

1. Introduction

In response to the cost-of-living crisis, Manchester City Council is making funding available to Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) organisations, to support the continuation and / or enhancement of cost-of-living support in the city.

By cost-of-living crisis, we refer to the fall in 'real' disposable incomes (that is, adjusted for inflation and after taxes and benefits) that the UK has experienced since late 2021.

We are launching a £1 million Cost of Living Grants programme, which will be managed by the Our Manchester Funds Programme Team in Manchester City Council.

2. Aims of the fund

We know that in times of crisis, emergency support is a lifeline for people. Things like accessing food, clothing and money to help with utility bills in the short term is crucial. This fund aims to build on that, and invest in support services that offer longer term, sustainable support for people. We want to hear from VCFSE organisations that help people with things like developing employability skills, identifying and applying for unclaimed benefits and adult education (see 'Types of things we will fund' below).

We also know that accessing emergency support can be a route into longer term support for some people. If your organisation provides, for example, an emergency food offer as a way to engage people in a longer-term, broader support offer that aligns with this fund, we want to hear from you.

The aims of this funding are:

1. for residents to be able to access support services that help build resilience and to find ways to deal with the impact of increased costs on day to day living
2. to make sure support is available for people who can be worse affected by the cost-of-living crisis than the population in general. This may include, but isn't limited to:
 - people living with long term health conditions and disability
 - communities experiencing racial inequality
 - older people
 - people living in some of the city's most disadvantaged wards

Types of things that we will fund:

The grant can be used to continue existing activities and / or enhance those activities that contribute to the aims of the fund, including new activities that respond to a need within the community you serve. Typical costs covered might include:

- Advice services, especially related to financial management support
- Debt recovery support
- Support to access unclaimed benefits
- Education and Employability support
- Support for communities of identity at greater risk of financial and / or energy-related challenges
- Activities that support people's mental health and wellbeing
- Staffing, core costs and other expenses associated with delivering the activities, including volunteer expenses and training
- Items of equipment and other resources such as sessional fees
- Food and meals where part of a wider offer of support
- **Applicants are invited to outline other activities not listed above in their applications that contribute to a sustained recovery from cost-of-living related issues.**

Types of things we won't fund:

- Activities that promote political views.
- Activities that promote religious beliefs.
- An hourly wage/rate for volunteers
- Research projects.
- Staffing costs not related to the specific project or activity.
- Individuals, including for travel, study, or other purposes.
- Costs that have already been incurred.
- Purchase of vehicles, land or property.
- Building renovation/repair costs.
- Work that isn't charitable or doesn't benefit Manchester residents.
- Direct payments to beneficiaries.
- Foodbanks, and projects where food provision is the main offer.

Key Dates

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|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| Opening date | Wednesday 26 June 2024 8am |
| Closing date | Wednesday 24 July 2024 5pm |
| Decisions made | August 2024 |

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|--------------------------------|---|
| Start date for activity | 1 October 2024 |
| End date for activity | We expect delivery of activities to be completed by 31 October 2025. |
| Monitoring date(s) | There will be an informal check-in halfway through the project, or at 6 months whichever is sooner. A formal monitoring form must be completed at the end of the project. A template monitoring form will be provided. |

3. Available funding and grant amounts

The total amount of funding available is £1,000,000.

Grants of up to £15,000 are available per application.

We will only accept one individual application from each organisation. If you're part of a partnership delivering cost of living activities and would like to chat with the team about how this fund could support your work please get in touch.

4. Who can apply:

We welcome applications from the following organisations:

1. A charitable company limited by guarantee
2. A charitable incorporated organisation
3. A Community Benefit company registered as an industrial and provident society (Bencom)
4. A community interest company limited by guarantee
5. A community Interest company limited by share (Schedule 2 with 100% asset lock only)
6. A constituted community group
7. A faith group or organisation (exempt charity)
8. A registered charity
9. An unincorporated charitable association
10. An unregistered voluntary or community organisation.

Organisations funded through this programme must:

- Evidence a strong connection to Manchester e.g. be based in Manchester and / or have a fixed address in Manchester
- have been delivering services to Manchester residents for a minimum of 12 months.

- be constituted or formalised with an agreed set of rules or governing document in place
- have a bank account in the organisation's name
- have at least three trustees or directors who are not related to each other and are not paid shareholders

If you are successful with your application we will ask to see copies of your organisation's:

- Governing document (constitution, articles of association, etc.)
- Safeguarding policy (including your named safeguarding lead)
- Health and Safety policy
- Certificates of insurance cover

For Partnership applications we will ask to see these documents for all organisations named in the application, as well as allocation of funding across partners.

5. Assessment and decision making

The assessment and decision-making process will be overseen by the OM Funds Programme Team and applications will be assessed 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

Once decisions have been made:

- We will let you know by email at the earliest opportunity if your application was successful.
- We will carry out due diligence checks on successful individual and partnership applications.
- Following completion of the due diligence process, successful applicants will be sent a grant funding agreement with the terms and conditions for all parties to sign and return, ready to go live.
- Depending on the amount requested and the length of the project, grants may be paid in one or multiple payments across the funded period. A payment schedule will be agreed with successful applicants.

6. Monitoring

We will check in with successful organisations during the delivery of the project to find out how things are going. Successful organisations will also need to complete a monitoring form at the end of the project, outlining how the funding was used and what was achieved.

7. How to apply

Applications should be completed using the online application form on Smart Survey. A Word version of the application form is available to help you plan your answers, but you should then use this to make your application using the online form. If you need help using Smart Survey, please email omfunds@manchester.gov.uk.

The OM funds team will be running a drop-in session to help people with the application process. For more information see Macc's website or contact the team using the email address above.

The form will be available from **8:00 am on Wednesday 26 June 2024** when you will be able to [click this link to start and submit an application](#).

The deadline for submitting your application is **5:00 pm on Wednesday 24 July 2024**.

8. Points to consider

- The maximum grant available for applications is £15,000.
- Funding is provided on a one-off basis and is not renewable.
- The decision to award a grant rests with the Council and there is no appeals process.
- If the application form is not fully completed then the application will be rejected.

9. Application support

We have arranged 3 virtual drop-in sessions which will take place on the following dates and times if you have any questions you wish to ask about the fund:

- Wednesday 3 July 2024 at 10 am
- Tuesday 9 July 2024 at 12pm
- Thursday 18 July 2024 at 2pm

If you would like to book a place on one of the sessions or if you need to contact us for any reason please email the Our Manchester Funds Team at: omfunds@manchester.gov.uk