

THE INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES FUND

A LEGACY OF THE COMMONWEALTH GAMES

APPLICATION GUIDANCE PACK

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The 2022 Commonwealth Games took place between July 28th-August 8th, 2022 and was the biggest event in the history of the West Midlands and the largest major event in the United Kingdom since the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Alongside the sport, the Birmingham 2022 Festival between March-September 2022 attracted a record audience for a Commonwealth Games cultural programme of nearly 2.5 Million people.

The Games resulted in a budget underspend which facilitated the creation of a £70 million Commonwealth Games Legacy Enhancement Fund via the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. The West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) are overseeing delivery against this investment to enable a significant programme of Legacy projects to take place until March 2025.

This Guidance Pack details The Inclusive Communities Fund, which is £9million of funding that will give opportunities to organisations and communities across the region.

ABOUT THE INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES FUND

The Inclusive Communities Fund is set to ignite communities across the West Midlands to imagine, propose, and bring to life solutions that directly address the challenges in their neighbourhoods and local areas. This Fund is inspired by the momentum generated by the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games, which provided support to community-based organisations across the West Midlands, enabling access to exciting opportunities and fresh funding streams.

The Fund aims to strengthen the achievements, prompted by the Games, offering community organisations access to new funding to make a difference for the people they work with. The Fund will serve as a catalyst to address inequalities, forging deeper connections between individuals and organisations to continue the legacy of the Games.

This Fund shares the four original core mission principles of the Commonwealth Games:

- Bringing people together
- Improving health and wellbeing
- Helping the region to grow
- Putting the region on the map

Grants will be available for works, activities and services that will contribute to the four core missions, and which fall within one or more of the following three themes:

- Physical activity and sport
- Mental health and well-being
- Arts, culture and creativity

OVERVIEW OF GRANTS AVAILABLE THROUGH THIS FUND

The majority of funding will be awarded via revenue grants for locally led projects that bring people together and promote health and wellbeing, but there will also be some smaller capital grants available.

Grants will be available for works, activities and services that will contribute to the four core missions and which fall within one or more of the following three themes:

- Physical activity and sport
- Mental health and well-being
- Arts, culture and creativity

1. Projects will need to demonstrate tangible and achievable outcomes, and impact.
2. Projects will need to demonstrate ongoing sustainability beyond the initial funding.
3. New organisations less than two years old will need to demonstrate capacity to manage a grant.
4. Applicants must make sure they are within the UK subsidy threshold of £315,000 (see minimal financial assistance in the Subsidy Control Act 2022).

Organisations located in one of the Fund's geographies are eligible to apply. (See list in FAQs)

Large grants will be paid in instalments, to be agreed following an award.

All grants must be fully spent by December 2024.

GRANT THRESHOLDS AND AVAILABLE LEVELS

There are four types of grants available:

- Small Grants - £500 to £15,000
- Medium Grants - £15,001 to £75,000
- Large Grants - £75,001 to £300,000
- Small Works, Refurbishment, Renovation - £500 to £100,000

SMALL GRANTS

£500 to £15,000

We anticipate these will be applications from 'grassroots' organisations with already established links into communities. Grants could also be awarded for 'business as usual' costs for organisations struggling to deliver community projects.

Organisations applying for a small grant must have an income level equal to or less than £500,000 as shown in their most recent annual accounts.

Examples of potential projects:

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Core staffing and volunteers' costs to ensure a sports club can continue its regular sessions for members, and funding for specialist help such as business planning.

New projects to encourage local communities to incorporate walking and/or cycling into their everyday lives.

SEND sports activity or accessibility support.

Local sports events to celebrate the anniversary of the Commonwealth Games e.g. street closures, taster activities, volunteering opportunities.

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Activities and interest groups run in community centres and venues for any and all ages

Contribution towards core staffing for a mental health community group

Mental health awareness sessions with marginalised and/or racialised communities.

ARTS, CULTURE AND CREATIVITY

Creation of memory boxes for a dementia group

Artist payments for regular creative activities in a community venue

MEDIUM GRANTS

£15,001 to £75,000

We anticipate these will focus on deeper projects that aim to make a difference for an identified group. Revenue and core costs can be included in these applications. There is no income limit for organisations applying for a Medium Grant.

Examples of potential projects:

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Project that looks at multi-generational sporting activities bringing together families. Projects which help recruit, train and develop the physical activity workforce. For example, volunteer development, coaches, mentors etc.

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Projects that support people who experience mental health conditions to live well. For example, community allotments/ gardens, sports, culture, community learning etc.

New mental wellbeing groups that focus on protective factors of mental wellbeing outlined by the Mental Health Commission. E.g. physical activity, social connectedness.

Projects that increase mental health engagement and support in partnership with education settings, especially those with complex needs.

ARTS, CULTURE AND CREATIVITY

A six month or year-long set of activities to grow and embed work with a particular group (for example young people).

Skills and training support that addresses local need to support a strengthened arts, culture or heritage offer. For example, through peer support and networking.

Projects which help recruit, train and develop the arts, culture and heritage workforce. For example, volunteer development, working with disabilities, mentors etc.

LARGE GRANTS

£75,001 to £300,000

CLOSING 4 JANUARY 2024

We anticipate these will be mostly consortium-led, longer term initiatives that may have a local authority-wide remit. These projects should aim to leverage in some match funding. If single organisations wish to apply, they will need to clearly demonstrate their capacity to manage a grant. There is no income limit for organisations applying for a Large Grant.

Examples of potential projects:

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Projects that use sport and mentoring as a route to improve the outcomes of vulnerable young people e.g. providing those with safer places.

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Development of early mental health support hubs in local communities that provide youth information, advice and counselling services for Children and Young People.

Set up targeted mental health support for vulnerable residents in local areas including welfare advice, physical and counselling services.

Prevention focused interventions that improve and enhance the voice of marginalised communities, especially racialised communities.

ARTS, CULTURE AND CREATIVITY

Creative health initiatives that bring together consortiums to tackle local community issues.

Strategic partnerships that can identify how to strengthen their local community arts/culture or heritage offer.

Partnerships or events that can support more than one West Midlands geographical area to work together.

SMALL WORKS, REFURBISHMENT, RENOVATION

£500 to £100,000 CLOSING 4 JANUARY 2024

We anticipate these will be for organisations that wish to improve their buildings or facilities to enable them to better deliver activities and services that will achieve the four core missions. These grants are for small capital works that do not require planning permission. Schools and local authorities cannot apply for these grants. There is no income limit for organisations applying for a Small Works Grant.

Examples of potential projects:

Refurbishing a kitchen in a community centre to be able to support more individuals to access services by offering them a warm place and a hot meal.

Resurfacing a multi-use games area to offer a new lease of life and enable more physical activity and sports to take place for the local community.

Updating changing areas and facilities to enable a new group or individuals to be able to take part in an activity to improve their mental health or wellbeing.

Building a sensory room for people with additional needs to engage their senses in a calm, safe environment that builds their confidence and abilities.

Installing adapted equipment and facility improvements that don't require planning permission (or planning permission is in place) e.g. hearing loops, ramps, inclusive fitness equipment, changing places access e.g ramps, inclusive gyms, non- binary changing places, bikes and wheelchairs.

WHO CAN APPLY AND ACTIVITIES/ COSTS WE WILL FUND

This Fund is for not-for-profit organisations based in and delivering projects, activities and services in the Fund's area (see area list in FAQs). These include:

- Registered charities
- Charitable Incorporated Organisations (CIOs)
- Charitable companies
- Companies limited by guarantee
- Constituted community organisations
- Local Authorities where activity is for community benefit and would not have been able to access the funding through community partners, (for example in small rural parishes).
- Schools and other educational establishments - where a grant would be used for extra-curricular activities and activities which engage the wider community (cannot apply for grants for Small Works, Refurbishment, Renovation)
- Community Interest Companies (CICs) limited by guarantee
- Community Interest Companies (CICs) limited by shares (but see additional eligibility requirements listed in the FAQs section)
- Sports Clubs that address disadvantage
- Co-operatives - registered Community Benefit Societies and registered Industrial and Provident Societies
- Social Enterprises
- Staff costs
- Volunteer costs - such as out-of-pocket expenses, training, DBS checks
- Participant costs
- Publicity/marketing
- Monitoring and evaluation activities
- Accessibility costs
- Professional fees (grants for Small Works, Refurbishment, Renovation only)

INELIGIBLE ORGANISATIONS AND ACTIVITIES

- Individuals/sole traders
- Political groups
- Religious/faith groups unless a grant would benefit a wider community and is not intended to influence people's religious choices or promote a particular belief system.
- Companies Limited by Shares (CICs limited by shares can be funded by exception – see FAQs section)
- National organisations, with some exceptions (see FAQs section)
- Animal welfare organisations, except where a project directly benefits people
- Groups with significant financial free reserves
- Retrospective funding
- Funding statutory services or facilities
- The purchase of buildings or land
- Any works requiring planning permission
- Contribution to endowment fund, or payment of deficit funding, or replacement of loans
- Sponsored or fundraising events or groups raising funds to distribute to other causes
- Direct replacement of statutory obligation and public funding
- Overseas travel or expeditions
- Contingency budget

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS REQUIRED

You will need to have the following in place and to send us the required supporting document with your application:

Criterion	Supporting document required with application form
Governing Body with a minimum of three unrelated people	Your written constitution; or articles of association; or a set of rules. A list of the names and addresses
Annual accounts	Accounts for the most recent complete financial year showing income or turnover, expenditure, end of year balance, reserves. New organisations without annual accounts must send a 12-month cashflow forecast instead
Bank account in the name of the organisation with at least two unrelated signatories	Please indicate on the list of the names and addresses of your governing body members (see 2 above) which ones have bank authorisation
A bank statement from the last three months	Bank statements must be clear and not redacted. They must show the name and address of the organisation, the account name, number and sort code, the opening and closing balances. You may redact payments to individuals.
Safeguarding Policy	Please send one or both of the following as appropriate for your organisation: Safeguarding Children Policy Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy
Equal Opportunities Policy	
GDPR Policy	See FAQs for more information
Project Plan	Medium grants only
Business Plan	Large grants, and Small Works, Refurbishment, Renovation Grants only
Quotations for small capital items over £300 for project delivery activities	These could be supplier quotes, screenshots of webpages, links to webpages. Organisations applying for a grant for Small Works, Refurbishment, Renovation should follow the requirements for quotations/tenders given in the 'Grants for Small Works, Refurbishment, Renovation factsheet.
Subsidy Control Document	Only for applications for Small Works, Refurbishment, Renovations grants
Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)	Only for partnership applications.
Evidence of other funding secured	Letters confirming funding; only required for Large, upper level of Medium, and Small Works, Refurbishment, Renovations grants.

THE APPLICATION PROCESS

We are expecting to receive a high volume of applications.

Please read this application guidance pack carefully, including any application deadlines, and the FAQs section, before applying.

All applications are made via the link on the HoECF website. Please ensure you regularly save your application whilst working on it. Once you have completed the application and have attached all the required supporting documents, please **Submit** the form. You will receive an email acknowledgement of its receipt.

Accepting our Terms and Conditions of Grants are now part of the application process - please ensure you familiarise yourself with these.

Your application will be assessed by a Grants Assessors who might contact you for additional information or clarification. Your application and the assessment report will be considered by a Grants Panel that will be meeting regularly. You will be notified of the decision in writing as soon as possible but please note it may take up to eight weeks for a decision to be reached.

NEXT STEPS

Successful Applicants

- Work should commence as soon as possible, and no later than within three months of a successful application
- All grants must be spent and work completed by the project end date and all grants must be fully spent by December 2024.
- You must acknowledge the grant and include the relevant logos of the UK Government, WMCA, HoECF, UB22 logos on any publicity and marketing materials
- You will need to complete monitoring reports (frequency will depend on grant size) and an end of grant report.
- Any changes must be discussed in advance with a member of the Programme Team at Heart of England Community Foundation.

Unsuccessful Applicants

The decision of the Grants Panel is final and not open to appeal. Feedback will be provided to unsuccessful applications whenever possible. You can apply again if advised.

Which geographic areas are covered by this funding?

A. The following areas are covered:

- Birmingham
- Cannock Chase
- Coventry
- Dudley
- Redditch
- Sandwell
- Shropshire
- Solihull
- Tamworth
- Telford and Wrekin
- Walsall
- Warwickshire
- Wolverhampton

Can National Organisations apply?

A. The Inclusive Communities Fund is aimed at local organisations based in and delivering services/activities within the funding area. National organisations can only apply if they already have an established West Midlands presence; projects would be West Midlands-led; and if they can clearly demonstrate they understand local needs and have community engagement. Grants cannot be used towards the parent organisation unless costs are clearly project related.

Can Community Interest Companies limited by shares apply?

If a CIC is limited by shares rather than guarantee the company may be eligible providing they meet other criteria which will include open share distribution from the wider community. We will not fund an organisation where the shares are limited to the Directors or people who are involved/employed with the CIC only.

Why is there an income limit for Small Grants?

A. We have set an income limit of £500,000 for the Small Grants fund. This is because the fund is intended for smaller community and grassroots organisations. Other Inclusive Communities Fund Grants do not have an income limit.

Can we apply for more than one grant?

A. Yes, but only from Small Grants, Medium Grants, and Small Work, Refurbishment & Renovation, and the requests would have to meet different needs. If you have applied for and been awarded a Large Grant you cannot apply for a second grant.

We are applying for a Small Works, Renovation and Refurbishment and we lease our building. How long must remain on our lease?

A. Your lease must have a minimum of three years remaining on your lease.

Can we include contingency in the budget?

A. No, unfortunately contingency cannot be included. You will need to submit an accurate budget. This is because of the tight timescales for this programme and your project cannot overrun.

What are the monitoring and reporting requirements on grants?

A. All grantees will have to complete monitoring forms but the frequency will depend on the grant size and this will be determined when the grant is awarded. All grantees will have to complete an End of Grant Monitoring Report.
<https://www.heartofenglandcf.co.uk/monitoring-your-grant/>

Will each area in the West Midlands Combined Authority get a fair share of the fund?

We strive to ensure fairness and equity in the distribution of this grant across the region. To achieve this, we have considered factors such as the population size and the indices of multiple deprivation.

This approach provides us with the necessary information to effectively monitor and guide our initiatives throughout the entire West Midlands Combined Authority region.

We have refrained from assigning specific allocations to areas because we recognise that doing so would hinder our efforts to foster a more inclusive West Midlands that collaborates seamlessly across boundaries.

Please note that we will continue to add FAQs in response to questions. We will publish updates on our website.

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