

Grassroots Grants Express guidance notes

INTRODUCTION AND ELIGIBILITY

Grassroots Grants is a grant scheme funded by the Government Office for the Third Sector and run locally by the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Community Foundation with several partner organisations, in particular Community Action Hampshire, Isle of Wight Rural Community Council, Community First for Portsmouth and Southampton Voluntary Services.

The scheme is aimed at small, volunteer-led, not-for-profit groups and only groups with a **total annual income of under £30,000 (averaged over the last three years) are eligible**. Applications can be for almost any activity that will benefit people living in Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth or Southampton. The basic rule is that applications must be for activities, projects or equipment aimed at strengthening your organisation and / or meeting a need that will benefit your local community

Examples of possible projects and activities include:

- Purchase of equipment, computer, oven, furniture
- Cost of putting on a local event
- Staff costs to enable employment of individuals
- Contribution to rent costs – related to activity or service delivery)
- Cost of attending a conference or event
- Training for volunteers (this doesn't say staff but must means staff as well)
- Additional activities to expand an existing funded project
- Activities that support community activity
- Activities that meet an identified need in the local community
- Funding to support an organisation to achieve a quality or other standard relevant to their activities

However, please note that the following groups or activities **cannot be supported by Grassroots Grants**:

- Applications from individuals
- Public bodies like local authorities and schools
- Organisations that are for the sole benefit or relief of animals or plants
- New Organisations, i.e. those which have not been active involved in their local community for at least one year – see the notes under Question 2 for more details
- Larger organisations – see the above note about annual income
- Any party political activity
- Commercial ventures
- Proselytising activities, i.e. active promotion of a specific religion or belief system

There are a few other restrictions and points which may affect your application so we suggest that you **contact us before you complete the application form**. Please see the back page of these guidance notes for details of whom you should contact to discuss your application.

There are two separate application forms. These guidance notes deal with the Express Grants form, which is for grants from £250 up to £900. The other application form is for grants of more than £900 and up to £5,000 and there are separate guidance notes for that form.

Groups can only receive **a maximum of £5,000 from Grassroots Grants** over the entire lifetime of the scheme – see the notes under Question 3. You are welcome to apply for this all at once but this is not compulsory and may not suit your group's circumstances.

MONITORING

You will need to complete and return a monitoring and evaluation form this form when you have fully spent your grant You must also get our approval **in advance** for any changes to how you spend the grant money. We will randomly visit a certain number of organisations / groups. It will be a condition of accepting a Grassroots Grant that you agree in principle to such a visit, which will be arranged for a mutually convenient time usually when the Grassroots-funded activity is taking place.

Guidance notes for the express application form

(for grants from £250 up to £900)

Q1 Contact Details

Please give the contact details for someone who knows the details of the application – normally this would be the person completing the application form. We need to know the name of your **organisation or group**, not the name of this specific project or activity. The organisation name should appear at the top of your constitution / terms of reference document. Your organisation / group must be local and independent – with its own management committee and control over its finances – though it may be affiliated with a regional or national voluntary organisation.

Q2 About your organisation

Here, you should use a maximum of 50 words to explain what your organisation aims to do, for example: 'We provide community centre facilities and services to help people in our local area'. We only need to know what your organisation does, not how you do it.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Your application must only cover work that will benefit people that live in one of the following areas: Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth City, Southampton City. We cannot award grants for activities that will benefit people from more than one of these areas.

Please also indicate when your organisation was first formed. You might take this to be the date when your committee agreed its first constitution / terms of reference.

IMPORTANT NOTE: In order to be eligible for a Grassroots Grant, your group must not be brand new. Groups should be in existence for at least one year before applying to tGrassroots Grants. Your group may be asked for evidence to establish the date it started.

You do not need to be a registered charity to apply for a Grassroots Grant, but you should clearly be a charitable or not-for-profit organisation or group. We will judge this mainly based on the information in your constitution / terms of reference / rules.

Q3 About your organisation's finances

We ask everyone applying for a grant to send us a signed copy of their most recent accounts (see checklist at the end of the application form). To complete Q3, please use the details from these accounts that you are sending.

IMPORTANT NOTE: For your group to be eligible for the Grassroots scheme, it must have an annual income of under £30,000 as averaged over the last three years (or, if your group is newer than this, for as many years as you have financial figures).

IMPORTANT NOTE: Groups can only receive **£5,000** in total from the Grassroots Grants programme. If your group has had a grant from another Grassroots Grants Funder then you can only apply for a grant from us to bring the total up to £5,000. If you receive more than £5,000 from Grassroots Grants then you will have to return the amount above £5,000.

Q4 Bank details for your organisation

The 'Organisation's bank account name' is the name that your grant cheque would be made payable to if you are awarded a grant. Please contact us if your group does not have its own bank account. We may be able to pay the grant to another charitable organisation willing to hold the funds on your behalf, although we do prefer organisations to have their own account. Note that all cheques drawing on any bank account in the name of your organisation must need at least TWO authorised signatures. For reasons of financial soundness, we strongly recommend that cheques cannot be authorised by people who are related to each other.

Q5 Please provide a brief description of what activity or project (including equipment) you are asking to be funded

Here, you should explain and then give brief details of what you want to do, such as, 'We would like to buy some new camping equipment' or 'We would like to run a programme to help unemployed people into work by finding them work experience places, training courses and coaching for vocational qualifications'. You may explain the need or benefits to the community

Please also tell us when you hope to get started and when you expect the grant will be fully spent. Remember that your Express Grant must be fully spent within six months of the decision notification. However if your application is approved between 1 January and 31 March, you must spend the grant by 30th June. For example, if you are notified on 25th February that your application has been successful then you must spend the grant in full by 30th June of that year.

IMPORTANT NOTE: You can only receive a grant for activities that have not yet taken place, or for equipment, services etc. that have not yet been paid for on the day that your application will be considered. Please contact your local grants team if you are not sure when this will be.

Q6 How much will this cost?

This table is designed so that you can show the amount of grant you are applying for and how you will spend the grant. Use the two boxes labelled 'Other costs' to note any other categories of cost that are not already in the table. If the form does not give you enough space then you can send us a separate sheet with your costs breakdown, but we would expect the table to give enough space for most Express Grant applications.

Please use the spaces in the table (or a separate sheet, if necessary) to give details of how you have worked out the figures, e.g. staff costs, a list of equipment, room hire costs. You must also include evidence of costs for all equipment items or groups of items costing over £100. Acceptable evidence could be quotations, catalogue or website pages.

Q7 Please indicate below which groups of people will directly benefit

This section of the application form will give us the information we need to ensure that the Grassroots Grants scheme is benefiting as wide a cross-section of the community as possible.

Please tick all the categories of people that will benefit in significant numbers or that you are specifically focusing on. We appreciate that for new work you may not know exactly who will benefit, but please tell us which groups you expect will benefit from the project / activity.

IMPORTANT NOTE: If your project / activity is not targeted at any particular group of people then please tick 'Open to all / no specific focus'. For example a photography club that is open to all should probably tick this box – the club is not targeted at any section of the community and is open to anyone with an interest in photography. Only tick the box for a particular group of people that will either benefit in significant numbers or that you are specifically focusing on.

Q8 How many people will benefit?

The number of people to directly benefit will usually mean the number of people that you expect to work with on the funded project / activity. The indirect beneficiaries may be related to these people (e.g. children will indirectly benefit from their parents doing a parenting class) or they may live in the local area (e.g. local residents will indirectly benefit from a community garden which local job-seekers will create).

REFEREE DETAILS

IMPORTANT NOTE: You do NOT need to give a referee if you have received a grant from either CAH, HIWCF, Isle of Wight Rural Community Council, Portsmouth Council of Community Service or Southampton Voluntary Services within two years of the date that we receive your Grassroots Grants application. If you do need a referee, then they should be someone who works with voluntary or community groups and:

- A paid employee of either a Council of Voluntary Service, a housing association, a community development organization or a Local Authority (district, county, city etc.) that covers where your group operates **AND**
- Is willing to provide a reference on behalf of your organisation **AND**
- Is not personally connected with your organisation, and does not have any personal vested interest in either your organisation itself or the outcome of this grant application **AND**
- Has read this application form in full and supports your application for funding

Please see the end of the guidance notes for how to contact us if you have any queries about providing a referee.

CHECKLIST FOR SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Please ensure that when you send us your completed application, you include **all** the documents in the checklist on the next page. Your application may not be submitted to the assessment panel if you do not include all the requested documents. Please contact HIWCF if you need any help with your supporting documents and we will put you in touch with your local Council of Voluntary Service (CVS) organisation, who will be able to help you with developing these policies and documents if you do not already have them in place.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Signatures on documents must be originals (not copies) and must be of your management committee's chair, vice-chair, treasurer or secretary.

- A **signed** copy of your Constitution or Set of Rules etc. with a list of **names** and **signatures** of all members of your management committee
- A **signed** copy of the minutes of a recent committee meeting

- A **signed** copy of your most recent annual accounts
- Evidence for cost calculations / Quotes
- A **signed** copy of your Health and Safety Policy or measures (not required with all applications – please see below)
- A **signed** copy of your Child Protection or Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy (required if you are working with children or vulnerable adults)
- Terms and Conditions** on page 5 are signed

Constitution / Set of Rules (signed) – this will tell us whether your group is charitable / not-for-profit and will show us what your organisation is set up to do and how it operates. The constitution should contain a dissolution clause stating that proceeds will be to a similar organisation or a charity.

Most recent committee meeting minutes (signed) – this will show us that your organisation is active and being managed properly.

Names and signatures of ALL committee members – this will help assure us that your organisation has a sound structure and should be capable of managing a Grassroots Grant

Annual accounts (signed) – these should cover the same 12 month period as used to answer Q3 of this application and they must be your most recent annual accounts. We do appreciate that organisations have different financial year periods and that it can take time to prepare accounts. Therefore, we will accept accounts where the financial period ended any time within the 18 months before the date that we receive your application.

Evidence for cost calculations – see earlier in these notes under Q6

Health and Safety Policy (signed) – if your organisation has a Health and Safety policy, then please send us a copy. If you do not have such a policy but you are asking for a grant to run an activity that has a risk attached to it, we recommend that that you consider putting in place a Health and Safety policy or measures.

Child / Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy (signed) – if your organisation works with under 18 year-olds and / or with adults that could be considered vulnerable (e.g. people with learning disabilities, older people) then you must send us a copy of the relevant policy.

DECLARATION

We would like to use information about groups and projects / activities that receive a Grassroots Grant in our promotional work for the scheme. Please tick the box if you do **NOT** want your information to be used for publicity purposes.

The final declaration must be signed by the person named in Q1 as the main contact.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Please sign the form at the bottom of the page. This will form part of the agreement that you will commit to if your organisation is awarded funding.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

You should **take a copy** of your completed application form and then post it along with the required signed documents to the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Community Foundation (HIWCF) to be assessed. Once you have sent it, you may also e-mail the application to the Foundation to help us process the application more quickly.

Hampshire and Isle of Wight Community Foundation

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We will check your application and contact you if anything is incomplete or unclear. For Express Grant applications we aim to give groups a decision within two weeks of us receiving a correctly completed application and all supporting documents. Any errors or omissions may lead to delays to this timescale. Also, the two week turnaround may not be achievable during periods of very high demand so please bear with us if this is the case.