

OMVCS Fund 2023 - Questions & Queries

Our Manchester VCS Grant Programme – Frequently Asked Questions

Last updated: 04.10.2022

We have pulled together a list of queries received from the information sessions and individual queries. We hope this is useful, please do get in touch if there are outstanding questions and we'll do our best to answer them.

Eligibility

We're part of a national network/ a national organisation with a Manchester regional office, will this count against us?

And

We're based outside of the Manchester boundaries; will this be an issue?

This fund is intended to benefit Manchester residents only, and you will be asked to demonstrate your connection to the Manchester communities you work with.

Are there income caps on who can apply?

No, there are no lower- or upper-income caps. However, it is unlikely you will be successful if the amount you're applying for is more than double the income you have received in the last three years. Groups should think realistically about the connection between their current work and income and not try to scale up too quickly.

Please also note that this funding is not intended to be the first funding an organisation receives, and organisations must meet the funds eligibility criteria and expectations.

If we are in receipt of a Cultural Partnership Grant, can we apply?

Yes.

We have recently incorporated as a CIO, but have many years track record of good management and service provision as an unincorporated association, can we still apply?

Yes, if you meet all the eligibility criteria.

OMVCS Fund 2023 - Questions & Queries

Partnerships

Is it possible to bring together new partnerships to apply for funding?

Applicants should have an existing partnership able to demonstrate an existing good track record of working together.

Do all applicants in a partnership bid need to meet the funds eligibility requirements?

Yes, all applicants need to meet the funds basic eligibility criteria and demonstrate the funds five expectations

Will there be an eligibility checker for partner organisations?

All organisations within the partnership should check that they're individually eligible using the checker. The link for this is at the bottom of this document.

Is priority given to partnership bids, and will there be a ring-fenced amount for individual applications and then another ring-fenced amount for partnership bids?

There is no priority within the funding for individual bids or partnership bids, and there is not a ring-fenced amount set aside for either.

Will we be more successful if addressing aims as a partnership?

No, you will neither be more successful or unsuccessful if you work in partnership. The fund is looking for strong individual and partnership bids that address the aims of the fund. Organisations can apply in partnership only where a partnership already exists and where this is the best way of delivering the desired impacts.

What to include in the bid

How will you decide what is acceptable for an organisation to apply for?

All applications will be assessed on areas such as activity, value for money and beneficiaries. There should be a reasonable investment evidenced for the level of activity. There is no single calculation, a multi-disciplinary panel are put in place to assess accurately.

OMVCS Fund 2023 - Questions & Queries

Will you expect match funding for bids / do grants need to cover 100% of organisational activity?

We will accept both. There is no set condition.

Will you need to see a consultation or collation of specific resident related data?

We will be looking for a compelling narrative that shows a strong track record and purpose over the last 18 months that shows you have engaged with residents. What you know about your communities is more important than quantitative data.

In the application form, where there are tick boxes for service user demographics, do we need to complete/estimate every section?

Yes, you do need to complete a best estimate for all service user figures. There's advice on this within the guidance document, which can be downloaded from the [website](#). Evidence should be provided where possible. If evidence is unobtainable, please provide best estimates.

Does the yearly amount requested need to be the same across 3 years?

Yes, successful applicants will be awarded the same grant value in years 1, 2 and 3. There will be no uplift in that time. Cost of living increases should be factored into the application and the breakdown of spending amounts may differ across the 3 years which, should be reflected in the application text.

In question 48 (for individual applicants) or question 54 (for partnership applicants), each of the 3 columns must add up to the same figure. It might be advisable to add your own 'totals' row to make it obvious that this is the case. The solution for all groups to budget for inflation is likely to be some combination of:

1. Reducing some areas of cost in Years 2 and 3.
2. Increasing contributory income from other sources in Years 2 and 3. For individual applicants, this implies that the answer to questions 45 and 46 will be different, and you will need to answer question 47. For partnership applicants, questions 51 and 52 will be different and you will need to answer question 53.

Do we need to seek multiple quotes for budget to show reasonable/average costs?

Applicants are required to work out the costs of their proposed activities, including running costs where applicable, and present these in the relevant parts of the application form. There is no requirement in the form for applicants to submit quotes.

OMVCS Fund 2023 - Questions & Queries

If we are currently funded by OMVCS, is the current work funded of any relevance? Or will you not be interested in whether it's a continuation or not?

Organisations who are currently funded by the OMVCS programme are not limited to applying for what they currently are funded to do; organisations can continue to do what they're funded for or change. All applicants will be expected to demonstrate how they meet the five expectations of the fund, such as demonstrating impact with and on Manchester residents, and organisations on the OMVCS programme may wish to use their currently funded activity within their application as evidence.

Should we plan for inflation uncertainty and Real living wage increases?

Yes. The value of the grant each year remains the same but what this is spent on can vary. Applications which have carefully considered their yearly budgets will be looked on favourably. Groups should budget realistically and be clear about what they can deliver for the money within each year as well as over the lifetime of the grant.

In terms of the Living Wage, should we consider any staff employed as part of co-working spaces, e.g. cleaning staff, despite not being employed by the group themselves?

No, as you are not responsible for paying these workers yourselves. However, groups should consider full cost recovery, e.g. if there are additional cleaning charges you have to pay on top of rent for the space you lease.

Is there a cap on the amount of core/indirect/admin/support costs we can request?

No, there is no 'cap'. This fund will support an organisation's core running costs, service delivery and associated activities. See the Prospectus for further guidance. The Fund is aimed at sustaining a healthy VCSE sector that provides essential services for Manchester citizens. For guidance on including your indirect costs in a budget and full cost recovery, seek support from Macc:

<https://manchestercommunitycentral.org/news/our-manchester-vcs-grants-2023-2026>

Can we include external links and hyperlinks in the text, such as to a case study or data?

No, please do not include any external links or hyperlinks.

Do we need to demonstrate what happens after the three-year funding?

There is no requirement for organisations to demonstrate at the application stage any planned activity or spend beyond the three-year funding period. Successful applicants will be required to submit regular monitoring forms to ensure progress of activities and reasonable spend during the three-year period, but not beyond.

OMVCS Fund 2023 - Questions & Queries

In the application form, it requests information from the last 12 months. Should this be September to September or can it be our last financial year (if different)?

September to September would be the norm, but a slightly different period is fine as long as it is recent enough to show a continuing track record.

Process and timelines

Is the application process different for Small, Medium & Large grants?

The application process is the same for all grant levels. The funding will be granted based on the strength of evidence; the amount of narrative required will differ depending on the size of the grant e.g a large grant will be expected to use the full maximum word count. This is outlined within the accompanying guidance document released on 1 September.

Will you be ring fencing amounts depending on application size, e.g. a certain amount of funding to be awarded to small grants and so on?

No, there are no ringfenced funds for each grant size. The panel will be looking to achieve a diverse spread across neighborhoods and communities of identity representative of Manchester's residents. However larger grants are likely to be more competitive.

Are there any other priorities in addition to the key aims of the fund, such as particular areas of Manchester, or particular communities of interest?

As far as possible, the panel will be looking to achieve a balanced portfolio that includes a diverse spread across neighborhoods and communities of identity that are representative of Manchester's residents.

Is the amount you apply for what you will receive, or will there be an opportunity to receive/negotiate a smaller grant?

No, the application will be assessed and granted on the information provided.

How can we submit applications?

Applications should be submitted via Smart Survey. The link to the application was made available on 1 September.

OMVCS Fund 2023 - Questions & Queries

Will there be a WORD version of the application form be made available so the answers can be prepped prior to being inputted to the Smart Survey?

Yes, this is available on the Manchester City Council website from 1 September.

Will there be a facility to upload attachments? English is my second language and I like to provide visual representations of ideas.

This facility isn't currently available. A written response is required. However, applicants may wish to work with Macc who can assist with translating visual ideas into the narrative required and their contact details are at the bottom of this document.

If applicants require an alternative format for accessibility reasons, please contact the team as soon as possible at omfunds@manchester.gov.uk

Can you save and continue on the application?

Yes. See the Smart Survey page for more information on how to use the form

Will there be an appeals process?

No, there will not be an appeals process for this fund

Will there only be one round per year, or is it one round for the 3 years?

Funding is available for 3 years, and will be one process taking place from September 2022. Those successful will receive funding for 3 years from 1 April 2023, and there will be no other bidding processes taking place in subsequent years of the funding programme.

Is there any benefit to submitting an application before the final deadline of 10th October 2022?

No, applications will only be reviewed from after the closing date. However, applicants are advised to start their application as soon as they can so they can develop the best bid possible.

How long is the due diligence period expected to take?

Due diligence is likely to begin in January 2023 and conclude in March 2023, for the new programme to start 1 April 2023.

OMVCS Fund 2023 - Questions & Queries

Support

Is there any information/help with any redundancy situation arising from the grant process?

Macc have some guidance available on their website, including how organisations can go about reviewing their options for different scenarios in a funding crisis. Starter information relating to insolvency and redundancy can be found on this page. Macc are also available to talk to in situations like this and can act as a sounding board, as well as signposting to further support.

Once the grant has been awarded

When do expect the project to start and end?

Funding and activity should commence from April 1st 2023, and funding will continue until March 2026.

What are the expectations of reporting frequency and meeting attendance?

On our current fund we undertake quarterly monitoring, but for the new fund we are planning on moving to 6 monthly monitoring periods, as we feel there is a better story to tell in this timeframe. We are finalising details and will share these with successful applicants at a later date.

Will the reporting requirements be the same irrespective of the grant amount?

There is one mechanism for doing this but the amount of information required will be proportionate to the grant received. We are finalising details and will share these at a later date.

If successful, will we need to submit a new application for each year of the funding?

You will not be able to re-apply for the funding if unsuccessful. However, if you are successful, there is no need to reapply each year – the same amount will be paid annually. Whilst the amount paid will be the same, the cost breakdown within that budget may change e.g. salary increases, project cost decreases etc.

Further assistance

OMVCS Fund 2023 - Questions & Queries

Our Manchester Funds

You can find the prospectus on the [website](#) along with the application link and supporting guidance notes.

The eligibility checker can be found online – [Online eligibility checker](#).

If you have any questions about the fund, you can contact omfunds@manchester.gov.uk and one of the team will get back to you.

Macc

You can find information about the support offer available [here](#) You can:

- Ring them on 0333 321 3021
- Email them at info@mcrcommunitycentral.org
- Visit [their website](#)