



We Love MCR Charity

Stronger Communities Fund

Guidance Notes

We Love MCR Charity is Manchester's iconic charity.

In our thriving city, many people are excluded from, or are unable to enjoy, the benefits of rapid business growth. We exist to **give heart, hope and opportunity to the people of Manchester, when they need it most.**

We support and inspire Mancunians to make our city a fairer, safer, cleaner, friendlier place. For ambitious community groups and grassroots charities, our Fund is here to offer financial help.

This fund offers support to communities which know how they can improve lives locally but need some financial help to deliver their plans.

Constituted community groups, charities, community interest companies and social enterprises can now **apply for an SCF grant of up to £4,000** for projects that fit into one of the fund's four themes:

Stronger Communities Fund (SCF)



Focus

The Stronger Communities Fund is primarily aimed at **community groups and grassroots charities**. We aim to offer support to ambitious groups where up to £4,000 can make a real difference to their work and their communities.

We particularly like to fund **incremental work** which cannot be done without our financial support. So - a new Planting Project (e.g. with a grant to cover hardstanding and planter materials, seeds, fertilisers and training of volunteers) may be suitable, but a request for a 10% contribution to the salary of an employee would not be supported.

Themes of the Fund:

1. COMBATING LONELINESS AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION –

Supporting groups of people who are at risk of exclusion from community life for example as a result of advanced age or disability

2. HELPING IN THE EARLY YEARS –

Supporting children 0-4 years old, and their parents, to make the best start possible in terms of learning, health and/or nutrition

3. OFFERING POSITIVE YOUTH ACTIVITIES -

Providing sustainable, structured programmes and activities to help communities of young people to live safely and successfully

4. PROTECTING AND IMPROVING OUR OPEN SPACES –

Delivering work which ensures public spaces are maintained and improved for the benefit of local people, or expanding access to open spaces for all members of the community.

Geographic Restrictions



Your Project should benefit residents of the City of Manchester. (I.e. **not** across Greater Manchester, solely within the city boundaries as defined by Manchester City Council).

We may be able to consider minor exceptions to this e.g. for Projects where up to 10% of beneficiaries are not residents of Manchester, or where beneficiaries include Young People Leaving Care in Manchester who may not all be moving to accommodation within the City of Manchester.

Here are some examples of projects already funded by the Charity:



A project that reaches out to people suffering dementia in care homes and in the community to connect through music
– **Sound up CIC**



Widening opportunities for young people and spreading a love of outdoor activities
– **South Manchester Scouts Group**



A Community festival – bringing local women together from different community backgrounds to celebrate diversity through different cultural food, dress and dances
– **Angels of Hope**



Supporting a community group to update and beautify an alleyway to promote community cohesion
– **Upping it**

Please contact us if you would like to discuss your idea for a Project or activity before you apply.

Restrictions on Applications



In 2024/25, we have £200,000 to award to community groups.

Things we will not fund –

- Private/commercial organisations

- Project proposals which are >50%-funded by Manchester City Council

- Fundraising events

- Projects which benefit residents primarily living outside the City of Manchester

- Projects benefitting only a small number of individuals

- Projects which do not address one or more of our themes

- Projects which promote religious beliefs

- Projects that are brand new, or applications from organisations without previous experience relevant to the proposed Project

- Academic or medical research & equipment

- Organisations have an annual gross income of £200,000. We will take a holistic approach to reviewing finances including reviewing level of reserves.

- Retrospective requests (i.e. Projects/activities that have already taken place or have already been paid for)

- Applications from applicants who have received funding from the Stronger Communities Fund within the previous 12 months

- Requests that will replace or enhance a Statutory Duty of Manchester City Council

- Applications made by one organisation on behalf of another

We reserve the right to amend this list at any time.

Application Process:

We receive all applications to the fund on our online platform:

<https://mcrcharity.grantplatform.com/>

You can contact us at any time with queries if you have any issues.

Please make sure you upload any supporting information along with your application as requested on the application form.

Applications are considered following the dates displayed on the platform

How decisions will be made:

Your Application will be reviewed by the Charity team and trustees, and we will aim contact you if we have any questions.

We may ask you to provide additional information or clarification.

Failure to provide information requested may result in your application being delayed.

After an initial review, the Charity's Officers will make a recommendation to our board of trustees to consider or to reject the application.

The decision to make a grant award or to reject the application lies with the trustees alone and is not subject to appeal.

The committee is made up of Trustees of We Love MCR Charity.

What happens after decisions have been made:

All applicants will be contacted within a few days following their application being presented to the trustees and advised of the outcome.

Unsuccessful applicants can apply again in future, but only with a different proposal.

If your application is successful, we will request the following:

- A few lines of thanks to We Love MCR Charity stating what difference the grant will make to the project and the people you want to help. We will use this to promote your award.
- Photos that illustrate your group and/or project, so we can promote your award. (Short videos of thanks, or of your work, are a bonus but not essential!)
- A signed and returned Grant Award Agreement form which we will send to you. This details all the conditions which apply to our grant award.
- A copy of your group's bank statement.

Monitoring and feedback:

Our Grants Manager will also discuss and agree the update and feedback requirements of the award with each successful applicant - this will include agreement to provide an update and complete a final report. This will be detailed in the grant award agreement.

Data Protection Notice

The details you submit on your application form will be held securely. We Love MCR Charity will use them to assess your eligibility to receive funds from the charity.

We may check the information you give us, or information someone else gives us about you, with other information we hold.

We may also get information from other organisations (such as Manchester City Council) or give details to them, to check the accuracy of information and appropriateness of the request, to prevent or detect fraud and/or to safeguard charity funds in accordance with the law.

We will not give information about you to anyone outside We Love MCR Charity or Manchester City Council, or use information about you for any other purposes as governed by the General Data Protection Regulations 2018.

If you want to know what information we have about you or the way we use your information, you can contact the Charity directly.



Giving **heart** to Manchester

Lord Mayor of Manchester's Charity Appeal Trust
(operating as We Love MCR Charity)
– registered charity no. 1066972

