

Manchester VCSE Funding Partnership

Position Statement

November 2020

Working together to support a vibrant, strong, diverse and thriving voluntary and community sector in Manchester.

We are a newly formed partnership made up of VCSE funders covering Manchester, chaired by Manchester City Council's Executive lead member for the VCSE sector – Councillor Angeliki Stogia. Our focus is to work together to support Manchester to have a vibrant, strong, diverse and thriving VCSE sector. Key to this is working together to support, and where possible, invest in the VCSE sector in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic and beyond.

The importance of the VCSE in achieving the city's goals cannot be overstated. The work carried out by the sector is vital to Manchester's residents and communities, and in recent months this could not have been truer. The way voluntary organisations have responded to the Covid-19 crisis has been inspiring. We are clear that the VCSE sector has to be at the heart of our recovery too, getting us back on track to be a fairer, healthier, wealthier and happier Manchester that we now need more than ever.

Working in tandem with other initiatives and partners, in addition to looking at how we can strengthen our funding collectively, will work to ensure that Manchester's VCSE sector is continually championed and has its contribution and needs recognised at the right level, including discussions and lobbying at a regional and national level.

Organisations represented on the partnership include:

- Greater Manchester Mental Health
- Macc
- Manchester City Council
- Manchester Health and Care Commissioning
- MCR Active
- One Manchester
- We Love MCR Charity
- Young Manchester

The consequences of the Covid-19 crisis represent a short-term challenge to the sector in responding and a very serious threat to the long-term viability, diversity and strength of Manchester's VCSE sector.

We know that we need to use our resources wisely and we know that more investment is needed:

- to support VCSE organisations to adapt delivery of existing services and develop offers that can support residents within this new environment
- to support individuals and partnerships in the VCSE sector who play key roles in leading, coordinating and supporting the sector
- for the recovery and long term viability of organisations beyond the emergency response to Covid-19
- to embed new and effective ways of working that will grow and strengthen the sector

As with any other crisis there are also opportunities and lessons to be learned that must not be forgotten, including new and more effective ways of running organisations and services.

The Our Manchester Strategy (OMS) has been the backdrop for the city's work over the last 5 years, of which the voluntary sector plays a critical role. Accompanying the strategy is the Our Manchester approach – a way of working which the voluntary sector embodies – listening to people, working together in a strengths based way, and putting the needs of people before the needs of institutions. A key focus has been to think differently about existing approaches in order to maximise outcomes for residents and communities.

In the wake of Covid-19, a reset of the OMS has been agreed by the Council's Executive to address new and existing priorities and work alongside the development of other strategies. The VCSE sector will be critical in shaping the reset and the continued delivery of this strategy.

Next steps for the partnership:

- Develop a VCSE funding strategy to inform the partnership's approach to funding the VCSE on a Manchester level. This will include key principles by which the partnership will operate and will be underpinned by consultation and engagement with the VCSE sector
- Improve strategic oversight of grant making through the sharing of data and intelligence and the alignment of relevant processes
- Develop a VCSE Covid Recovery Fund to support the sector. This initiative is being funded by MHCC and being developed by MHCC, MCC and Young Manchester with the support of Macc. The fund aims to:
 - Improve the health and wellbeing of Manchester residents
 - address health inequalities within the city of Manchester
 - support the sustainability of the VCSE sector in Manchester in order to support resident's health
 - support the securing of funding from new sources, including through the fund and the activity of grantees

We invite other Manchester funders to join the partnership. To express an interest please email: omfunds@manchester.gov.uk