



Communities Addressing Gambling Harms

FUNDING PROGRAMME GUIDANCE

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Summary

Grants of £2,500 are available for sixteen Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) organisations tackling inequalities across Greater Manchester to initiate conversations around gambling harms and support community action.

The funding will support you to run community action activities to increase awareness of gambling harms. The programme seeks to build a collaborative approach and so grant holders are also required to:

- participate in a **collaborative co-design workshop** in April 2026 where you will:
 - be supported by people with lived experience of gambling harms and local knowledge to develop your approach to utilising the funds
 - network with other grantees and identify opportunities for further collaboration
- attend one **Gambling Harms awareness training session** with partners [Chapter One](#)
- attend a **reflective session** in October 2026 to develop peer support networks and share learning, insights and challenges

Funded activity will need to be completed within six months of grants being paid.

The deadline for expressions of interest is 12:00 midday Monday 2 March 2026.

Manchester Community Central is managing the programme on behalf of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA).

We hosted two **Meet the Funder** webinar - information and Q&A sessions on 27 January and 12 February. Click [here](#) to access the information slides.

Background

At least one in 15 residents of Greater Manchester are experiencing harm caused by gambling. Despite gambling being increasingly normalised in our society, the harms are often hidden or overlooked. Too many people are drawn into addiction, too many communities are harmed by gambling and too few people access appropriate help and support.

Gambling harms are the impacts from gambling that can affect the health and wellbeing of individuals, communities and wider society. The harms from gambling are diverse and can affect not only an individual but also family, friends and others. Harms include (but are not limited to):

- increased stress and impacts on mental health and wellbeing (such as anxiety, depression and suicide risk)
- relationship breakdown
- domestic abuse
- financial hardship

Though ‘gambling harms can affect anyone’, individuals are not equally likely to experience harm from gambling and this is driven predominantly by existing inequalities in society ([Gambling Harms Inequalities Framework](#), 2025).

Greater Manchester has been leading the way nationally in the development of a city region approach to gambling harms. GMCA led the first phase of ‘Communities Addressing Gambling Harms’ to foster community innovation to reduce gambling related harms in Greater Manchester. Key impacts of this work included raising public awareness through various community-led projects, which created greater visibility and engagement with gambling related harm issues in local communities. See the [Research and Evaluation report](#) for more detail.

Aim of the Fund

Manchester Community Central are launching a new phase of GMCA's Communities Against Gambling Harms programme, to:

- Support community action to reduce gambling harm
- Help more VCSE organisations start conversations with people at risk of gambling related harm

By targeting organisations not traditionally focused on gambling harm but those working to address inequalities, we will build on existing community assets, staff networks and community groups to further develop a community-led movement to address gambling harms in Greater Manchester.

The intended impact of this funding is for:

- VCSE organisations to be better equipped to identify and support individuals at risk of gambling-related harm.
- Increased public knowledge and confidence around addressing gambling harms from enhanced engagement and education

What's on offer

We are inviting organisations to apply once for a full **one-off grant of £2,500** to:

- participate in a **collaborative codesign workshop** in April 2026. You will
 - be supported by people with lived experience of gambling harms and local knowledge to develop your approach to utilising the funds
 - network with other grantees and identify opportunities for further collaboration
- run **community action activities** to increase awareness of gambling harms in your community within 6 months of receiving the grant
- attend a **reflective session** in October 2026 to develop peer support networks and share learning, insights and challenges

You will be required to attend a **Gambling Harms awareness training session** with Chapter One. The next session is in-person 1-3pm on 16 March - click [here](#) to register. There will be other opportunities to attend this.

GMCA will provide a Gambling Harms resource toolkit for community groups.

There are 16 grants available.

Who can apply?

Greater Manchester-based VCSE organisations *that have an income not exceeding £1 million in the last financial reporting period*¹ and which are either:

1. Led by or working with communities experiencing racial inequalities
2. Working with low-income households (including groups who support people living in poverty, offer welfare/debt advice, or those experiencing multiple disadvantage)
3. Addressing broader inequalities in Greater Manchester.

You must be based and already operating in one or more of the ten localities of Greater Manchester:

- Bolton
- Bury
- Manchester
- Oldham
- Rochdale
- Salford
- Stockport
- Tameside
- Trafford
- Wigan

We can only fund VCSE organisations, e.g.

- charitable companies
- charitable incorporated organisations (CIO)
- community benefit societies
- community interest companies (CIC) limited by guarantee
- registered charities
- not-for-profit private limited companies
- unincorporated constituted groups/associations

In addition, your organisation must have:

¹ We want to reach grassroots, community-based groups that have a strong understanding of the communities they serve and are well placed to engage those who experience inequalities. This will help broaden the reach of activity and ensure support is delivered in ways that are accessible to communities. We know these are predominantly delivered by small and medium-sized organisations in our region. NCVO defines small and medium charities as those with an income under £1million.

- A constitution or governing document which sets out the rules of your group
- A minimum of three directors/trustees who are unrelated to each other
- Public, employers and product liability insurance cover
- Key policies relating to health & safety, safeguarding, data protection and financial risk management
- Its own bank account (or links to a named charitable entity that has agreed to hold the funds on your behalf)

As part of GMCA's commitment to an independent, public-health-led approach, this funding **will generally not be available to organisations that are in receipt of gambling industry funding between 1 March 2026 and 31 December 2026.**

For the purposes of this programme, gambling industry funding may include (but is not limited to):

- Direct funding or sponsorship from commercial gambling operators
- Funding from online or land-based betting, casino, bingo, or gaming companies
- Contributions from gambling industry trade bodies or representative organisations
- Voluntary industry donations or legacy pre-levy funding arrangements
- In-kind support (such as staff, services, data, or platforms) provided by gambling operators

National Lottery funding is not included in this definition during the national statutory levy transition period and does not affect eligibility.

If you are unsure about your organisation's eligibility please contact Aneeqa Javed on aneeqa@macc.org.uk or call 0161 834 9823

We expect high levels of interest. Please only apply if you meet all of the criteria.

What we can fund

We want to fund organisations to:

- Raise awareness of gambling harms through in-house workshops for staff and volunteers, and community awareness through activities such as targeted outreach, education, and engagement
- Center lived experience, involving those affected by gambling harm in project design and delivery to ensure activities are person-centered, and impactful (*you will be supported to engage with those with lived experience through the co-design workshop*)
- Strengthen community-level capacity and resilience to address gambling-related harms

Any kind of usual project costs can be included, e.g. staff time, expenses, overheads, consumables, equipment, administration, training, communications, marketing, etc. Please ensure staff time is built-in for grant holder representatives to take part in programme co-design and reflective sessions.

All funded activities must take place within Greater Manchester, and you must have **spent all funding by 31 October 2026** and submit a completed monitoring form no later than 20 November 2026.

Grantees must keep full records of all costs funded by this programme. However, we will not ask for evidence of this unless i) adverse issues emerge in the delivery of your funded activities, or ii) the programme becomes subject to external audit.

What we cannot fund

We cannot fund:

- ineligible organisations, i.e. those that do not fit the criteria under ‘Who can apply?’
- any organisation or activity not based in Greater Manchester
- any proposal that does not relate to gambling harms
- costs incurred before a grant offer is received, or that you do not plan to incur by 31 October 2026
- any political organisations or project activities involving the promotion of a particular religion.

How and when to apply

Please read this guidance document in full to ensure you meet the criteria.

Complete an [Expression of Interest form](#) online no later than **12:00 midday on Monday 2 March 2026.**

The form can be found via the Manchester Community Central website:
<https://manchestercommunitycentral.org/what-we-do/communities-against-gambling-harms>

To request an alternate version of the form, please email grants@macc.org.uk or call 0333 321 3021.

How we will assess your submissions

Manchester Community Central operates a comprehensive, fair and transparent grant making process. In line with our policies, our staff will help manage and advise the selection process though explicitly not in the role of assessors.

A panel comprised of those with lived experience, representatives from GMCA, and VCSE sector representatives from across Greater Manchester, with expertise in the Fund's thematic area, will assess expression of interest forms.

Expression of interest forms will be scored using a criteria, followed by panel discussions to decide which 16 organisations will receive funding. Priority will be given to those able to reach and engage underserved communities.

When we will tell you the outcome

We will notify you of the panel's decisions by 2 April 2026. We will provide brief feedback from the assessment panel to unsuccessful applicants.

Due diligence checks

Before we pay funding to successful applicants, you will need to assist us in carrying out due diligence checks. We may ask you to provide some or all the following information about your group:

- most recent signed annual accounts (or a Treasurer-signed income and expenditure statement for the last twelve months if annual accounts are not available)
- key organisational policies relating to health and safety, safeguarding and data protection
- a recent bank statement (must be uncensored and cover at least a one-month period within the last three months)
- A financial risk management policy (*or home addresses of two unrelated trustees if a financial policy is not available*)
- Confirmation that your organisation will not be in receipt of gambling industry funding between 1 March 2026 and 31 December 2026

Please do not provide any due diligence information before we request it.

The information is required as part of our standard due diligence checks to ensure recipients of charitable funding are currently active locally and financially solvent. Manchester Community Central is obliged to collect this and other information in its appointed role as fund administrator on behalf of GMCA.

In strict accordance with The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018, Manchester Community Central will store all personal and financial information confidentially. Our [Information Commissioner's Office](#)² reference is Z9595019 and we re-register annually on 10 September. Upon request, Manchester Community Central can provide our data protection and information security policies.

If you require more detailed information, please let us know.

² <https://ico.org.uk/>

If successful, when will you receive the grant?

Upon receipt of an award letter from Manchester Community Central, successful applicants will need to complete and return an 'Acceptance of Grant Form' together with the due diligence information requested (see previous section).

Subject to your providing the requested information, we aim to transfer approved funding within one week of completing the checks, no later than 30 April 2026.

How long will you have to spend on the grant?

You must have fully spent your grant within six months of receiving the funds, and no later than 31 October 2026.

How will your project be evaluated?

We will provide a monitoring form along with your grant offer letter, to be completed and returned no later than 20 November 2026.

The form will ask for:

- details of the activities delivered, and numbers of people engaged
- feedback from communities involved
- confirmation of the actual costs that were covered by the grant (you must keep full records of the expenses funded by this programme although you will not be asked to provide financial records or other evidence of expenditure at this time)
- An image or other visual representation of your project activities

We will host a session towards the end of the 6 months for you to reflect on your project alongside other grant-holders.

What support is available to applicants?

We hosted two **Meet the Funder** webinar - information and Q&A sessions on 27 January and 12 February. Click [here](#) to access the information slides.

For general queries about the programme, please email Aneeqa Javed on aneeqa@macc.org.uk or call 0161 834 9823

Your local VCSE sector support organisation can provide free advice on completing a grant application, subject to their capacity, through their usual referral processes. The contact details are below. If you require assistance, please contact the relevant organisation as early as possible before the deadline.

Bolton phone Bolton CVS on 01204 546010 or email info@boltoncvs.org.uk

Bury email Bury Voluntary Community & Faith Alliance via funding@buryvcfa.org.uk

Manchester phone Manchester Community Central on 0333 321 3021 or email info@mcrcommunitycentral.org

Oldham phone Action Together on 0161 339 2345 or email funding@actiontogether.org.uk

Rochdale phone Action Together on 0161 339 2345 or email funding@actiontogether.org.uk

Salford phone Salford CVS on 0161 787 7795 or email office@salfordcvs.co.uk

Stockport email Sector 3 on info@sector3sk.org

Tameside phone Action Together on 0161 339 2345 or email funding@actiontogether.org.uk

Trafford phone Thrive on 0330 123 9766 or email info@thrivetrafford.org.uk

Wigan phone Wigan and Leigh Community Charity on 01942 732022 or email enquiries@wlcommunity.org.uk