



Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council

Community grant application form - part A

Please ensure you complete all of this form and Part B and send:

- forms A and B
- your organisation's last set of accounts
- the most recent bank statement

to enquiries@abingdon.gov.uk.

1. About your organisation

Name of the organisation requesting the grant

ATOM Festival of Science & Technology (a charity)

Please state briefly what the purpose of your organisation is

To encourage and promote an interest in science and technology within the public of all ages in Abingdon and the surrounding areas.
To promote an interest in science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) subjects in children and students of all ages, in Abingdon and the surrounding areas through ATOM Festival events (talks, activities and lectures for local school students of all ages with the aim of encouraging more students of both genders to take up careers in STEM subjects.
To involve and co-operate with local companies to further the above objects.

2. Your grant request

Please describe the project for which the grant is needed.

The ATOM Festival is held annually. In 2026 we will be holding the Festival in March again. The Festival will be held between 14th and 25th March. (Please note we have to accept the dates given to us by the Amey Theatre which work around school priorities.) The Science Market in the Market Place will open the Festival on 14th comprising interactive demonstrations by local academic and commercial organisations, activities in the Museum and a workshop in the Community Shop. We work in partnership with other organisations such as Harwell and UKAEA as well as Abingdon's scientific community groups such as the Astronomy Society and Abingdon Naturalists.
The festival goes on to include talks on science and technology which are open to the public and also the Fame Lab competition for schools at the Amey Theatre. (ATOM has been awarded a formal contract by the Cheltenham Festival to run the FameLab Academy franchise for Oxfordshire and any surrounding counties which do not have their own FameLab Academy programme.)

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In the past two years we have increased the number of family events by including two weekends within the duration of the Festival, allowing us to offer more children’s workshop days. Family response to this has been very positive with workshops filling almost to capacity.

What is the total cost of the project	£13 200
How much grant are you seeking	£1,250
What percentage of the total cost of your project are you seeking via this grant	9%
How do you plan to raise the rest of the money for your project	<p>Ticket Sales £5,500</p> <p>Sponsorship £4,000</p> <p>In-kind support £1,950</p> <p>Doris Field Trust grant £500</p>
Please show roughly how the costs of the project are broken down	<p>Advertising and promotional £2,950 (of which £1,200 print is covered by UKAEA as in-kind support)</p> <p>Ticketing Costs £400</p> <p>Speaker and VIP guest costs £1250</p> <p>Venue costs £1,900 (of which most of Amey Theatre is covered by in-kind sponsorship) – other venues include SHSK and Guildhall</p> <p>Science Market costs £2,100</p> <p>School Events Fame Lab £1200</p> <p>Insurance £400</p> <p>Professional fees including workshops £2,350</p> <p>Contingency of 5% £650</p>
What fund-raising have you undertaken for this project or others in the past 2 years	<p>We have written to scientific companies around the area and have had some positive results; Examples for the 2025 Festival were:</p> <p>£1500 Enable (who were working at Culham last year)</p> <p>£3000 Kavli Institute, Oxford</p> <p>but most have been for one year only and prefer to spread their budgets across the UK, so will not commit to multiple years.</p> <p>Exceptions to this are UKAEA who have been regular in-kind sponsors via their print department, Abingdon School who give in-kind support via price reduction on the Amey Theatre and we have received renewed support from Sir Michael Peagram for the past 4 years.</p>

3. Local benefit.

How many people take part in your organisation’s activities? Give local branch numbers if you are a national organisation.

As members	We are not a membership organisation. Our partner organisation the ATOM Society does have members but finances are totally separate to the Festival finances. The ATOM Festival committee and delivery team is a group of around 7 permanent volunteers and around 10 volunteers who help during the festival.
As recipients	3785 – est. number of individual engagements with the festival (there will be people who engage several times via different events) See table below for how the estimate was reached.

Please fill in the table below relating to numbers of members and/or recipients falling into each category. Estimates are acceptable provided an “e” is put after the figure.

Age profile	0-16	16-65	over 65
- Workshops	155e		
- Talks	94e	376e	470e
- Science Market (Inc workshop)	1200e	800e	500e
- Tours and visits	10e	40e	140e*

- Some of our tours and visits can only be offered by our partners during working/school weekdays which skews the data towards retired recipients for this strand of the Festival

Gender profile	Male	Female
- Gender information not collected		

Local connection	Town resident	Attend education in town	Neither resident nor attending education in town
- Recipients	We draw some residents in from local villages and from Oxford but the vast majority are from Abingdon		

4. Vision and objectives

Please explain how your project will meet the town councils vision and objectives, which are set out below. **You do not need to respond to each point** but it is important that your project addresses the town council's vision and at least one objectives.

4a. Vision

To develop an inclusive community so that Abingdon is the place where everyone wants to live and where the wellbeing of residents is prioritised. In developing this community, the town will be one which is environmentally sustainable, vibrant, resilient and safe.

All of our events are open to the public.

In order to be socio-economically inclusive we have, for many years, provided as a matter of principle everything for free on Science Market Day. We have built confidence in parents so that they will bring their children down to the Market Place whatever their economic status. This year this will also include a young children's walk-in workshop in the Community Shop for which we have to pay a professional workshop provider.

Later in the Festival we will be offering other, longer, workshops at a nominal sum (£3 or under) so that the barrier to inclusion is very low. We explored making these free two years ago but found that there were a lot of frivolous bookings leading to no-shows and this potentially prevented other people taking advantage of the workshops which appeared to be fully booked but in fact were not. The nominal sum is our compromise which seemed to work well last year.

We believe that in the current economic climate this is more important than ever.

Our ticket prices for talks are generally priced to allow anyone to attend although this year we have also managed to secure Brian Cox as a speaker and we will price tickets higher for this event as we have been advised that if they are too cheap it will attract ticket touts. We have a set of tickets for this event reserved for distribution through schools at a cheaper price.

All of the above commitments to inclusivity do put pressure on us to balance the books by seeking funding from organisations who value the work of the Festival.

4b. Objectives

1. **To respond effectively and speedily to the climate emergency**

We use re-usable marketing assets as much as possible – Our signs and banners are stored and re-used year after year. We have our banners hand-edited with new dates each year.

2. **To develop a resilient, sustainable town which will provide a home for residents now and in the future**

For most of the past decade ATOM Festival has "opened" the event season, waking up the town after winter and signalling that it is time to get out into the town centre again and enjoy the atmosphere. Kick-starting the event season plays a part in the town centre's economic viability which is largely dependent on footfall.

3. To manage the Council's assets efficiently and effectively to meet for the needs of the community now and in the future

We are an important part of the town's self-identification and civic pride as a centre of national scientific heritage.

ATOM Festival is delivered using a range of funding sources: the Town Council's contribution helps to leverage sponsorship from private companies and other grant giving bodies which gives Abingdon residents "more bang for the buck" for the amount of money the council spends.

4. To work with community partners to support those who are vulnerable and in need and to create opportunities to increase social inclusivity

Science Market including workshop – FREE
Other children's workshops – only £3 per child place
Disabled spaces available at all our venues (except the Museum).

5. Other/previous grant awards

Please provide details of any grant awards you have received from the town council, other councils or large organisations that you have received in the past three years

2023 Festival

Abingdon Town Council £800

2024 Festival

Abingdon Town Council £1000

2025 Festival

Abingdon Town Council £1100

Please list any grant applications to other councils or bodies which are currently pending

Doris Field Trust already awarded – see in figures above
British Science Week grant scheme checked and found to be unsuitable as requires a science project.

6. About your organisation

Please explain what structure your organisation has, i.e. is it a charity, a society, or another type of model

Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)

What is the balance of your main account according to the most recent bank statement?

£2519

Balance taken from Sep before costs/income of current festival started going through the account.

Additional financial information

Does your organisation have any other finances held in other accounts?

No

If so, please provide full details of all your additional finances, including recent figures.

If these funds are earmarked for any specific projects, please provide further information about this.