<b>South West</b>	£105,000	£152,395	£40,305	<b>24</b>	£297,700
<b>South East</b>	£336,909	£233,677	£108,915	<b>50</b>	£679,501
<b>North</b>	£71,500	£50,510	£40,405	<b>17</b>	£162,415

[Official 4]'s working on the update for the FM and notifications will start going out tomorrow.

Thanks for today everyone!

Thanks,

[Official 5]