Mayor's Community Fund

Applicant Guidance Handbook

2026

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About this guidance

This handbook is for organisations and community groups interested in applying to the Mayor's Community Fund.

It explains what the Fund is for, who can apply, what information applicants should provide, how project costs should be presented, how applications are considered, and what may be required before any funding can be released.

The aim is to make the process clearer and easier for applicants, while making sure public money is awarded fairly, transparently and responsibly.

Important

This guidance does not guarantee funding. All applications are subject to assessment, governance checks, due diligence, approval and available budget.

About the Mayor's Community Fund

The Mayor's Community Fund supports projects that make a positive difference to communities across Hull and East Yorkshire.

The Fund was created to support practical, community-led action. It recognises that local residents, volunteers, community groups and local organisations often understand the needs of their places best.

The Fund is intended to support projects that are rooted in local need, deliver clear public benefit, and help strengthen communities across Hull and East Yorkshire.

The Fund is not only about awarding money. It is also about helping groups develop good ideas, become ready for funding, improve local participation and build stronger links between communities and the Combined Authority.

What the Fund is Trying to Achieve

Applications should show how the proposed project will contribute to one or more of the following outcomes.

Community wellbeing

Improving physical health, mental wellbeing, confidence, resilience or quality of life. Reducing loneliness or social isolation. Supporting people to take part in positive local activity.

Children and young people

Providing positive activities or safe spaces. Building confidence, aspiration, skills or wellbeing. Helping young people access opportunities.

Participation and inclusion

Reducing barriers to participation. Supporting residents who may otherwise be excluded. Improving accessibility and widening community involvement.

Stronger communities

Supporting volunteering and civic action. Helping people come together. Improving community facilities or shared spaces.

Opportunity and aspiration

Helping people gain confidence or skills. Supporting community-led activity linked to employment, learning or personal development.

Who Can Apply

Applications are welcomed from organisations operating in, or clearly benefiting residents of, Hull and East Yorkshire.

This may include:

- **registered charities**
- **charitable trusts**
- **Community Interest Companies**
- **constituted voluntary organisations**
- **constituted community groups**
- **sports clubs**
- **village hall committees**
- **parish and town councils**
- **community associations**
- **social enterprises**
- **faith organisations delivering wider community benefit**
- **other not-for-profit organisations delivering community benefit**

Applicants must be able to demonstrate that they are properly managed and able to handle public funds responsibly.

Supporting Grassroots and Emerging Organisations

The Fund aims to be accessible to grassroots organisations and community groups, including groups that may not have applied for public funding before.

Some groups may need support to become ready for funding. This could include help to understand governance, budgets, bank accounts, safeguarding, monitoring or evidence requirements.

Where a group has a strong community idea but does not yet have all the right governance in place, the Community Fund Team may be able to help them understand what is needed to become ready to manage public funding.

This could include signposting to simple constitution templates, explaining what a governing document should include, setting out why an organisation bank account is needed, and helping applicants understand the basic financial controls expected before public money can be awarded.

This support does not guarantee funding and does not replace the assessment process. It is intended to help community groups understand the steps they may need to take before an award can be made safely and responsibly.

Being a small or early-stage organisation is not a barrier. However, public money cannot normally be awarded until the right governance, accountability and financial arrangements are in place.

Who Cannot Normally Apply

The Fund is not normally intended for:

- **individuals seeking personal financial support**
- **private businesses seeking commercial gain**
- **organisations based outside Hull and East Yorkshire with no clear local benefit**
- **political parties or party-political campaigning activity**
- **projects that promote a party-political purpose**
- **organisations unable to demonstrate suitable governance or financial controls**
- **applications where the main benefit is private rather than community-based**

Membership organisations, including sports clubs and community associations, may still be considered where the project demonstrates wider community benefit, open or inclusive access, youth development, wellbeing outcomes, volunteering, facility improvement or broader local participation.

What Can Be Funded

The Fund may support a wide range of community-led activity. Examples include:

Community activity

Local sessions, support groups, wellbeing activities, community events, outreach activity.

Youth provision

Positive activities, mentoring, skills activity, structured diversionary activity, holiday or after-school provision.

Equipment

Activity equipment, sports equipment, accessibility equipment, IT or digital equipment where there is clear community benefit.

Community facilities

Minor improvements, accessibility works, safety improvements, small refurbishments, equipment for shared spaces.

Project delivery

Venue hire, sessional staff, training, volunteer expenses, materials, transport linked to delivery.

Small capital projects

Community asset improvements or one-off infrastructure that creates clear public benefit.

All expenditure must directly support delivery of the project described in the application.

What Will Not Normally Be Funded

The Fund will not normally support:

- retrospective costs already incurred before approval
- political activity or campaigning
- activity promoting a political party
- personal benefit or private gain
- projects outside Hull and East Yorkshire without clear local benefit
- general reserves or unrestricted organisational deficits
- commercial activity primarily designed to generate private profit
- costs that are unclear, excessive or insufficiently evidenced
- projects with no clear community benefit
- projects creating unsustainable long-term liabilities
- statutory responsibilities of public bodies, unless there is clear additional community benefit and the Fund is not replacing statutory provision

Understanding Community Benefit

One of the most important questions applicants should answer is: what difference will this project make?

Community benefit means more than simply delivering an activity. Applicants should explain who will benefit, how many people are expected to benefit, why the project is needed, and what will change as a result.

Examples of community benefit may include:

- **increased opportunities for young people**
- **reduced loneliness or isolation**
- **improved health and wellbeing**
- **stronger volunteering**
- **improved access for disabled residents**
- **safer or more usable community spaces**
- **greater local participation**
- **improved community facilities**
- **increased confidence or skills**

Helpful distinction

Activities are what you do. Outcomes are the difference those activities make.

APPLYING TO THE FUND

Sections 10 - 14

Understanding Value for Money

The Fund must ensure public money is used responsibly. Applications will be considered not only on whether the project is worthwhile, but also on whether the proposed use of public funds is reasonable, clearly explained, and directly linked to the community benefit being delivered.

Applicants should consider:

- **Is the amount requested realistic?**
- **Is the cost clearly explained?**
- **Does the spending directly support the project?**
- **Could the same outcome be achieved more efficiently?**
- **Is the cost proportionate to the number of people benefiting?**
- **Would the use of public money be understandable and clearly linked to community benefit?**

A good project does not automatically mean every cost requested will be supported. The Combined Authority may support a project in full, support part of it, attach conditions, request further information or decide not to fund specific items.

Before You Apply

Before completing the form, applicants should consider:

- **Is the project based in, or clearly benefiting, Hull and East Yorkshire?**
- **Does the project provide clear community benefit?**
- **Can the organisation manage public money responsibly?**
- **Can the budget be explained clearly?**
- **Are estimates or quotations available?**
- **Are any permissions or approvals needed?**
- **Can the organisation monitor and report on delivery?**
- **Are there any conflicts of interest that should be declared?**

Completing the Application Form

The application form has been designed to help applicants explain their project clearly and consistently. Applicants should answer each section as fully as possible.

Clear and complete information helps the Community Fund Team assess applications efficiently and may reduce the need for follow-up questions.

Section 1: Eligibility and location

Provide the organisation postcode and the project delivery postcode, if different. Explain clearly whether the project is based in Hull and East Yorkshire or how it will benefit residents.

Section 2: Organisation details

The organisation name should match the name on the organisation bank account wherever possible. If there is a difference, explain why. Include the organisation type and registration number if applicable.

Section 3: Primary contact

Provide the details of the person who can answer questions about the application and receive correspondence. Contact details should be kept up to date during the process.

Application Form (continued)

Section 4: Governance

Explain how the organisation is structured and managed. This may include trustees, committee members, directors, officers, volunteers or accountable partners. The form asks whether the organisation has a governing document and a bank account in the organisation's name.

Section 5: Project overview

This section should explain what the project is, why it is needed, and what difference it will make.

A strong project description should answer:

- **What will happen?**
- **Who will take part?**
- **Where will activities take place?**
- **How often will activities happen?**
- **How long will the project run?**
- **Who will deliver it?**

Community need

Explain why the project is needed. You do not need a formal research report, but you should provide enough information to show that the project responds to a real local issue or opportunity.

Application Form (continued)

Outcomes and impact

Explain what difference the project will make. Focus on the change you expect to see, not only the activity you will deliver.

Section 6: Delivery

Explain how the project will be delivered. Include start and end dates, key activities, who will manage the project, and any partners involved. If there are risks or challenges, explain how they will be managed.

Section 7: Beneficiaries

Explain who will benefit from the project. This may include direct beneficiaries and wider community beneficiaries. Where possible, provide a realistic estimate of numbers.

Section 8: Financial information

Provide the total project cost and the amount requested from the Fund. If the project has other funding, donations or in-kind support, include this. The cost breakdown should be clear and itemised.

Section 9: Monitoring

Explain how success will be measured. Examples may include attendance numbers, participant feedback, volunteer numbers, photographs, receipts, case studies or surveys.

Application Form (continued)

Section 10: Risk and safeguarding

Identify any significant risks and explain how they will be managed. If the project involves children, young people or vulnerable adults, explain the safeguarding arrangements in place.

Section 11: Previous funding

Tell us whether the organisation has previously received public, charitable or grant funding. This helps assess experience and delivery capacity. It does not prevent an application from being considered.

Section 12: Declaration

The declaration should be completed by someone authorised to submit the application on behalf of the organisation.

Project Costs, Estimates and Quotations

Applicants should provide the most accurate costs available at the time of application.

Estimates

Reasonable estimates are acceptable at application stage where final quotations are not yet available. Where estimates are used, applicants should explain:

- **how the estimate was calculated**
- **whether it is based on previous experience, supplier discussion or market research**
- **whether VAT is included**
- **whether the amount includes contingency**
- **whether costs may change**

Quotations

Quotations are encouraged where available, especially for higher-value items, building works, equipment purchases, professional services and specialist contractors.

Successful applicants may be required to provide quotations, invoices or other evidence before funding is released.

Costs that need extra explanation

Staffing costs, professional fees, building works, large equipment purchases, transport costs, overheads, contingency sums, and costs linked to land or assets not owned by the applicant.

Budget Examples

Less helpful	More helpful
Equipment £5,000	Activity equipment - £2,000 Storage - £1,000 Accessibility equipment - £2,000 Total - £5,000
Building works £10,000	Materials - £4,000 Labour - £5,000 Building control fee - £1,000 Total - £10,000
Project delivery £6,000	Venue hire - £1,200 Sessional worker - £3,600 Materials - £700 Publicity - £500 Total - £6,000

A clear, itemised budget helps the assessment team understand what is being funded and whether costs are reasonable and proportionate.

Match Funding and Other Support

Applicants should tell us about any other funding or support connected to the project.

This may include:
- **confirmed grants**
- **grants applied for**
- **fundraising**
- **sponsorship**
- **donations**
- **organisation contribution**
- **volunteer time**
- **in-kind support**
- **discounts or donated materials**

Match funding is not always required, but it can help demonstrate wider support, value for money and sustainability.

Applicants must not seek funding for costs that are already fully funded from another source.

Governance & Controls

As public money is being distributed, applicants must demonstrate appropriate governance and financial controls.

The level of governance expected will depend on the size, complexity and risk of the project.

Applicants may be asked for:

- **constitution or governing document**
- **names of trustees, directors or committee members**
- **bank account in the organisation's name**
- **recent bank statement**
- **accounts or income and expenditure statement**
- **evidence that more than one person is involved in financial decisions**
- **relevant policies where applicable**

Safeguarding

16. Safeguarding

Projects involving children, young people or vulnerable adults must have suitable safeguarding arrangements.

Depending on the project, applicants may be asked to provide:

- **safeguarding policy**
- **named safeguarding lead**
- **DBS arrangements**
- **risk assessments**
- **staff or volunteer training information**
- **procedures for reporting concerns**

Safeguarding requirements will be proportionate to the project, but the Combined Authority must be satisfied that appropriate arrangements are in place where relevant.

Governance Evidence by Organisation Type

Charity

Charity number, governing document, trustee details, accounts, bank statement

CIC or company limited by guarantee

Company number, governing documents, director details, accounts, bank statement

Constituted community group

Constitution, committee details, bank statement, income and expenditure record

Sports club or association

Constitution or rules, committee details, bank statement, safeguarding information where relevant

Parish or town council

Council details, approval route, bank/payment details and project authorisation

New or emerging group

Draft constitution, named responsible people, proposed bank arrangements and accountable body if needed

The level of evidence required will be proportionate to the size and complexity of the application. The Community Fund Team can advise on what is likely to be needed.

Insurance, Permissions and Consents

17. Insurance, Permissions and Consents

Applicants are responsible for identifying and securing any permissions, consents or approvals needed for the project.

Depending on the project, this may include:

- **landlord or landowner consent**
- **planning permission**
- **building control approval**
- **school or venue approval**
- **licensing requirements**
- **highways permissions**
- **event permissions**
- **insurance confirmation**

Funding may be conditional on relevant permissions being secured.

Conflicts of Interest

18. Conflicts of Interest

Applicants must declare any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest connected to the application.

This may include:

- **personal relationships with officers, elected members or decision-makers**
- **family connections**
- **employment relationships**
- **trustee or committee links**
- **financial interests**
- **previous involvement by someone connected to assessment or approval**

Declaring a conflict does not automatically prevent funding. It allows the process to be managed fairly and transparently.

Due Diligence

19. Due Diligence

Applications recommended for support may be subject to due diligence checks before any funding is released.

These checks may include:

- **verification of organisational details**
- **review of governing documents**
- **financial review**
- **bank account verification**
- **safeguarding checks**
- **insurance checks**
- **fraud prevention checks**
- **subsidy control considerations**
- **conflict of interest checks**
- **review of permissions and consents**
- **review of quotations or cost evidence**

Funding cannot normally be released until required checks have been completed satisfactorily.

Assessment

20. How Applications Are Assessed

Applications are assessed through a structured process to make sure public funding is awarded fairly, transparently and consistently.

Applications may be considered against:

- **eligibility**
- **community benefit**
- **local need**
- **deliverability**
- **governance arrangements**
- **value for money**
- **sustainability**
- **risk**
- **alignment with the aims of the Fund**

Applications are assessed through an internal assessment process. This guidance explains the Fund's aims and the type of information applications should provide.

Decision-Making

21. Decision-Making

Applications may pass through several stages before a final decision is made. These may include application review, officer assessment, recommendation, governance review, financial review, due diligence and approval.

Depending on the nature and value of the application, approval may involve officers, directors, statutory officers or the Mayor, in accordance with the Combined Authority's governance arrangements.

Applicants should not assume funding has been approved until formal written confirmation has been issued.

Decision-Making and Outcomes

Applications may pass through several stages before a final decision is made. These may include application review, officer assessment, recommendation, governance review, financial review, due diligence and approval.

Applicants should not assume funding has been approved until formal written confirmation has been issued.

Possible outcomes:

- **Approved - The application is approved as submitted, subject to due diligence and grant agreement.**
- **Approved subject to conditions - Certain conditions must be met before payment.**
- **Partially approved - Only part of the project or specific costs are supported.**
- **Deferred - Further information is needed before a decision can be made.**
- **Unsuccessful - The application is not approved for funding.**

If Your Application is Successful

Successful applicants will receive written confirmation setting out the approved funding amount, any conditions attached to the award, due diligence requirements, grant agreement requirements and monitoring arrangements.

Funding will not normally be released until all required checks have been completed.

Grant agreements

Most successful applicants will be required to enter into a grant agreement with the Combined Authority. The agreement will set out:

- **the approved purpose of the funding**
- **the grant amount**
- **eligible expenditure**
- **the delivery period**
- **monitoring and reporting requirements**
- **record-keeping duties**
- **publicity requirements**
- **repayment provisions where applicable**

Funding must only be used for the agreed purpose. Any significant changes must be discussed with the Community Fund Team before expenditure takes place.

Payment and Monitoring

Payment

Approval does not automatically mean immediate payment. Before payment can be released, applicants may be required to provide a signed grant agreement, bank verification, quotations, insurance information, safeguarding information, permissions or any other information reasonably required.

Monitoring and reporting

The Combined Authority has a responsibility to ensure public money has been used appropriately. Successful applicants will normally be required to provide:

- **what was delivered**
- **how many people benefited**
- **what difference the project made**
- **how the money was spent**
- **receipts or invoices**
- **photographs**
- **participant feedback**
- **case studies**
- **lessons learned**

Monitoring will be proportionate to the size and nature of the award.

Publicity, Changes and Recovery

Publicity and acknowledgement

Successful applicants may be asked to acknowledge support from the Mayor's Community Fund and Hull and East Yorkshire Combined Authority. This may include use of logos, social media activity, case studies, photographs or press activity.

Changes to approved projects

If circumstances change, applicants should contact the Community Fund Team as soon as possible. Funding should not be redirected to another purpose without written agreement.

Recovery of funding

The Combined Authority reserves the right to withhold, suspend or recover funding where:

- **funding has been used for purposes other than those agreed**
- **false or misleading information has been provided**
- **grant conditions have been breached**
- **monitoring information is not provided**
- **fraud or financial irregularity is identified**

Complaints, Data Protection and Common Issues

Complaints and feedback

Applicants who are dissatisfied with the administration of the Fund may provide feedback or submit a complaint through the Combined Authority's corporate complaints process.

The complaints process is not intended to provide a second assessment of funding decisions. However, concerns relating to process, conduct or administration will be considered appropriately.

Data protection

Information submitted as part of an application will be processed in accordance with applicable data protection legislation.

Information may be used for assessment, due diligence, monitoring, audit, fraud prevention and reporting.

Further information about how the Combined Authority processes personal data is available in our privacy notice [link].

Common reasons applications are delayed or unsuccessful

- The application does not clearly explain what the project will do
- The community benefit is not clearly described
- Costs are not broken down or explained
- Governance documents are missing or incomplete
- Safeguarding or insurance information is not provided
- The applicant has not responded to requests for further information
- The project duplicates existing provision without explanation
- The application does not demonstrate value for money
- The project falls outside the Fund's aims or eligible activities

Frequently Asked Questions 1/3

Do I need quotes before applying?

Not always. Estimates may be accepted at application stage, but quotes may be requested later, especially for higher-value costs.

Can we apply if we are a new group?

Yes, but you may need to show that suitable governance and financial controls are in place before funding can be awarded.

Can sports clubs apply?

Yes, where the project demonstrates wider community benefit, youth development, wellbeing, inclusion, volunteering or broader local participation.

Can parish or town councils apply?

Yes, where the project fits the Fund's aims and provides clear community benefit.

Can faith organisations apply?

Yes, where the project provides wider community benefit and is not primarily for worship or religious promotion.

Frequently Asked Questions 2/3

Can we apply for running costs?

Running costs may be considered where they are directly linked to delivery of a specific project and represent value for money.

Can we apply if we do not yet have a constitution or formal governance?

You can still contact the Community Fund Team and explain your position. A lack of formal governance does not automatically mean your idea cannot be considered in future. However, public funding cannot normally be awarded until suitable governance, accountability and financial controls are in place.
Where appropriate, the team may be able to help groups understand what they need to become ready to manage public funding. This may include adopting a simple constitution, setting up an organisation bank account, identifying responsible committee members and putting basic financial controls in place.

Frequently Asked Questions 3/3

Can we start spending before approval?

Costs incurred before formal approval are unlikely to be funded. Wait for written confirmation before committing expenditure.

Will approval mean immediate payment?

No. Payment will normally depend on due diligence, a signed grant agreement and any conditions being met.

Can we get help with the form?

The Community Fund Team can explain the process and what information is required. The team cannot guarantee funding or advise applicants how to score highly.

Will every eligible project be funded?

No. Eligible projects must still be assessed against available budget, value for money, governance, risk and community benefit.

Can the Fund award partial funding?

Yes. The Combined Authority may fund part of a project or specific expenditure items only.

What happens if our application is unsuccessful?

Where possible, applicants may be signposted to other support or encouraged to strengthen their proposal for future opportunities.

Thank You

Hull and East Yorkshire Combined Authority

LUKE CAMPBELL MBE
Hull and East Yorkshire's
MAYOR

Contact the Community Fund Team at
community.fund@hullandeastyorkshire.gov.uk