

Active Communities Fund

Application Instructions

Full Guidelines

Please read this entire document before completing the application form.

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Introduction

In support of the Southampton Physical Activity and Sports Strategy, Southampton City Council have created the Active Communities Fund. This strategy aims to make physical activity a normal part of life for all and actively support excluded, inactive groups to increase participation in physical activity and sport. This fund aims to enable inactive communities in Southampton to become more physically active for their physical and mental health and wellbeing.

The **Active Communities Fund** is to be used towards projects in Southampton that can support groups who struggle most to be physically active including:

- Women/Girls
- Lower income groups
- Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic communities
- People with long-term conditions or disabilities
- LGBTQ+ community

These projects could support children and young people, adults, or families.

Projects should do one or more of the following:

- Increase the range and availability of green/open spaces and facilities close to home for informal play and recreation
- Enhance community assets to increase physical activity and play in our streets and neighbourhoods
- Diversify and expand the range of local activities to meet people's needs
- Bring communities together to transform local spaces for physical activity
- Learn more about what support people need to be active
- Embed physical activity into everyday life to create positive experiences and lifelong benefits
- Create physical activity champions and leaders within communities that support others to be physically active

The Application Process

This guide has been designed to help you when applying to the Active Communities Fund. The details below will help you to complete the application form.

The application process:

- Complete and submit your application by email*
- We assess your application
- We tell you our decision (approx. 1 months after the closing date)
- Successful applicants return their signed grant agreement
- Start your project
- Finish your project and complete the monitoring form

*We prefer to receive applications and supporting documents electronically. If you are not able to do this, please contact us for a paper application pack.

It takes approximately 1 month for the grant decision to be made.

Closing dates and timelines

Closing date: 21st January 2022

Decision: 11th February 2022

Please make sure your full application is submitted by midday on the closing date – we cannot accept late applications. You may be contacted during the assessment period if we need more information to assess your application.

Active Communities Fund Criteria

Who can apply?

Applicants must ensure they meet the purposes of this grant through their projects/actions.

Applications can be accepted from the following organisations:

- Charities
- Volunteer Groups
- Youth Groups
- Sports Groups
- 'Friends of' groups
- Community and Residents associations

Priority is given to small, unfunded, volunteer-led community groups.

Applications are **NOT** accepted from:

- Schools, further and higher education establishments, regardless of how they are funded (LEA, trusts, privately funded, etc.).
- Statutory agencies, such as the police, health, other local authorities, or other Southampton City Council departments.

Application requirements:

- Applicants will need a legal status or provide evidence of a host body to receive funds. Evidence an organisation is applying for this status will be enough at the time of application
- Applications must demonstrate how their project will benefit groups which are less likely to be physically active (Women/girls, lower income groups, Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic communities, people with long-term conditions or disabilities, or LGBTQ+ community)
- Applications must support/contribute towards one or more priorities of the [Southampton Physical Activity and Sports Strategy](#) :
 - Active Places
Increasing the availability of green/open spaces, environments and facilities that encourage physical activity and supports people to live healthy,

- independent lives. Residents have access to local facilities that suit their needs and aspirations, and barriers to physical activity are minimised.
- Active Communities
Improving participation in physical activity and sport, which raises aspiration, creates community cohesion and builds city pride. Projects bring communities together, and work with our communities to understand local needs and encourage the development of local solutions.
 - Active Everyday
Encourage positive attitudes and behaviours to physical activity, especially from an early age and promote positive physical activity habits so that they become embedded in everyday life.
- Projects must **start** before 31st March 2022
 - Any match funding or contribution of third-party money from elsewhere will be favoured
 - Projects are of direct benefit to the residents of Southampton
 - Applications must be affordable and realistic

What can be funded?

- Insurance
- Venue hire for regular meetings or events
- Materials for use in your project
- Publicity materials, including digital publicity (such as social media), newsletters and flyers
- Basic stationery – paper, ink cartridges, envelopes, etc.
- Transport costs within the city for groups of members/attendees who have limited mobility
- Individuals
- Volunteer expenses
- Sports equipment
- Health and wellbeing activities
- Employment and training activities
- Basic IT equipment (as long as it is reasonably priced and you can show us the need for it)
- Fees for services - like crèche facilities, guest speakers, artists, entertainers, etc. (excluding professional fees)
- AGM costs (including tea/coffee but excluding food)

Decisions on awards will be made under Delegated Authority.

Grants and anything bought with grants must be used directly by the applicant and cannot be transferred to any other organisation or affiliate, except by consent of the Council.

This list is not exhaustive. If what you want to apply for isn't on this list, we may still be able to fund it – please contact the grants team for advice.

What can't be funded?

- Applications towards religious or political activities, i.e. activities where the key purpose is to promote a religious or political doctrine, mission, or another form of proselytising.
- Work or events that have already taken place or for equipment that has already been purchased or building works which have been completed.
- Activities that happen or start before we confirm the grant
- Core funding from groups and organisations whose activities fall within the responsibility of another public body. However, contributions to jointly funded projects may be considered.
- Towards subsidised contracts (whether with the council or anyone else).
- Large capital projects
- Applications for the intention of profit
- Food expenses – unless they are integral to the project, like a lunch club
- Alcohol
- Prizes and awards, such as tombola/raffle prizes or trophies
- Items that mainly benefit individuals
- Trips
- Holidays and expeditions
- Advanced and/or expensive IT equipment
- Websites, including domain names, design and hosting (there are many free options available)
- Professional fees – lawyers, surveyors, architects, etc.
- Ongoing projects that you cannot maintain beyond the grant (e.g. because of high ongoing costs or the need for specialist skills)
- Salaries for staff employed directly by the applicant or to allow applicants to employ staff.
- Groups may buy services for a specific project which include salary costs within the fees. For example, speakers/entertainers for community events and social clubs or trainers/tutors for one-off courses/events.

Standard Grants Criteria

Southampton City Council is keen to support the local voluntary and community sector by awarding grants to organisations and groups that meet the following criteria.

Applications will normally only be considered from voluntary groups and organisations that:-

- Are properly constituted and can demonstrate that their practices and structures are representative of all relevant interests and are clearly accountable to users, beneficiaries and members.
- Can demonstrate the proper conduct of their officers both general and financial and that they keep proper books of accounts together with full written records indicating how any grant monies are used.
- Adhere to all equalities legislation and work in line with Southampton City Council's Equality Policy.
- Are not wholly reliant on Southampton City Council grants and can demonstrate that they receive or are seeking funding from other sources.

- Where appropriate, will agree to Southampton City Council nominee(s) on the managing body in an observer status.
- Where appropriate a national or regional organisation can demonstrate that there is a specific benefit to Southampton which is not being offered by a local organisation.

Applications will normally only be considered towards projects and activities that:-

- Demonstrate innovative approaches to meeting the needs of the residents of Southampton.
- Contribute to the delivery of any of the Southampton Connect priorities and/or any other council or partnership strategies or priorities.
- Are of direct benefit to the residents of Southampton. Groups whose activities extend beyond the boundaries of the City or who provide services to people who are not resident in Southampton will be expected to seek contributions from funding sources in those areas that benefit from their work.
- Complement and support and do not duplicate Southampton City Council and other services, strategies and plans including commissioning strategies.
- Religious organisations are welcome to apply towards the costs of **community** projects.

Applications should meet one of the following Southampton City Council's Physical Activity and Sports Strategy priorities:

- Active Places

Increasing the availability of green/open spaces, environments and facilities that encourage physical activity and supports people to live healthy, independent lives. Residents have access to local facilities that suit their needs and aspirations, and barriers to physical activity are minimised.

- Active Communities

Improving participation in physical activity and sport, which raises aspiration, creates community cohesion and builds city pride. Projects bring communities together, and work with our communities to understand local needs and encourage the development of local solutions.

- Active Everyday

Encourage positive attitudes and behaviours to physical activity, especially from an early age and promote positive physical activity habits so that they become embedded in everyday life.

Applications will not normally be considered:-

- Towards religious or political activities, i.e. activities where the key purpose is to promote a religious or political doctrine, mission or another form of proselytising.
- For work or events that have already taken place or for equipment that has already been purchased or building works which have been completed.

- For core funding from groups and organisations whose activities fall within the responsibility of another public body. However, contributions to jointly funded projects may be considered.
- For core funding from groups and organisations whose activities fall within the responsibility of schools to fund. However, contributions to jointly funded projects may be considered.
- From organisations with sufficient free reserves not held for a specific purpose to cover 12 months running costs. (Free reserves are funds controlled by the organisation and do not include restricted funds provided for a certain purpose).
- Towards vehicles unless they are part of a community transport scheme or mobile resource centre. Applications will only be considered for individual organisations if they cannot access community or shared transport. Applicants will need to demonstrate that any vehicle funded by Southampton City Council will be properly maintained and insured and used often and regularly.
- From recently formed organisations for large grants. It is suggested that recently formed organisations first consider the council's small grant scheme, Community Chest.
- From groups and organisations that have unsuccessfully tendered for the same project/work as a contracted service (either to the council or anyone else).
- This relates to the specific project/work funding is being requested for.
- To subsidise contracts (whether with the council or anyone else).
- For large capital projects

As a general rule Southampton City Council will not fund:-

- individuals
- trips
- holidays and expeditions

Question Guidance

The most successful applicants are those who have complied with the application guidelines and criteria. Please provide as much detail as possible so that we can assess your application properly.

Q1 Your details

Please give us contact details for the person best able to answer queries about your application.

If you give us an email address please make sure it is checked regularly throughout the application period as this is the most likely way we'll contact you.

If you are a registered charity, company or community amateur sports club (CASC), please tell us your registration number.

Q2 What does your organisation do?

In 50 words or less, please summarise the purpose of your organisation. For example, a resident's association might say: "We support local residents to make our area a good place to live."

Q3 What would you like a grant for and why?

In 100 words or less tell us what you would spend the money on. Please give details – we need to know EXACTLY what it will be spent on. Why do you want to do this? Is it because you have consulted your members/users or local residents and this is what they want? Is it because you have done this activity before and it was very popular?

What you are asking for must fit within the Active Communities Fund criteria, which you can find on the application guidelines and above.

Bad example	Good example
“We would like a grant to set up a new community club.”	“We would like a grant to start a new ladies dance club in Newtown. The group would provide a space for women to be regularly active together and connect close to home. Similar groups used to exist but haven’t reformed since the pandemic. They have been expressed as a need at our neighbourhood meetings. We will use the grant to buy equipment, promote the sessions, and pay for the first session for new ladies. After the group has been set up and established it will be sustainable by charging a low cost per person, per session.”

Q4 How much money are you applying for and what do you intend to spend it on?

Use this question to list exactly what you will buy and how much it will cost. You need to list everything – if you need more space please use a separate document/piece of paper. The amounts here should match the estimates you provide.

Bad Item/activity examples	Good Item/activity examples	Cost
Sports session costs	Netball coach (2 days)	£150
Sports session costs	Venue hire (1 day)	£80
Admin costs	Printer paper x 2 boxes	£20
Admin costs	Ink cartridges x 4	£50
Printing costs	Printing newsletters x 4 a year	£200
Volunteer expenses	Volunteer travel expenses	£200
Total		£700

You also need to submit estimates/quotes from an external supplier with your application. Please see the Supporting Documents section for more information.

Q5 When is this project going to start?

Your project must start before 31st March 2022.

Please give a specific or approximate date for when your project will start. If you don't yet have a start date, please put "when grant decision is made." Please note we receive a lot of applications and it takes time to assess them all to make the grant decisions.

Q6 and Q6a How many people will directly benefit from your project? What percentage of those people live in the city of Southampton?

Please give approximate figures of how many people this grant funding will benefit. By 'directly benefit' we mean the number of people who will attend your activity/event or are directly supported by the work you do. For example, 500 people might be expected to attend a fun day or 1500 people live in the residents association's area of benefit.

Southampton City Council can only fund projects that benefit residents of the City of Southampton. If your project includes residents from outside the city you will need other funding to cover those costs.

Q7 and Q7a Which priority does your project support? Please explain how you will meet this priority.

The council has three priority outcomes in relation to the Southampton Physical Activity and Sports Strategy that apply to the Active Communities Fund grant:

- **Active Places**
Increasing the availability of green/open spaces, environments and facilities that encourage physical activity and supports people to live healthy, independent lives. Residents have access to local facilities that suit their needs and aspirations, and barriers to physical activity are minimised.
- **Active Communities**
Improving participation in physical activity and sport, which raises aspiration, creates community cohesion and builds city pride. Projects bring communities together, and work with our communities to understand local needs and encourage the development of local solutions.
- **Active Everyday**
Encourage positive attitudes and behaviours to physical activity, especially from an early age and promote positive physical activity habits so that they become embedded in everyday life.

Tick the box of the priority that your project/what you are applying for contributes most to. You must contribute to one of these priorities to be eligible for funding. In 50 words or less please explain how what you are applying for contributes to the priority you have ticked.

Who is applying and for what	Bad examples	Good examples
Who – community group What – improving local park Priority ticked – Active Places	We will make our local park better	We would like a grant to organise clean-up days to improve our local park in Lords Hill. The park has over the last few years become overgrown and unloved. The clean-up days would organise residents to litter pick, weed, plant, and repaint walls that have graffiti. We would also

		<p>purchase benches and welcome signs that tell people more about the area.</p> <p>Making these improvements to the park would help more people to access green space close to home and use it to be active.</p>
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Q8 What do you hope to achieve with this grant and what will happen after the funding has ended?

We would like to know about the difference our grant will make and whether that will continue beyond the year of the grant funding. How will having this grant enable you to help local residents? Is it a short-term project or will it continue after the end of the funding? If it's continuing, how will it be funded in the future? Will the grant enable the project/group to become financially self-sustaining?

Q9 How will you ensure your project reaches and is of benefit, to groups which struggle most to be active?

To apply for the Active Communities Fund, you must demonstrate how your project will benefit a group/ groups which are less likely to be physically active (Women/Girls, lower income groups, Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic communities, people with long-term conditions or disabilities, and LGBTQ+ community).

The grant funding is for the benefit of ALL residents in the city. How do you make sure your group, activities and events are open and accessible to everyone that would like to attend?

All applicants must provide their equal opportunities policy or statement (also known as an equality policy or diversity policy) with their application.

Projects must not discriminate against anyone.

Q10 If we can only part-fund your project will it still go ahead?

Community Grants usually have more applications than it can fund and we often choose to part-fund as this allows us to support more groups. If you were offered partial funding rather than everything you requested what would happen? Would you look for match funding from another grant funder or from donations? Would you scale down your project? Would the whole project be cancelled?

Q11 Have you applied for any other funding towards this project?

You might have applied to another funder for a different part of the same project. Or you might have applied to more than one funder to increase your chances of getting funding. We ask for details of this to make sure we don't duplicate the funding. If you are still waiting for a decision from the other funder, please give details of when you are likely to hear.

Q12 Do your accounts show a reserve?

We want to make sure the grant funding goes to community groups that really need it. We don't want to fund groups that can afford to run their project without the grant.

However, you might have money in your account that is reserved or 'restricted' for another use and that is okay. This might be a grant from another funder for a particular project. It might be money you are saving up for a specific use (such as fixing the roof or taking everyone on a trip to the zoo). If you do have money saved for something specific please give us the details.

It is expected that organisations with paid staff will have 3 to 6 months running costs in reserve (or more if stated in your reserves policy). We consider this restricted funds.

Declarations

There are two declarations we ask you to agree to. The first confirms that you are authorised to submit the application and everything you have written is true. This declaration must be ticked for us to accept your application. The second asks you to, where possible, support the council's ambitions for a more environmentally friendly city, which includes simple pledges to help improve our environment. Please tick the box to agree to the declarations.

Bank signatories and account details

You must have a minimum of two signatories for your group's bank account who are not related and do not share a home.

Bank account details are requested to confirm the group has a suitable bank account and also to enable us to pay the grant as quickly as possible once it's been awarded and the signed grant agreements have been returned.

Application Checklist

The application checklist has details of all the supporting documents you need to submit with your application.

We prefer all supporting documents are emailed, however if you are not able to do this you can post them, or hand deliver them (in a sealed envelope) to the Civic Centre. The email and postal addresses are in the 'Advice to Applicants' section of this document and also shown at the end of the application form.

Supporting documents required:

- Governance document/s
- Estimates / quotes
- Annual accounts
- Recent bank statement or photocopy from passbook
- Equal opportunities policy or statement (if not included in governance document)
- Safeguarding Children Policy (if relevant)
- Safeguarding Adults Policy (if relevant)

See the Supporting Documents section below for more details.

Checking your application has been received

We aim to confirm receipt of grant applications within 5 working days. However, this may take longer if you submit your application on the closing day or the day before as this is when the majority of applications are received.

If you intend to call to check your application has been received please allow at least 15 minutes after you send the email. All attachments on emails are scanned by our virus software. This can cause a few minutes delay before we receive your application.

Supporting Documents

The council has legal duties and all the money we give out must go to groups who also meet these legal duties. All the information and documents we ask for help us ensure that. We only ask for documents we need.

Please be aware that we run 'paperless' grant schemes. Any paper copies of documents you send will immediately be scanned and saved electronically. The paper copy will be destroyed in our confidential waste. **If you would like the paper copy returned to you please let us know when you submit your application.**

You can submit your documents in whatever format you like providing it is compatible with PCs/Microsoft Office (please do not send Apple format documents). This could be Word or Excel documents (or open source versions), PDF, scanned documents, photos, emails, etc. Please send all documents as attachments on an email as we cannot access file sharing services for security reasons.

Estimates

You must fully plan the grant expenditure before you apply. This includes getting estimates/quotes from external sources to evidence what the costs are.

We ask for estimates/quotes for several reasons.

- 1) To ensure you have properly planned your project and your costs are realistic. For example, if you only ask us for £200 for equipment that costs £500 and you have no other funds you will run into problems.
- 2) To ensure what you are asking us to fund is suitable for how you want to use it. For example, making sure the garden chairs you want to buy are suitable for the elderly people who are going to be using them.
- 3) To ensure what you are asking for will provide good value for money, good social value and fits with our Green City Charter.
- 4) To ensure you have good planning and good financial governance

What we can accept as estimates/quotes from external sources:

- A formal quote from a supplier, either on headed paper or an email that clearly shows the company's details
- A link to an item for sale on a website – the link must be directly to the page the item is on, not just the company's website
- A page from a catalogue or a price leaflet

- A recent invoice or receipt if it's something you pay for regularly
- Volunteer expenses – you do not need to provide written estimates/quotes for these but please provide a breakdown of the costs. For example, bus travel at £3 each for 10 people

How can we get written estimates/quotes?

Most businesses will provide these on request. However, many businesses also publish their prices on their websites. For example, if you are applying for crafting supplies you will be able to find the costs of these on several retailers' websites and you can submit a list of links to the relevant items.

What if things change between applying for the grant and it being awarded?

We appreciate that costs can change in between you applying for the grant and it being awarded. An item you picked may no longer be for sale or a better item may be on offer. That's okay. If you asked for a printer and still buy and printer it doesn't matter if it's a different make/model from the one in the quote.

Governing document

This shows us that you are properly set up as a group and can do the activities you are requesting the funding for. We also check the dissolution clause to see what will happen to any assets bought with the grant funding if your group decides it can no longer continue.

Annual accounts

All applicants that are more than 1 year old must submit annual accounts for their last financial year. For most groups, accounts can be done on a receipts and payments basis. This simply lists all money received and paid out by the group in the year in question and a statement giving details of its assets (what the group has) and liabilities (what the group owes, if anything) at the end of the year.

Information on when accounts need to be independently examined or audited is available in the Charity Commission leaflet CC15d – Charity Reporting and Accounting: The essentials November 2016 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/charity-reporting-and-accounting-the-essentials-november-2016-cc15d>

Recent bank statement

We ask for a recent bank statement or copy from your passbook (less than 3 months old) for two reasons:

- 1) It provides evidence that you have a bank account in the group's name (we are unable to pay grants to individual's bank accounts)
- 2) It shows how much money you currently have. Annual accounts can be up to 22 months old and will not show recent income. We have limited funds and need to ensure the grants are awarded to the groups who need it the most.

If you have a lot of money in your bank account because of another grant for a different project to the one you're applying to us for or because you are saving for a specific project please make sure you provide details of this in the application form.

Equal opportunities

The council has a legal duty to ensure it does not discriminate against anyone that wants to use its services and to actively promote equalities. This means all groups the council funds through grants must also ensure they do not discriminate against anyone that wants to join the group or take part in the group's activities and events.

All applicants must have either an equality statement in their governing document or a policy stating that they will not discriminate against anyone and will not allow their members/users to discriminate against anyone.

Safeguarding Children and Safeguarding Adults policies

If your project involves working with children or vulnerable adults, you must have appropriate Safeguarding policies in place. These policies set out how you safeguard and promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults who are members or users of your group. If you will be working with children or vulnerable adults without their parents/carers this is essential. If you will be working with children or vulnerable adults and their parents/carers it may not be essential but is still good practice.

We appreciate that most applicants are small community groups run by volunteers, and therefore try to be as flexible as possible. If you don't have all the information or documents please email or phone us for advice.

How we make funding decisions

All Active Communities Fund applications will go through a three-stage process

Stage 1 – Technical assessment – can we fund it?

Experienced council officers assess applications and supporting documents to ensure both the applicant and the project/activity meet the Active Communities Fund eligibility criteria and the council's minimum standards for funding. If we have any queries or we need more information we will contact you. Our aim at this stage is to ensure all applications reach the next stage.

Stage 2 – Panel meeting – should we fund it?

A panel of relevant officers meet to review all the applications to ensure they will benefit residents of the city and offer good value for money, good social value and meet with the core objectives of the fund. The Panel makes recommendations as to which groups should

receive funding. Our aim at this stage is for as many applications as possible to be recommended for funding, subject to the available budget.

Stage 3 – Final decision

The recommendations from the Panel are submitted to the Director of Public Health with delegated responsibility for the Active Communities grant.

The Active Communities Fund applications will be assessed against

- relevant data about need,
- a business case received from the applicant based on empirical data and
- community feedback/support reflected in the applications.

Advice for applicants

Help with filling in the form

If you have any problems with filling in the form, or have any questions, please contact the Grants team and we will be happy to help:

Email: grants@southampton.gov.uk

Post: Strengthening Communities Team (Grants), Southampton City Council, Civic Centre, Southampton, SO14 7LY

Social enterprises

New social enterprises are welcome to apply for funding to help them start up. Established social enterprises are welcome to apply for funding new projects that are in addition to their core work. It is expected that established social enterprises will be generating income to fund their core work, and therefore this is not eligible for funding from the Community Fund.

'Friends of' groups

Some statutory services, such as schools, libraries and parks, and occasionally some voluntary organisations have 'Friends of' or supporters groups. While we are happy to support such groups, we can only fund projects which are either directly run by, or in partnership with, the 'Friends of' group. We are not able to fund projects where the funding or anything bought/paid for with it will be transferred to another organisation.

Good example: a 'Friends of' group of a park applies for equipment for volunteers to use at a tidy up event or for meeting costs to enable the 'Friends of' group committee to meet. This would be eligible for funding as the funding will be used by the 'Friends of' group for their own activities.

Bad example: a 'Friends of' library group applies for funding to provide a new printer for the library. This would not be eligible for funding as the printer will be used for library activities and not the 'Friends of' group's activities.

Training and general advice

SO: Linked offers support to groups on governance, funding and developing policies. Training is offered to whole committees on a range of topics from roles and responsibilities of trustees, funding and outcome training etc. Drop-in sessions are held on scheduled dates.

If you would like to know more about SO:Linked services please contact them directly:

<https://www.solinked.org.uk/>

Successful applications

Grant award letter and agreement

If your application is successful we will email you a grant award letter and our grant agreement (the terms and conditions). To accept your grant, you need to sign and return a copy of the grant agreement, preferably by email.

You can sign your grant agreement in several ways:

- Electronically (most touch screen devices will allow you to do this)
- Print the signature page, sign it and scan it to create an electronic copy
- Print the signature page, sign it and post it to the address you will be given in the email when we award the grant (you can also hand deliver it in a sealed envelope)

Payment

Grants are paid once your signed grant agreement has been returned. Our standard payment terms are 30 days, however, we aim to make grant payments quicker than that.

Payments are made via BACS transfer where possible. There are some types of account that we cannot make BACS transfers to, including savings accounts and building society accounts. If you have one of these your grant will be paid by cheque.

Monitoring and receipts

All applicants must complete a short monitoring form at the end of the grant award period. You must submit copies of receipts for all expenditure along with the monitoring form.