

We give heart, hope and opportunity to the people of Manchester, when they need it most

Manchester's Rising Stars Fund

We Love MCR Charity aims to improve the lives and life chances of individuals and communities across Manchester. In our thriving city, many people are unable to enjoy the benefits of rapid growth. We provide resources to make real changes for local people.

The Manchester's Rising Stars Fund (created with the generosity of the Sir Howard Bernstein Endowment Fund) supports ambitious young Mancunians - the potential rising stars who will help to shape Manchester and become the next generation of achievers.

The Manchester's Rising Stars Fund aims to give young people financial support to allow them to take opportunities that may otherwise be out of their reach. With 4 in 10 of Manchester's children growing up in poverty, many of our young people face disadvantages as they try to succeed. Many agencies and organisations in our city offer practical support and assistance. But sometimes, a financial grant to pay for something which will help a young person to take a step forward towards their goal is what it takes to enable progress.

We recognise that a little financial support, at the right time, can make a big difference when starting out on or progressing a career, self-employment or learning path.

We welcome requests for grants to purchase equipment, to fund courses and accreditations, and to support other costs relating to moving into employment, training or entrepreneurship. We will only consider requests which come from young people whose financial or family circumstances put them at a disadvantage, and who are unable to meet the costs of the items or support they are requesting. We welcome applications from ambitious young people who have a clear plan for themselves, and where any award from the Fund will make a sustainable difference rather than a fleeting benefit.

By providing this practical support to access opportunities, we aim to make Manchester a fairer and more prosperous place to live, work and succeed, for all our young people.

To read some pilot case studies of young people we've supported with the Manchester's Rising Stars Fund, explore our [website and social media](#) pages where we celebrate news from all our grant programmes, including the Rising Stars Fund.

We Love MCR Charity supports Manchester's mission to ensure that children and young people have the right skills to be able to grow up happy, healthy, safe and successful. Manchester aims to achieve this by promoting a common language and developing quick and easy to use resources as well as creating a city-wide movement to embed Skills For Life across Manchester.

For further information about Skills for life [visit this page](#), or you can contact: **natalie.dodd@manchester.gov.uk**

Grant Criteria



Financial parameters

In 24/25 trustees have allocated £150,000 to the fund.

The maximum MRSF award a young person can apply for is £5,000 worth of equipment, training and expenses.

Personal details

- **Applicants must be aged 15-22, OR up to 25 if they have personal experience of homelessness**
- **Applicants must live in the City of Manchester, and have lived in this area for a minimum of 3 years (students who came to Manchester to study at University are not eligible)**
- **Above requirement DOES NOT apply to: Manchester City Council's Looked After Children, and asylum seekers or refugees seeking sanctuary who are aiming to put down roots in Manchester**
- **Applicants must have a professional referee that is willing to endorse their application**

Ambition

- **Applicants must demonstrate and specify a realistic ambition for success**
- **Applicants must identify their next step to success in their stated ambition, through Work, Qualifications or Entrepreneurship**
- **Applicants must specify what items/services/support they need from our Fund to enable them to take their next step to success**

Financial circumstances

Applicants must demonstrate:

- **That household income/finances represent a real barrier to their ambition**
- **That they have exhausted reasonable options to earn, save or borrow the funding they require**
- **Verifiable evidence that the statements they make to explain their financial position are true (e.g. Universal Credit/PIP payment, young carer/LAC/homelessness status)**

Criteria continued on next page.



Grant Criteria *(cont.)*



Higher Education applicants

- Applicants must demonstrate they've exhausted all opportunities to raise funds themselves, beyond a Student Loan (e.g. by working a part-time job, UNLESS caring responsibilities prevent them from this)

Driving Lessons

- Applicants must discuss an application for Driving Lessons with the Grants Manager before submission, as we fund these very rarely

Laptops/IT equipment:

If you are applying for support to purchase a laptop, we can readily supply:

- [HP Chromebook 11A GS EE](#)
- [GEObook 2EGen](#)

Technical specifications for both devices are linked above. Should you wish to apply for a different device due to your academic or business needs you will need to make a case for this in your application.

Required feedback

Successful applicants are required to give feedback to the WLMC about how their award is supporting their ambition:

- 6 months after an award
- 1 year after an award

Not giving this feedback could impact any future application to the Manchester's Rising Stars Fund.

We are happy to discuss applications before you submit them so please feel free to contact us if you have questions by emailing [**welovemcrcharity@manchester.gov.uk**](mailto:welovemcrcharity@manchester.gov.uk)

All information will be treated confidentially and will not be shared outside the Charity. To avoid delays in your application, please ensure that all parts of the application are filled in.





Guidance for filling in the Application form

All applications are completed online at: mcrcharity.grantplatform.com

You may supplement your application with other materials within the platform (e.g. photographs, a video submission, examples of your work, a business plan etc.)

Eligibility Criteria

You need to meet these criteria to ensure you are able to apply for the Fund, so these questions must be answered before you can proceed with the form.

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Section 1 – Applicant details

This needs to be filled in, so we know who you are, and how to contact you about your application.

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Section 2 – Personal Statement

This will be split between your ambition and financial circumstance. First tell us what your ambition is, and describe your next step and plans to achieve this. Secondly, demonstrate why your financial circumstances (personal and family) mean you are unable to access what you are asking for, and explain how a successful award from us would make a difference to you reaching your ambition. Question B2 is for University applicants only, to demonstrate they have exhausted all opportunities to raise extra funds themselves - beyond what they may receive via Student Loan.

Your answers will give us important background on why you are applying for the grant, so we can understand your situation.

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Section 3 – Grant information

This lets us know exactly what you're applying for, and how much it will cost. We need the amount requested to be specific. For example, if you need a camera to progress in a Photography Apprenticeship, you should research exactly which one you want to buy before applying for the grant. It is important to show that you have put thought into this, you are applying for what you need at this stage in your progression, and that the item is both good quality and value for money.

You must include quotes in this section, links to websites are fine. Please include the total cost of your items including VAT, postage and packaging. If you have applied for funding from other sources, please give details here, we are very happy to co-fund support with another funder.

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Section 4 – Referee's Supporting Statement

A Referee is a professional person who can confirm who you are and vouch for your application and provide a supporting statement. This can be a teacher, manager, or tutor on your course if you're on an Apprenticeship. It could also be a Social Worker, Leaving-care Worker, Support Worker or youth leader.

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Section 5 – Declaration

Please sign to declare that everything you have written is accurate and true. Please also tell us where you found out about the Manchester's Rising Stars Fund. If information is found to be false, we reserve the right to recall funds.

Monitoring form

We try to be inclusive. We need to understand the background of applicants to make sure we succeed in this, so we would like to ask you some questions about you and ask that you fill in our monitoring form. These questions are optional, you do not have to answer, and they will not impact on your application in any way.



Here are some examples of awards made by the Manchester's Rising Stars Fund



18 year-old Roshay's ambition is to be Manchester's next go-to designer of Tattoo art. Having been made homeless, she was living independently on £280/month Universal Credit. Her next step to success was to take the professional tattooing qualification and acquire the "gun and ink" she needs to practice her craft. But the cost of £1,350 was an insurmountable barrier.

Our grant solved this – Roshay is now an apprentice in a leading salon, with a mentor with 30 years of experience. She is ready to leave her mark on Manchester...



Keighan is a young man who was a Looked After Child in Manchester, now living with his brilliant former foster carer in Wythenshawe.

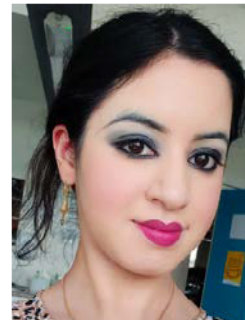
He was unemployed for a time during Lockdown, but managed to gain himself a Level 3 Motor Vehicle Apprenticeship and is loving the challenge this role gives him.

Keighan felt he was held back because everyone else in the large garage where works has their own toolkit. He knew he could develop his skills more quickly both at work and by practising at home if he had his own toolkit to use. Our £665 grant purchased Keighan a Hilka 489-piece toolkit and cabinet, so now he can develop his skills and career at his own pace.



Tully has two ambitions – to become a Clinical Scientist in the NHS – and to win Gold for Team GB! Dealing with Cerebral Palsy and Generalised Dystonia means every move Tully makes takes grit and determination. She was spending time and energy getting to and from the pool rather than in the pool – and needed £5,400 for a TriRide SP Light specialist motorised attachment for her chair so she can maximise her performance...

She brought home a Gold and Silver medal from the Tokyo Paralympics – and is now back working hard on her future career too. We're proud to have been a small part of Tully's success.



A young woman from Merseybank estate in Chorlton, Amina has a clear ambition of becoming a makeup artist and business owner specialised in the bridal industry. Now studying Makeup Artistry at The Manchester College, she's already earned a diploma in Business, demonstrating ambition by sharing a full business plan with us.

Amina's progress is restricted by her home situation: she and her twin sister are the sole breadwinners looking after parents in ill-health and a disabled older sister. Working part-time, caring for family, whilst also rigorously studying for a dream career is a heavy weight for such a young woman. Our grant of £1,980 for the quality products and materials she needs has lifted some of that weight, and we can't wait to see Amina flourish.