



## **Cost of Living Crisis Greater Manchester Funding Programme 2024-2025**

Funded by Eric Wright Charitable Trust

### **GUIDANCE**

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## Summary

£5000 grants are available to help sustain the existing activities of medium-sized voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) organisations across Greater Manchester. They are for organisations that are themselves struggling in the current financial climate, which support people most affected by the cost of living crisis.

For a second year, [The Eric Wright Charitable Trust](#)<sup>1</sup> has provided funding to enable thirty-six £5,000 grants to be distributed on a proportionate basis across the ten localities of Greater Manchester. Macc is again leading on programme delivery, working with the infrastructure organisation 10GM and its partners.

**The fund will close to applications at 12 noon on Friday 13 September 2024.**

The key eligibility requirements are:

- organisations must have an annual turnover between £50,000 and £250,000 and be based and operating in one of the ten localities of Greater Manchester
- organisations must already be delivering support activities within the chosen locality to people who tend to be most affected by social inequality and the cost of living crisis
- **this funding is to help support existing organisational costs - not projects.** We want to help sustain the current activities of anti-poverty organisations that are themselves struggling to keep operating in the present financial climate, new project activities are **not** required
- any typical organisation costs can be included in your grant application, e.g. salaries, staff expenses, overheads, consumables, equipment, administration, training, communications, marketing, etc.
- you must plan to have fully spent your grant by no later than 30 June 2025 – **there can be no extensions**
- by 25 July 2025 at the latest you must submit a grant monitoring form

## For how much can you apply?

Organisations can apply once for a full £5000 grant. To help ensure we allocate all of the available funding, applications for exactly £5000 are invited. Should there be the expected quantity of eligible bids requesting the full amount; applications for less than £5000 we will treat as low priority.

Thirty-six funding awards are available totalling £180,000. The allocation of funding across Greater Manchester's ten localities is in proportion to the relative size of the VCSE sector in each area:

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ericwright.co.uk/charitable-trust/>

Localities	Approx. no. of VCSE orgs <sup>2</sup>	%age of all VCSE orgs in GM	No. of £5000 grants available	Total
Bolton	1,672	10%	4	£20,000
Bury	1,249	7%	2	£10,000
Manchester	3,871	22%	8	£40,000
Oldham	1,326	8%	2	£10,000
Rochdale	1,239	7%	2	£10,000
Salford	1,665	10%	4	£20,000
Stockport	1,672	10%	4	£20,000
Tameside	1,223	7%	2	£10,000
Trafford	1,622	9%	4	£20,000
Wigan	1,732	10%	4	£20,000
	<b>17,271</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>£180,000</b>

## Who can apply?

*Only VCSE organisations are eligible to apply, e.g.*

- Charitable Company
- Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)
- Community Benefit Society
- Community Interest Company Limited by guarantee
- Registered Charity
- Not-for-profit Private Limited Company
- Unincorporated constituted group/association

*You must be based and operating in one of the ten localities of Greater Manchester, i.e.*

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

<sup>2</sup> Figures taken from [A Realist Evaluation of the State of the Greater Manchester Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Sector 2021](#) Centre for Social and Health Research, University of Salford (the detailed sub-report for each of the ten localities above can be found on the relevant sector support organisations' websites)

Grants are available to help fund the costs of your existing activities in that area of Greater Manchester. Unfortunately, we are not able to fund activity across localities or outside Greater Manchester.

*The turnover limit for eligible organisations is £50,000 to £250,000.*

The 2021 Greater Manchester State of the VCSE Sector report identifies organisations within the above income bracket as amongst those needing greatest levels of investment to maintain activities.

Organisations with annual turnovers greater or less than £50,000 to £250,000 are ineligible to apply. If your application is successful, as part of standard due diligence checks, we will ask for audited annual accounts, or equivalent info, to prove current turnover is within the eligible range. Organisations that are unable to provide confirmation of eligibility will have their offer of a grant withdrawn.

*Your organisation must already provide support activities to vulnerable communities of people in your locality most affected by social inequalities who are struggling to cope with the worst of the cost of living crisis.*

People that are the most adversely affected by the cost of living crisis may include:

- households, families and individuals with low incomes
- older or younger people
- users of foodbanks
- people with chronic long-term health issues including disabled people
- unpaid carers
- people from minoritised ethnicities
- people who are long-term unemployed or experiencing insecure employment or worklessness
- homeless people
- people who are refugees
- or any combination of these or other circumstances

We give the above as examples only. The grant application forms asks you to summarise in your own words the most common circumstances of the people you support.

*Applicant organisations' workforce wellbeing*

Question 3.5 in the application form asks, **“What are you doing to become a more inclusive employer that is better equipped to support the health and wellbeing of paid staff and/or volunteers?”**

We are all trying to make Greater Manchester a place where people can be healthy, happy, and live fulfilling lives. The way we run our organisations can make a real difference to the VCSE sector staff's health and wellbeing.

10GM has launched The VCSE Workforce Development Project<sup>3</sup> to address issues such as recruitment, nurturing new talent, diversity and inclusion, leadership and wellbeing. As part of this, 10GM has worked with Greater Manchester's local VCSE infrastructure organisations to establish a collective [workforce development hub](#)<sup>4</sup> for the sector.

VCSE organisations everywhere can all be more inclusive employers that are better equipped to support the health and wellbeing of all colleagues whether paid staff or volunteers.

While charity work, particularly volunteering, can reduce stress and boost happiness, the high demand, low pay and difficult working environments can have many adverse impacts on employees and volunteers' wellbeing.

In this grants programme, we want applicant organisations to tell us about their perspectives on this aspect of what they do and what commitments they are making.

## **What we can fund**

This funding is to help support existing organisational costs - not new projects.

Your organisation must have a turnover between £50,000 and £250,000. If your application is successful, we will ask you to provide auditable evidence of this.

All funded activity must take place within one locality of Greater Manchester and you must have spent all funding by 30 June 2025 and submitted a completed monitoring form no later than 25 July 2025.

We are purposely not providing examples of the kinds of activities VCSE groups need to be providing to struggling communities. We want you to tell us what it is that you do that achieves the best outcomes for people affected the most by the cost of living crisis.

Any kind of usual organisation costs can be included in your grant application as long as your activities centre on the support of communities that are struggling the most. Costs can include salaries, expenses, overheads, consumables, equipment, administration, training, communications, marketing, etc..

The grant application form will ask you to summarise the kind of costs you need most help with to keep providing your services. Please be realistic and thorough in estimating your eligible costs as the external panel will be looking at this when assessing your application. Where possible you should base your proposed costs on actual previous amounts spent.

Successful applicants must keep full records of all costs funded by this programme. However, we will not ask you to provide evidence of expenditure unless adverse issues emerge in the delivery of your funded activities.

## **What we cannot fund**

We cannot fund:

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.10gm.org.uk/vcseworkforce.html>

<sup>4</sup> <https://gmworkforcehub.org.uk/>

- organisations that do not have turnovers within the eligible range of £50,000 to £250,000
- any organisation or activity not based in one locality of Greater Manchester
- groups not working for the sole benefit of struggling communities there
- new projects
- costs that you do not plan to incur by 30 June 2025
- any political organisations or activities promoting a particular religion

We will prioritise applicants that plan to use the full £5000 grant available.

## How and when to apply

Please read in full this guidance document and the application form to ensure your proposal meets the criteria. Organisations that wish to apply will need to complete the MS Word application form provided. Your completed application can be in MS Word or Open Document Text format (no PDFs please) and emailed to [grants@macc.org.uk](mailto:grants@macc.org.uk).

The fund will close to applications at **12 noon on Friday 13 September 2024**.

Please do not send us **any** due diligence info at this stage. If you have not received an email acknowledging receipt of your application within two working days please contact Macc via 0161 834 9823 and ask for Oliver Cranfield.

## How will we assess your applications?

Dependant on the relative number of bids from each locality, the grants selection process will likely involve two panels of five VCSE sector representatives. Each panel is responsible for assessing all applications on a “west” and “east” basis, i.e.

- “West” (Bolton, Bury, Salford, Trafford and Wigan)
- “East” (Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Stockport and Tameside)

The two panels will each allocate 18 grants totalling £90,000.

## When we will tell you the outcome

We will inform all applicants about the outcome of their bid by email no later than Monday 4 November 2024. 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 copies of 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)
- a recent bank statement (it must be uncensored and cover at least a one-month period with an end-date of June 2025 or later)

- organisational policies
- the home addresses of two trustees

Please have the above info ready to send us if your bid is approved. 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. Macc is obliged to collect this and other information in its appointed role as fund administrator on behalf of The Eric Wright Charitable Trust.

In strict accordance with The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018, Macc will store all personal and financial information confidentially. Our [Information Commissioner's Office](#)<sup>5</sup> reference is Z9595019 and we re-register annually on 10 September. Upon request, Macc can provide our data protection and information security policies. If you require information that is more detailed please let us know.

If your project involves working with children or vulnerable adults, you may need to provide a copy of your safeguarding policy.

### **If successful, when will you receive the grant?**

On receipt of an offer letter from Macc, organisations will need to complete and return an 'Acceptance of Grant Form' together with the due diligence information requested (see previous page). Subject to your providing the requested information quickly, we aim to transfer approved funding no later than December 2024.

### **How long will you have to spend the grant?**

You must have fully spent your grant by 30 June 2025 and completed a short monitoring form as soon as possible but no later than 25 July 2025. There can be no extensions.

### **How will Macc evaluate your project?**

We will stage an interim meeting of grant holders online in April 2024 as an opportunity to share learning and experiences of supporting people most affected by the cost of living crisis.

We will provide a monitoring form for use at the end of your grant in which you will need to provide the following:

- 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***)
- 200 word commentary on what your organisation has done during the period the funding was used
- anonymised 300 word case study about actual people who have been supported by your organisation during the funding period

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<sup>5</sup> <https://ico.org.uk/>



## What support is available to applicants?

For general queries about the grants programme, please email [grants@macc.org.uk](mailto:grants@macc.org.uk).

Local VCSE sector support organisations can provide free advice on completing a grant application, subject to their capacity, through their usual referral processes.

Contact details are below. If you require assistance, please be sure to contact the relevant organisation as early as possible before the bid deadline.

**Bolton** phone Bolton CVS on 01204 546010 or email [info@boltoncvs.org.uk](mailto:info@boltoncvs.org.uk)

**Bury** email Bury Voluntary Community & Faith Alliance via [funding@buryvcfa.org.uk](mailto:funding@buryvcfa.org.uk)

**Manchester** phone Macc on 0333 321 3021 or email [info@mcrcommunitycentral.org](mailto:info@mcrcommunitycentral.org)

**Oldham** phone Action Together on 0161 339 2345 or email [funding@actiontogether.org.uk](mailto:funding@actiontogether.org.uk)

**Rochdale** phone Action Together on 0161 339 2345 or email [funding@actiontogether.org.uk](mailto:funding@actiontogether.org.uk)

**Salford** phone Salford CVS on 0161 787 7795 or email [office@salfordcvs.co.uk](mailto:office@salfordcvs.co.uk)

**Stockport** email Sector 3 on [info@sector3sk.org](mailto:info@sector3sk.org)

**Tameside** phone Action Together on 0161 339 2345 or email [funding@actiontogether.org.uk](mailto:funding@actiontogether.org.uk)

**Trafford** phone Thrive on 0330 123 9766 or email [info@thrivetrafford.org.uk](mailto:info@thrivetrafford.org.uk)

**Wigan** phone Wigan and Leigh Community Charity on 01942 732022 or email [enquiries@wlcommunity.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@wlcommunity.org.uk)

## Background information for the funding programme

### *Basis for the fund*

The cost of living crisis started in 2021. Prices for many essential goods began increasing faster than household incomes, resulting in a fall in real incomes. This was caused in part by a rise in inflation in the UK, the coronavirus, the economic impact of foreign issues such as the 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine and Brexit. While all communities are affected by rising prices, it most substantially affects people on low-incomes particularly those already affected by social inequalities.

*“VCSE sector income is in decline and many organisations have needed to use their reserves in order to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, whilst simultaneously weathering uncertainty about the long term future of the contracts and grants that enable them to do their vital work. Over time, this will inevitably reduce their ability to bear risk, to respond to demand and to adapt to further change. As has been seen across the country, fundraising has been significantly disrupted and many charitable funders have invested in responses to the pandemic, with longer-term project funding deprioritised. There are significant opportunities and benefits in supporting a thriving local*

*VCSE sector and equally significant risks of losing much valued and needed activity if no action is taken.”<sup>6</sup>*

A “squeezed middle” within Greater Manchester’s VCSE sector, organisations with turnovers between £50,000 and £250,000 that provide consistent more complex support in their local communities, need greater levels of investment to keep going.

The pandemic is receding and attempts to get back to some new level of normality are underway. However, like the communities it supports the VCSE sector has been hit hard by the cost of living crisis and continuation of vital services locally is threatened. Existing grants opportunities tend to be very small and mostly benefit smaller less-experienced organisations.

The impacts of COVID-19, uncertainties of Brexit, increasing costs of living and the fetter of racial inequalities and discrimination disproportionately affect those communities that struggle the most socially and economically.

### *About the fund’s partner organisations*

**The Eric Wright Charitable Trust** is funding this grants programme. The Trust is the sole owner of the Eric Wright Group, a long-established property and construction company, and works with a broad range of charities, primarily in the North West of England.

<https://www.ericwright.co.uk/charitable-trust/>

**Macc** is the VCSE sector support organisation for the city of Manchester. We encourage, support and develop VCSE organisations and local people to have a real influence over the places and communities in which they live. <https://macc.org.uk/>

**10GM** is a joint venture to support the VCSE sector in Greater Manchester. The founding members are [Action Together](#), [Bolton CVS](#), Macc and [Salford CVS](#). We are local infrastructure organisations operating strategically and collaboratively. Our shared purpose is to champion local voluntary and community action and social enterprise across the city-region in order to improve the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of Greater Manchester’s people and communities.

<http://www.10gm.org.uk/>

Also, the VCSE sector support organisations in Bury, Stockport, Trafford and Wigan have strategic relationships with 10GM:

- Bury Voluntary Community & Faith Alliance <http://www.buryvcfa.org.uk/>
- Thrive Trafford <http://www.thrivetrafford.org.uk/>
- Sector 3 (Stockport) <https://www.sector3sk.org/>
- Wigan and Leigh Community Charity <https://wlcommunity.org.uk/>

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<sup>6</sup> [State of the VCSE Sector 2021 Greater Manchester State of the Sector Briefing Note](#) Centre for Social and Health Research, University of Salford, p3