

Fairer Futures Fund**Frequently Asked Questions – Birmingham Citywide Small Grants****Question: What is the Fairer Futures Fund?**

- The Fairer Futures Fund was launched in 2022 by Birmingham and Solihull Integrated Care System (BSol ICS), and will see a total £22.2m being allocated to new community-based innovative projects across Birmingham and Solihull.
- It is part of the BSol ICS's strategic vision to radically transform how health and social care services are delivered in Birmingham and Solihull which, over the next five years, will see services become more integrated and delivered as close as possible to citizens' homes, whilst the focus will shift towards preventing ill-health.
- Integral to this will be innovative new projects and activities delivered and funded via the Fairer Futures Fund in communities through, and in collaboration with, the Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) sector.
- The Fund will improve the health and healthcare provision for citizens in Birmingham and Solihull; reduce inequalities in health outcomes and improve access to health and care. It will enhance the productivity and value of health and care services and support the broader social and economic development of Birmingham and Solihull.
- The Fairer Futures Fund has been split on a fair share basis between Birmingham and Solihull, with £18m allocated for Birmingham, and £4.2m for Solihull.
- BSol ICS's Birmingham and Solihull Place Committees - made up of representatives across the NHS, local authorities and the VCFSE sector - have responsibility for allocating these funds, acting with autonomy to ensure decisions are made strategically, locally, and in the best interests of the health and care needs of the local population.
- The Birmingham Fairer Futures Fund is being divided and allocated via four 'pots':
 - Citywide Small Grants
 - Citywide Partnership Fund
 - Localities Small Grants
 - Locality Partnership Fund.
- The first of the four pots being launched in Birmingham is the Citywide Small Grants – with applications opening on **20 March 2024** and applications deadline being **5pm on 12 July 2024**.

- More information will be released throughout 2024 and 2025 regarding the Citywide Partnership Fund; Localities Small Grants; and the Locality Partnership Fund.

Question: What is Birmingham and Solihull Integrated Care System?

- Originally created as part of the NHS's Long Term Plan, Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) became legal entities in July 2022, and there are 42 ICSs covering the whole of England.
- BSol ICS includes an Integrated Care Board (ICB) and an Integrated Care Partnership (ICP) and sees health and care organisations, local government and the voluntary sector working in collaboration to improve population health, tackle health inequalities, enhance productivity and help the NHS support broader social and economic development.
- BSol ICS serves 1.3 million people living across the city and borough and is working together to deliver a vision for Birmingham and Solihull to be the healthiest place to live and work, driving equity in life chances and health outcomes for everyone.

Question: Will there be any new opportunities to apply for Fairer Futures Fund for projects being delivered in Solihull?

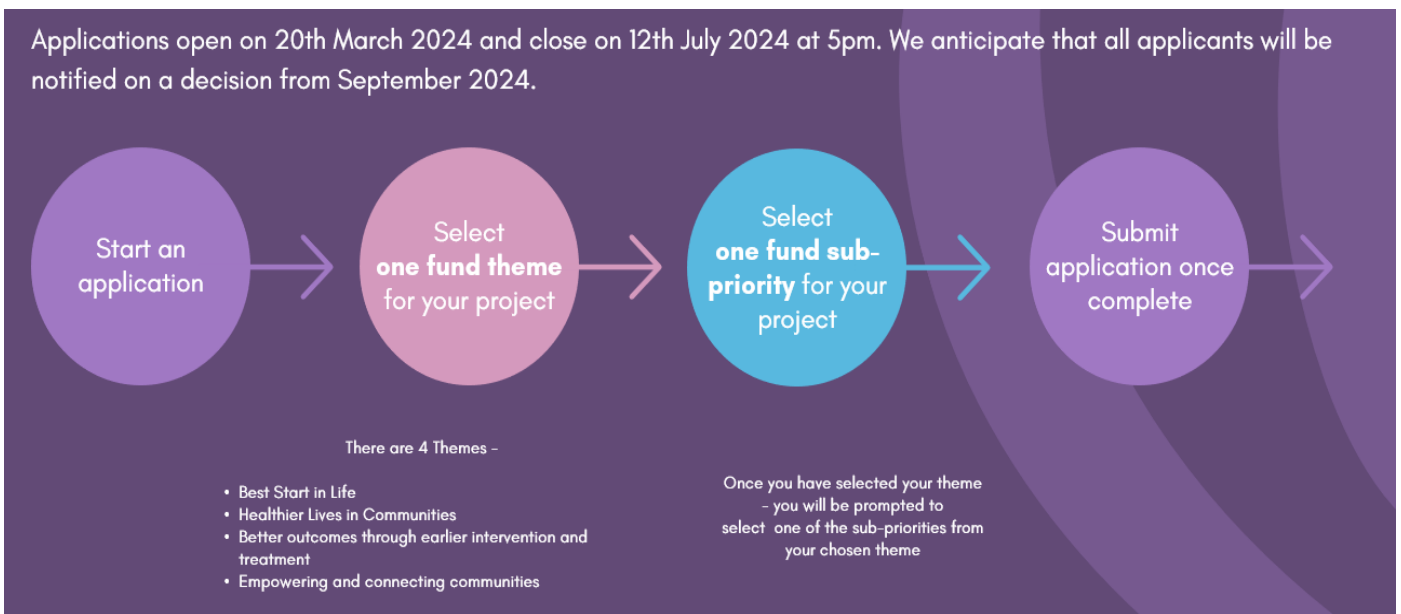
- Small grants of up to £10,000 are still available to apply for projects in Solihull. You can find out more [here](#). More information about other Fairer Futures Fund funding in Solihull will be released in due course.

Question: How much funding is available via the Birmingham Citywide Small Grants?

- They are small grants of up to £15,000 per annum or up to a maximum of £45,000 for individual projects over a 3-year delivery period.
- However, there is no requirement for organisations to apply for a 3-year delivery period – applications are welcomed irrespective of value or length of delivery period; subject to the upper limits of 3 years and £45,000. All applications must have an impact against the themes and priorities of the fund.
- Multi-year projects will be assessed at each end-of-year and continued funding will be dependent upon performance/meeting monitoring requirements.
- Applicants are limited to apply for funding to target one distinct theme per application. Groups/Consortiums leads are invited to apply for a maximum of two small grants only.

Question: How do organisations apply for Citywide Small Grants?

- Heart of England Community Foundation is working in partnership with Birmingham and Solihull Integrated Care System to lead the application process for the grants.
- You can find out more about the available funding and application process by attending one of a series of workshops taking place - head to Heart of England Community Foundation's website to find out more information and to sign up to the [workshops](#).
- You can email questions about the Citywide Small Grants to info@heartofenglandcf.co.uk - please clearly mark the subject line of your email: FFF/Bham
- Application can be made via the [Heart of England Community Foundation website](#)



Question: What projects would be considered for Citywide Small Grants?

- Applications must meet one of the following four themes and within those themes they must reach target communities through specific types of activities.

Funding Themes:

Funding Theme **Best start in life**

Projects should focus on at least one of the following sub-priorities:

Children, particularly those in care and children living in low-income households, via activities that support the uptake of vaccinations; uptake of healthy start vouchers; reduce infant mortality and hospital admissions caused by injuries and asthma

Young adults - including reducing conception rates in those aged below 18 and interventions to improve mental health

Women - including projects encouraging breastfeeding; develop parenting skills; uptake of long-acting reversible contraceptives; uptake of antenatal screening; continuity of maternal services and reproductive health particularly for those from deprived and ethnic minority backgrounds

Funding Theme **Better outcomes through earlier intervention and treatment**

Projects should focus on at least one of the following sub-priorities:

Ethnic minority backgrounds including African, Caribbean and South Asian Communities - through activities to increase uptake of NHS health checks particularly for hypertension, cardiovascular disease (CVD), and mental health

Deprived communities - through activities increasing immunisation uptake; uptake of cancer screening; and increasing dementia diagnosis in the under 65s

Heterosexual women - through activities preventing and treating blood borne viruses (BBV) such as HIV and Hepatitis

Funding Theme **Healthier lives in communities**

Projects should focus on at least one of the following sub-priorities:

People living with long-term conditions and disabilities

Men, women, children, families and those from deprived and ethnic minority backgrounds - activities aimed at improving nutrition, reducing sugar and salt intake and increasing physical activity; reducing the prevalence of diabetes and cardiovascular illnesses and related admissions to hospitals

Manual workers, people with long-term mental-health conditions, and the unemployed - through smoking cessation reducing the prevalence of Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease and related admissions to hospital

Funding Theme **Empowering and connecting communities**

Projects should focus on at least one of the following sub-priorities:

LGBTQ+ and people with long-term conditions and disabilities - through activities improving mental health; reducing social isolation; supporting adults with learning disabilities into employment; increasing uptake of annual health checks; reducing suicide and self-harm rates

Migrant communities, ex-offenders, gypsy, Roma and travellers, and those with English as a second language - through activities that improve health literacy

Carers - increasing uptake of annual health checks

Project Examples

Children	<p>Example Project: Develop community led breastfeeding support groups.</p> <p>Expected Outcomes: Increase in breastfeeding rates at 6-8 weeks (and beyond), supports parent-infant relationships and mental health and wellbeing.</p>
Ethnic minority background	<p>Example Project: Community-led walking groups in Daily Mile tracks newly installed in 8 deprived wards.</p> <p>Expected Outcomes: Increased Physical activity in minority ethnic groups and reduce gaps between inactivity levels between ethnic groups</p>
Carers	<p>Example Project: Tailored Wellness program for carers with exercise and peer support</p> <p>Expected Outcomes: Increased PA levels, better wellbeing</p>
Ex-offenders	<p>Example Project: Rehabilitative fitness program with structured activities and reintegration support for positive lifestyle changes, and a focus on social support.</p> <p>Expected Outcomes: Increased PA levels, better wellbeing</p>
Young Adults	<p>Example Project: Education, employment and wellbeing mentoring for vulnerable young people.</p> <p>Expected Outcomes: improved socio economic and health and wellbeing outcomes for vulnerable young people</p>

Question: Which organisations can apply for Citywide Small Grants?

You can apply to this fund if you are one of the following:

- Registered charities
- Constituted Community groups
- Companies Limited by Guarantee with charitable aims
- Community Interest Companies*
- Co-operatives - registered Community Benefit Societies and registered Industrial and Provident Societies
- Social Enterprises

*Funding to Community Interest Companies and other non-charities may include conditions to restrict funding to charitable objectives only.

Our ambition is to award at least 50% of the funding to groups with an income level of under £1 million - as stated in applicants most recent accounts or financial statements.

Question: What criteria must applications meet?

Applications must:

- Have a clear evidence-informed rationale for how the project will show impact on patient behaviours, knowledge and/or clinical outcomes;

- Link to [Birmingham and Solihull Integrated Care System's 10-year Strategy](#);
- Demonstrate collaboration and partnership between public and VCFSE sectors;
- Demonstrate innovation in addressing long-standing health and well-being inequalities – funding will not generally be awarded to continue existing projects or models of services or to substitute for existing sources of funding. However, each proposal will be assessed against the priorities for the fund and the ability of the proposal to contribute towards achieving the specific outcomes for the Fairer Futures Fund;
- Set out how the project will have a legacy beyond the lifespan of the Fairer Futures Fund;
- Build a new evidence base which compels statutory services to ask questions about how they will in future fund health and care services;
- For the full criteria for eligible applicants please visit the Heart of England Community Foundation [website](#).

Question: How will you measure impact?

- Projects will be expected to have a clear rationale for how they will achieve the change in outcome proposed.
- Individual outcomes should be measured using standardised methods. [The Birmingham Measurement Toolbox](#) has been developed to support this.
- Please note that whilst there may be projects for which the measurement toolkit is not appropriate (such as those that aim to work indirectly with the public e.g. through training and connecting), these will nonetheless require robust evaluation measures.
- Public Health colleagues have identified suitable quantitative methods for measuring impact against Fairer Futures Fund priorities. Wherever possible we would encourage organisations to incorporate use of these tools in their proposals and projects. Qualitative outcomes also have value and can be used to supplement and add richness to quantitative measures. Ultimately, we need to be assured that the Fairer Futures Fund is making an impact.

Question: Can an organisation apply for more than one grant for different projects and if an organisation is awarded a grant, can they apply for more?

- Yes. There are a wide range of priorities for the Fairer Futures Fund. We want to encourage as many good quality proposals as possible. However, applications for different projects should be distinct. For example, it would not be acceptable to break a single project down into different elements in order to attempt to maximise grant funding. Organisations can apply for a maximum of two separate grants from this fund. Each grant must be for a separate piece of work.

Question: Can an organisation be a lead for a small grant bid as well as another partner for another small grant bid?

- Yes, so long as the organisation has the capacity to manage/deliver multiple projects.

Question: For small grants, do organisations have to be part of a partnership?

- This is not mandatory, but it can be advantageous. One of the principles for the Fairer Futures Fund is to encourage partnership working between the VCFSE sector and statutory organisations. It is anticipated that the most effective projects would demonstrate some element of partnership working or will have been developed through a partnership approach.

Question: Are organisations able to submit consortium bids as well as individual bids? Will this have a negative impact on the likelihood of receiving funding?

- Yes, organisations are able to submit bids as part of a consortium. This will not have a negative impact on the likelihood of receiving funding and may be advantageous. You will need to propose a lead organisation as part of your application.

Question: What are the differences between Citywide and Locality funds within the wider Fairer Futures Fund in Birmingham?

- Citywide Small Grants are intended to be used for projects to address inequalities for communities of identity or experience, for example, people living with autism or communities of ethnicity; irrespective of whereabouts.
- Locality funds, to be released after Citywide Small Grants, are intended to be focussed on projects that address inequalities of place, such as a neighbourhood with a high rate of teenage conception. There are five localities in Birmingham (each one is made up of two parliamentary constituencies). Citywide Small Grants will be managed as a single programme whereas locality funds will be managed locally.

Question: Can grant applications be made for projects that are established and would benefit from extra funding?

- One of the intentions of the Fairer Futures Fund is to encourage new ways of working in order to make an impact on long-standing issues of inequality. All bidders are strongly encouraged to design projects that very clearly meet the priorities of the fund rather than seeing the fund as an opportunity to replace or to substitute for existing or reduced current funding. All bids will be assessed on their ability to make an impact on Fairer Futures Fund priorities.

Question: What is meant by ‘innovative projects’? Can innovation be perceived as using the funding to replicate existing projects to new areas?

- The Fairer Futures Fund has been created because it is recognised that the current ways in which statutory organisations deliver services is not making enough difference in terms of reducing the long-standing health and well-being inequalities that are experienced by some communities in our ICS.
- Innovation for the Fairer Futures Fund means working differently, in ways that are responsive to and led by communities who experience inequality of outcomes – ideally in partnership with practitioners and clinicians. We recognise that there are examples of this happening already. We want to grow and expand this approach. To this end, replicating or growing a successful project that meets the priorities for the fund, could be perceived as innovation. However, we need to be mindful that there are many undeveloped areas. We need to ensure that we have a range of projects that are representative of all of the themes and target communities for the fund.

Question: What won't you fund?

We will not fund:

- Direct replacement of statutory obligation and public funding
- Promotion of religious or political activities (we can fund religious or political organisations if their project benefits the wider community and does not include religious or political content)
- Groups with significant financial free reserves
- Retrospective grants
- Contribution to endowment fund, payment of deficit funding or repayment of loans
- Overseas travel or expeditions
- Medical research and equipment for statutory or private healthcare
- General appeals
- National Charities who don't have an existing strong local connection/presence
- Animal welfare, unless the project benefits people (e.g. disabled riding schemes)

- Statutory work in educational institutions
- Sponsored or fundraising events or groups raising funds to distribute to other causes
- Schools, Churches, Parish Councils or PTA's unless community benefit is demonstrated

Question: How will projects be valued, and what reporting mechanisms will be put in place?

Successful applicants will be required to provide 6 monthly written report to the Heart of England Community Foundation and to take part in:

- Monthly monitoring meetings
- Additional monitoring in partnership with an external evaluation partner administering online base line surveys and collection of participant data. Budgeting for proposed projects should allow for this requirement up to approximately 15% of the requested grant amount.
- Participate in a wider evaluation of the programme and impact outcomes (details TBC)
- Yearly grant review to assess project delivery and impact
- Complete an End of Grant Monitoring Report at the end of the delivery
- Provide case studies

Question: Why is it important to collect personal information about citizens who are benefiting from projects?

- We need to be able to evidence that the fund is having an impact. Given that the fund is focussed on addressing inequalities it is really important that we are able to quantify and understand which communities are accessing projects funded through Fairer Futures Fund grants. To do this we need to collect consistent information about participants. We understand that not all participants will wish to disclose personal information and ultimately it is their right to withhold such information.

Question: What is the deadline of Citywide Small Grants funding to be used?

- This will depend on the length of your proposed project. Projects can last for up to 3 years. In designing the fund we wanted to ensure that projects are funded to a period that is long enough to allow learning, development and the best possible outcomes.

Question: When will we find out if our application has been successful?

- All applicants will be notified of an outcome from September 2024.