

2021/2022 BUILD BACK A BETTER BORDERS RECOVERY FUND

Assessment Form

For the purpose of assessment, projects have been ranked high, medium or low to reflect how strongly the application meets the criteria of the Build Back a Better Borders Recovery Fund.

High – a strong demonstration of how the project will assist recovery from the pandemic

Medium – provides acceptable examples of how the project will assist recovery from the pandemic

Low – lacks detail of how the project will assist recovery from the pandemic

1. Applicant Details

Organisation name	Miracle Woodlands Ltd					
Organisation structure	Not-for-profit private company limited by guarantee					
Application reference	BBBB-EIL					
Theme of application	Sport	Arts & culture	Environment	Community capacity	Community resilience	Intergenerational activity
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Project start date	18/11/2021			Project end date	19/12/2021	

2. Organisation's Finances

End of year balance	n/a new organisation
Current bank balance	£0
Total cash/Unrestricted reserves available & purpose	n/a new organisation
Total restricted /committed funds & purpose	n/a new organisation

3. Project:

Outline of what the group plan to do to help people recover from the pandemic. Projects will be ranked higher if the application strongly demonstrates that they are meeting an identified need in the community. (e.g. area of deprivation, protected characteristics, tackling wellbeing and isolation, tackling climate change)

High <input type="checkbox"/>	Medium <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Low <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Comment: Miracle Woodlands is a brand new organisation established to raise awareness of the importance of our native woodlands through immersive, educational creative experiences.</p> <p>The inaugural event, Miracle at Mellerstain, will use light, sound and storytelling to highlight the importance of trees in a sustainable planet through a richly immersive production with vital environmental messages at its heart. An illuminated woodland walk</p>		

aims to use each leg of the visitor journey as a chapter, making up a rich, informative and highly engaging masterpiece for the senses.

Running from 18 November to 19 December 2021, the event in the grounds of Mellerstain House in the Borders, will have a particular focus on the importance of woodlands in combating climate change and the ecological emergency we face. By educating people on the importance of woodlands in our ecosystem, it is hoped generate positive change, while simultaneously raising funds for woodland protection projects across southern Scotland.

Working with local partners, including Borders Forest Trust (BFT) and the South of Scotland Destination Alliance (SSDA), Miracle Woodlands will engage the local community through creative educational and volunteering opportunities. This outdoor experience brings opportunities for participants and the event industry in the Scottish Borders to engage in an exciting, new seasonal outdoor activity following the global pandemic.

The event will be fun but with a serious message with opportunities to explore key environmental concerns including:

- The importance of trees in cleansing the air we breathe. How, without trees, the world would be a very different place...and one without humans. Facts and figures will show the stark changes over recent centuries and decades.
- Looking at deforestation and how individuals can help combat it. Innovative projections will be used to have all the trees shown in situ, growing at an accelerated timeline then disappearing to show a barren land when no action is taken.

The presentation of the core message will be on many levels, ensuring it is absorbed by all. The forest do the talking using intelligent lighting, projections and audio triggers. The experience will be multi-sensory and immersive. Each element of the story will be visual, helping to reinforce the message, create impact and remain in the mind long after the event. While the main woodland walk will be a ticketed event, the application to the Build Back a Better Borders Recovery Fund is to contribute to costs of the freely accessible elements of the experience, namely the workshops and Christmas market.

Miracle Woodlands will run workshops and events for schools in partnership with the Borders Forest Trust with wellbeing and mindfulness experiences in the woodland, also being explored.

There will be opportunities for schools to participate with the aim of engaging with up to 50 children and young people per day (Wednesday-Friday). Head teachers that have been engaged so far are supportive of this as an extracurricular activity. Transport will be provided for those participating. Groups outwith the school structure will also be engaged with, giving disadvantaged young people and adults the opportunity to learn and experience the trail.

The event will also feature an outdoor Christmas Market with an ecological/natural heritage theme to tie in with the main event. Local artisans and traders will be invited rent a stall and taking the opportunity to reach a large number of potential customers in the run up to Christmas.

Miracle Woodlands are engaged with SBC's Event's Team.

A grant from the Build Back a Better Borders Recovery Fund will contribute to the costs of providing the Christmas Market and workshops, and transport, for schools which will be available free of charge.

Evidence of individuals, groups or communities likely to <u>benefit</u> from the new initiative and how they have been affected by the pandemic:		
High <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Medium <input type="checkbox"/>	Low <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Comment:</p> <p>School pupils who have been unable to take part in out-of-school field trips and experiences will, restrictions permitting, be able to attend educational workshops at Mellerstain as part of school excursions, and go on the illuminated trail, free of charge.</p> <p>The projected number of visitors is conservatively estimated to be over 15,000 based on similar experiences in Scotland including Enchanted Forest and Dalkeith Country Park. Therefore the event will not only serve to deliver a key environmental message to a large number of people in the Borders and beyond but will deliver additional benefits for the area including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attracting new local and national visitors • Increasing brand awareness of the event and the Scottish Borders • Increasing economic impact for the local community through local business involvement • Increasing economic impact for the local community through extension of visitor number and overnight stays 		

Expected <u>impact</u> of the new initiative and how will it help those most in need recover from the pandemic		
High <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Medium <input type="checkbox"/>	Low <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Comment:</p> <p>A Christmas Market will be a key feature at the event, giving local artisans and traders the opportunity to benefit from access to customers in the run up to Christmas - benefitting from relatively high footfall at a crucial time in the retail calendar. Linking in with the theme of the event will also give them the chance to raise their profile among an interested group of potential customers - both at the event itself and in future.</p> <p>The local community will have the opportunity to experience creative arts. Initially these will be reached through the network of partner organisations. Over time, the aim is to include other specialist agencies and community groups in the Borders as partners.</p> <p>Miracle at Mellerstain will provide the region with a key creative event in the winter calendar for the Scottish Borders, bringing new audiences to the region with potential increased spend, profile and the economic benefit brought by the production team itself. Partners South of Scotland Destination Alliance are promoting Miracle Woodlands as their flagship winter event for 2021, to attract visitors to the region towards the end of the year.</p> <p>The event is expected create around 40 temporary jobs and volunteering opportunities (working with Borders Forest Trust and Volunteer Centre Borders). As an annual event, it is envisaged that we are likely to work with a core team each year, while also providing new opportunities for those living locally in the run up to Christmas.</p> <p>The specialist schools programme will engage young people and provide them with opportunities to access the arts. Participatory workshops will enable participants to delve into some of the rich detail of what will be learned on the walk. Each child visiting the</p>		

event will be given a tree seed to plant in a compost pot, which can then be planted at home.

Any surplus from the event will be invested into the programme for 2022.

4. Project Expenditure:

Total Project Cost	£280,892
BBBB funded costs	16,410
10% organisation contribution	£1,491
Request to BBBB	£14,919

Items of expenditure (BBBB funded element)	Cost
Market Stalls	£8,610
Transport	£4,500
PA equipment/furniture hire	£800
Staffing (part costs)	£2,500

Match/other funding sought for wider project:

Funder	Funding Requested	Status
Creative Scotland	£15,000.00	Pending
Visit Scotland (EventScotland funding)	£30,000.00	Pending
Private sector sponsorship	£95,000.00	Pending
Other costs will be met through pitch hire (traders), ticket sales and bar sales (estimated £215,000).		

Grants received from Scottish Borders Council or any other funder within the last three years

Date	Project Title	Amount
		£
		£
		£
		£
		£

SBC OFFICER ASSESSMENT	The application does not currently meet the criteria of the Fund as not all have been received. It is expected that these will be in place by the meeting on 23 September.
Comments	The application is rated high as it will assist economic recovery from the pandemic.
Additional terms and conditions required	<p>The applicant must follow Scottish Government Covid-19 guidance when delivering the project.</p> <p>The rate of pay for staff must meet the National Living Wage.</p> <p>Appropriate insurances and risk assessments must be in place.</p>

	Market stalls will be available to community groups to use for events.
Recommendations to evaluate impact:	<p>If successful, we recommend the applicant include in their funding evaluation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Number of schools and pupils engaged with• Feedback from pupils and teachers• Number of traders taking part in the Christmas Market• Number of members of the public attending the Christmas Market• Feedback from traders and members of the public attending the Christmas Market