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Cost of Living Grant 2024 Application Guidance

Our Manchester Funds Team   omfunds@manchester.gov.uk

Contents

About this guidance document
This guidance contains information to help you prepare and submit your application to the Cost of Living 2024 Grants Programme). This document is aimed at the person who will be filling in the application form and gives more information about most of the questions in the application form.

Submitting your application using Smart Survey
- You must use the online Smart Survey form to send us your application. A word version is available on Macc's website to help you plan your answers.
- To complete the form we strongly recommend use of a desktop computer rather than a mobile device or tablet.
- Make sure you complete all parts of the online form before submitting your application.
- All questions require an answer.
- You can save your application at any point using the "Save for later" button at the bottom of the page. Make sure you note down the email address you've used with the form as you will need this to access the form again. Emails from Smart Survey can end up in your Spam / Junk folder so be sure to check this.
- At the end of the form you will have the opportunity to print your response.
- We can also provide you with a copy of your submitted application on request.
- **Only evidence provided in the application form will be used to score the application.** Please do not email us with additional documents in support of your application. Any links to websites provided in the application will only be used for eligibility and due diligence checks on successful applicant organisations.
- All information provided is assessed in the context of the entire application. Please provide information which to the best of your knowledge is accurate and gives a fair reflection.

Accessibility
We are committed to making this grant application process accessible to as many eligible organisations as possible. Smart Survey is compatible with widely used screen readers, usable with keyboard only, supports browser zoom up to 400% and has accessible colour.
If anyone in your organisation requires additional assistance or information in accessible formats, please email omfunds@manchester.gov.uk.

Word limits
As much as possible we are after concise responses that answer the question. Some questions have word limits to help with this. Where this is the case we will tell you what the word limit is in the question. You do not need to write up to the maximum word limit - the panel are looking for clear and meaningful responses which make sense and which answer the question asked.

Support

We recommend that you read this application guidance before completing and submitting your application. The prospectus, application questions, and guidance are

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all available on Macc's website. You can also request copies of these directly from us by emailing omfunds@manchester.gov.uk

If you have any technical issues with the form please contact us at the same email address where we expect to respond within 48 hours. Please note that the team cannot help you draft answers to the application form.

Information Briefing

To support you in producing and submitting your application, the Our Manchester Funds team will host an online briefing to provide more information about the fund, the application process and there will be an opportunity to ask questions. The webinar dates can be found on Macc's website. A recording of the briefing will be made available.

You can register for the briefing and/or request access to the recording by emailing omfunds@manchester.gov.uk.

This briefing is not compulsory but is recommended to groups who haven't applied before, or who have questions about the process.

Privacy notice

Manchester City Council is committed to ensuring your information is held securely and in keeping with data protection legislation. Information you provide us with will be used by us and shared with the mentor that is working with you in order to provide support through this programme and for evaluation purposes. Your information will not be used to determine other grant funding decisions. If you'd like to know more you can read our privacy notice here.

Scoring

Every application will be scored against the following criteria:

1. Relevant skills & experience of the organisation(s) applying for funding
2. Connection between the proposal and the aims of the fund
3. Rationale for target beneficiaries
4. Value for money

Please write your application with these criteria in mind.

Existing Manchester City Council grantees

Organisations who have a prior or existing grant relationship with Manchester City Council are eligible to apply to this fund. However, you cannot apply for funding for a project or activity that you are currently receiving funding for from the Council.

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Do's and Don'ts for completing your application

Do:

- Make sure you answer the questions we ask in the form.
- Be specific in your answers and avoid making general statements.
- If talking about previous work, focus on telling us about what you have delivered in Manchester.
- Tell us about your organisation's experiences, evidence and data.
- Please use exact figures where you have them. If you do not have these, use your best estimates instead. We may ask you to provide evidence for the numbers stated in your application, for example in the form of monitoring information or an annual report.
- Feel free to use headings, short sentences and bullet points to organise your answers.
- We recommend that you get a colleague or friend to check your application before you submit to make sure the application makes sense.
- If you are having issues with the Smart Survey system let us know in plenty of time.
- If you have submitted your application and then want to make a change, please email us as soon as possible. We can re-open submitted applications to help with this.

Don't:

- Don't leave your application to the last minute. We expect to be very busy on the day of submission and can't guarantee that we can respond to all queries before the deadline.
- Don't worry about spelling and grammar mistakes – applications will not be judged on these, as long as the panel can understand your responses.
- Don't think you need to apply for the examples we give in the guidance. Examples we give are only to explain how we want you to answer the question, they are not intended to encourage you to ask for funding for that specific group or activity.
- You must not apply for funding on behalf of another organisation. If you are unsure about your organisation's eligibility please get in touch with us.

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1. <u>Eligibility Checker</u>

- The eligibility checker questions help us to identify the organisations that are eligible for this grant.
- Please answer the questions based on your organisation's <u>current</u> circumstances at the time of application.
- Please note that eligibility is not a guarantee that your application will be successful.
- If you cannot answer Yes to each of the eligibility questions, you are not eligible for this funding. If you would like to look at other funding, please [visit the Macc website](#).

2. <u>Your contact details</u>

- This section allows us to get in touch with you, for example to let you know if your organisation has been successful.
- First contact – this should be the person who will be the main contact for your organisation's application. The application assumes that the person filling in the form is the first contact.
- Second contact – Please provide details of a second contact person in case we need to get in touch and the first contact is unavailable. They must work for the same organisation as the first contact person.

3. <u>About your organisation</u>

- This section helps us to understand what you already deliver as an organisation and undertake due diligence checks.

Q14. What is the name of your group or organisation?

- Please use the full name of your organisation. If you are registered with the Charities Commission, please use the full name listed on the Charities Register.

Q15. What's the address of your group or organisation? (you must include the full postcode)

- If you have a registered address on the Charities Commission website use this. If not, please use the main correspondence address for your organisation.
- Either way you must include a full postcode.

Q16. If applicable, please include links to your website and/or facebook page.

- If you do not have a website or facebook page, you could include a link to social media pages for your organisation, such as X (formerly Twitter) or Instagram.
- **We will check weblinks as part of our eligibility and due diligence checks, but external links provided will not be used to score your application.**
- **Only information within the form itself is used to score your application.**

Q17. Please select your type of organisation

- If you are not one of the specified types of organisation, you are not eligible. If successful we may ask you to provide evidence of your organisation type, such as a governing document or constitution.

Q19. Please provide your organisation's bank account details.

- We ask for your bank details so that we can send the grant funding to your organisation.
- DO NOT supply personal bank details through this form.
- We cannot fund organisations that do not have an organisation or group bank account.
- If successful we may ask you for additional bank details and may ask you to provide a recent bank statement.

Q20. What is your organisation's annual income?

- Annual income is the total amount of money coming into the charity, through donations and legacies, grants, charitable activities, other trading activities and investments.

Q21. Would you say your organisation is "BAME led"?

- Your organisation may choose to describe itself as being "BAME led" if your board of trustees / directors is mostly made up of people from Black, Asian and other ethnic minority communities.
- **Please note this is not a requirement for funding and organisations that provide cost of living support and meet our criteria are encouraged to apply whether or not they would describe themselves as being "BAME led".**

Q22 Where are your Manchester beneficiaries from?

- We want to know about the people your organisation usually works with.
- By Manchester beneficiaries we mean Manchester residents that you work with and/or access your support and services.
- It may not be possible for you to know if your beneficiaries are Manchester residents, so we have included an option to say you do not have this information.

- You do not need to tick every ward.
- Applications covering a few wards or one ward only will not automatically be scored lower. Likewise, organisations covering all or lots of wards will not automatically score higher.

Q23. Please tell us more about your Manchester beneficiaries. This might be different to who you're planning to work with using this funding.

- As well as asking about where in Manchester your beneficiaries are based, we want to know brief information that helps us to understand their background, such as their protected characteristics, inequality that they experience and/or the kinds of support they receive from you. If you work with lots of different people from different backgrounds and with different needs, please tell us about the main groups you typically work with, even if this is different to what you want to use this funding for.
- Please use exact figures where you have them. If you do not have these, use your best estimates instead.
- Applications will not automatically be scored higher for listing lots of different groups, or lower for listing only one or two groups. This information will be assessed in the context of the entire application.
- Please tell us this information as simply as possible, for example:
    - *we work with women of all ages including trans women and young girls at risk of exploitation, domestic violence and abuse*
    - *our beneficiaries are from Black, Asian and other ethnic minority communities, living with long term health conditions including mental health*
    - *we work with people over the age of 65 who are socially isolated*
    - *our beneficiaries are from the local area (see wards question above) and we do not discriminate based on any other criteria. However a lot of our activities are aimed at single parents with young children and older people in the community.*
- Please note the following definitions:
    - We define older people as those aged 55 years or over.
    - We define younger people as those up to 18 years old, or up to 25 if they have special educational needs and disabilities.

Q24. How many Manchester beneficiaries do you usually work with each year?

- We ask this question to get a sense of your organisation's reach and impact in Manchester.
- We only want to know about the Manchester residents you work with, please do not include figures from other local authority areas.
- Please use exact figures where you have them. If you do not have these, use your best estimates instead. If you do not know, please state this.
- It is fine if the number of Manchester beneficiaries you work with each year is different to the number of Manchester beneficiaries you are going to work with using this funding.

- Applications will not automatically be scored higher for high numbers, or lower for low numbers. All information provided is assessed in the context of the entire application.

4. <u>About your activities</u>

- This section helps us to understand what you want the funding for.

Q26. Is this funding to continue what you're already doing, build on or adapt current activities or both?

- The fund aims to support organisations to:
    - continue the activities they are already delivering
    - build on or adapt activities by including new elements
    - or both 1 and 2

- <u>What do we mean by new elements?</u>

    Your application may include new elements that you want funding for, however these new elements should have a strong reason for delivering them and should not be a complete change from what you currently deliver. Some examples of new elements might include:

    - an organisation might have an existing community café that is open 2 days a week and the new element could be to expand this to open 3 days a week
    - an organisation might have an education offer that currently supports people with digital literacy and the new element might be to expand this to include modules on budget management and employability skills
    - an organisation might deliver social activities for young people from one community and following lots of inquiries might want to expand this to reach a neighbouring community with the same offer.

Q27. Where in Manchester does your organisation plan to work with this funding? This might be different to where you usually work. Please select all wards that apply.

- This question helps us to compare where your beneficiaries are based with where you plan to work with this funding.
- Please only select wards that you will be targeting for this work.
- We can only provide funding for work within the Manchester local authority ward boundaries.
- Applications will not automatically be scored less for delivering in different wards to where their beneficiaries are from, however we do expect you to explain the reasons for this in your application.

- Applications covering a few wards or one ward only will not automatically be scored lower. Likewise, organisations covering all or lots of wards will not automatically score higher.

Q28. Which Manchester communities are you going to work with using this funding? This might be different to who you usually work with.

- This question is to understand the types of people that you plan to work with
- This might be different to who you usually work with in Section 3. If your answer to this is the same as the people you normally work with that you have already told us about, please write "same as existing".
- Please be as specific as possible, giving us detail about the people you want to work with and approximately how many people, for example:
  - "we plan to work with
    50 families experiencing in-work poverty including
    35 single parents with poor mental health with children under 5"
- Please use exact figures where you have them. If you do not have these, use your best estimates instead.
- Applications will not automatically be scored higher for listing lots of different groups, or lower for listing only one or two groups. This information will be assessed in the context of the entire application.
- Please note the following definitions:
  - We define older people as those aged 55 years or over.
  - We define younger people as those up to 18 years old, or up to 25 if they have special educational needs and disabilities.

Q29. What is the <u>total number of individuals</u> that you plan to work with over the funded period?

- We want to know the total number of individual Manchester residents that you will work with over the funded period.
- Please count each individual only once. For family or household support, count each member of the household.
- Please use exact figures where you have them. If you do not have these, use your best estimates instead.
- You only need to tell us the total number for this question, you do not need to show your working out.

Q30. Please tell us how the cost-of-living crisis is currently affecting the people you plan to work with.

- There is a word limit of 500 words for this question.
- Please be clear and concise, stating the main issues affecting the people you have said you are going to be working with.
- Tell us how you know this information, for example feedback from beneficiaries, evidence from delivering services, etc.
- We expect that what you plan to do with the funding will relate to the issues you describe in this question.

Q31. Please describe what you will do with this funding, including the activities you have planned (maximum 1,000 words)

- There is a word limit of 1,000 words for this question.
- Please be clear and concise, stating what activities will be delivered over the funded period, how often activities will take place and who will access these.
- Please be clear about which activities are new, and which activities are a continuation of what you already deliver.
- Tell us other information relevant to the funding as applicable.
- We expect that what you plan to do with the funding will respond to the issues you described in the question above.

Q32. What difference will these activities make to the people you plan to work with? (maximum 500 words)

- Please make sure you address each community you have listed in previous questions about who you will work with.

Q33. What is the total length of your project that you are asking funding for?

- Your choice can be approximate and may change, but we will undertake monitoring against the details you put into this application.
- Please note that funding must be spent and activities delivered by the end of October 2025, and monitoring submitted by the end of November 2025.
- Funding will be provided no earlier than October 2024.
- Only expenditure that occurs after a grant is awarded can be funded, and funds cannot be applied to expenses incurred before October 2024.
- All specific expenditure for which the grant is requested must fall within the grant period of up to 12 months, although your project may have started before and/or continue beyond this period.

5. <u>Outcomes</u>

Q34. Tell us about the outcomes and indicators for your proposal and how you will capture this information. You can list up to 5 outcomes for this work.

- We ask for a set of outcomes and indicators for two main reasons:
  1. to help us understand what impact you are intending to achieve over the funded period and
  2. to help measure progress against the intended impact – all successful groups will be asked to report on their outcomes through monitoring activities.

What we mean by "outcome":

- Outcomes describes the impact you want to have as a result of activities.
- Please use the SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Timebound) framework to write your outcomes.
- Your outcomes must respond to the stated aims of the fund.
- Organisations must supply at least one outcome, and are free to write up to 5 outcomes.
- Your outcomes can relate to each other, for example the following three outcomes might relate to the activities of an organisation supporting beneficiaries to secure employment:
  1. *10 beneficiaries secure permanent and/or temporary employment in the next 12 months.*
  2. *35 beneficiaries successfully complete a work placement in the next 12 months.*
  3. *At least 75% of beneficiaries report improved interview confidence.*

What we don't mean by "outcome":

- Outcomes should not describe your activities <u>without telling us the difference it will make</u>.
  For example: *We will deliver 40 employability webinars over a 12 month period.* – this is clear but it doesn't tell us what the impact of those webinars will be on your beneficiaries. What will the webinars achieve? As it currently stands, this wording is not useful for us as an outcome.

What we mean by indicator:

- Indicators describe in numbers what you are going to measure to show the progress you're making against the outcome.
- Each outcome must have an indicator and each outcome can have more than one indicator. The same indicator can be used for more than one outcome.
- We also ask how you will record this information. This is just about the data sources you have, for example, beneficiaries might send you an email to let you know how the interview went, or you might use a survey to capture feedback.
- For example:

Outcome:	Indicator	How recorded
1. 10 beneficiaries will secure permanent and/or temporary employment in the next 12 months.	• Number of beneficiaries reporting that they have secured a permanent employment contract. • Number of beneficiaries reporting that they have secured a temporary employment contract.	• Email feedback from beneficiaries

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2. 35 beneficiaries will successfully complete a work placement in the next 12 months.	• Number of beneficiaries completing work placements.	• Attendance records • Beneficiary feedback • Workplace feedback
3. At least 75% of beneficiaries will report improved interview confidence.	• Percentage of beneficiaries reporting improved interview confidence. • Number of beneficiaries attending work placements. • Number of interviews attended by beneficiaries.	• Beneficiary Survey • Attendance records • Beneficiary feedback • Workplace feedback

6. <u>Costs</u>

Q35.   What is the total amount that you are applying for? Please note that the maximum you can apply for is £15,000.

- The maximum each organisation can apply for is £15,000.
- Please note that less expensive projects will not automatically have more chance of being successful.
- Applications will be scored on the assessment criteria, which includes "value for money", meaning that costs should be realistic and proportionate to the work and impact described in the application.

Q36.   What will you spend the money on? Breakdowns do not need to be to the penny – we just want to know broad spend areas e.g. staffing, rent, equipment. Costings should relate to your project plan.

- This is a brief breakdown of what you think you will spend the money on and should link with the proposed activities in the project plan. Please try to provide accurate costings where possible. We understand that costs may change throughout the project. Please be aware that Manchester City Council reserves the right to audit financial information related to grants that we award.

Q37.   How have you worked out your costs?

- We want to know the thinking behind your costs and how they represent value for money. Any costs that may be open to interpretation must be explained. These might include:
  - management/administration costs
  - fees and charges, for example consultancy
  - costs which suggest a business or profit-making enterprise which are not clearly linked to the organisation and/or its activities, or do not appear to deliver community benefit.

7. <u>Safeguarding</u>

- If you are working with children, or adults with care and support needs, you MUST have appropriate safeguarding measures in place, including a named Safeguarding Lead. For more information visit [Safeguarding | Manchester Community Central](#).

8. <u>Other funding</u>

- This section lets us know about the existing support for this project (match funding) from other sources.
- Match funding is not a requirement of this fund.

9. <u>Your experience</u>

- This section is not compulsory but helps the Our Manchester Funds team to continuously improve our application processes.