

Guidance for applicants

What is Sussex Community Foundation?

Sussex Community Foundation raises funds for and makes grants to local charities and community groups across East and West Sussex and Brighton & Hove. Together we've raised over £30 million to support Sussex communities since 2006. In a typical year we give around £2 million in grants to several hundred charities and community groups.

Where does the money come from?

We manage funds on behalf of a wide range of donors, both local and national, connecting them to the groups and communities they want to support. Each fund has its own criteria, sometimes addressing a particular theme or area of need, and sometimes a particular part of Sussex.

What can I apply for?

Our grants programmes are made up of a range of funds which help to address disadvantage and deprivation and build resilience in Sussex communities.

The type of work we support includes:

- Youth club activities
- Lunch clubs for older people
- Health and well-being initiatives
- Projects supporting digital inclusion
- Community transport
- Community gardens and environmental projects
- Projects addressing homelessness
- Community advice and support
- Food banks
- Projects addressing drug and alcohol misuse

Your grant can cover costs such as:

- Equipment and materials
- Staffing
- Training and skills development
- Rent or hire
- Marketing
- Organisational development, eg. help with business planning or fundraising strategies
- Digital solutions
- Volunteer expenses

You can see more of the sort of work and projects we fund on our website.

How much can I apply for?

Most of our funds offer grants of up to £5,000. However, most grants awarded are for less than this. Some funds are able to offer larger grants. These opportunities will be publicised on our website, and in our Grants E-Bulletin (which you can sign up for [here](#)).

When can I apply?

General applications can be made at any time throughout the year, using our standard application form. Our Grants Committee usually meets three times a year to make decisions. Deadlines for these Committees will be advertised on our website. Applications received after each closing date will be carried forward to the next grant round. Some funds have particular deadlines, application forms and requirements – please see our website for more information about these.

Am I eligible to apply?

Most of our grants are awarded to not-for-profit volunteer led organisations whose annual income does not exceed £1 million.¹

We define ‘not for profit’ organisations as those:

- Whose governing body (board or management committee) is entirely voluntary, although out of pocket expenses may be paid, and has a minimum of three un-related people (if some are related there must be at least three who are not)
- Whose members do not receive any financial benefit
- Whose income and assets are used for exclusively charitable purposes (and any remaining assets are transferred to a charitable organisation)
- That do not pay any dividend or distribute any surplus to shareholders or members

Your organisation does not have to be a charity but it does need to have:

- its own bank account, with at least two cheque signatories (who are not related to each other)
- a constitution or set of governing rules, with a minimum of three trustees/committee members, as above
- accounts or records of expenditure
- relevant policies (such as child protection, vulnerable adults, health and safety etc).

We can accept applications from social enterprises, CICs and Companies Limited by Guarantee carrying out activities which are charitable. However, these organisations must have:

- Demonstrable public benefit and clear protection against private benefit
- A minimum of three unrelated directors, the majority of whom are not paid either as directors or for delivering the activities of the organization (if some are related there must be at least three who are not)
- A majority of non-executive directors approving the salaries and benefits of any paid directors, which should be reasonable and proportionate to the work they do and the financial position of the organisation
- An asset lock body (in the case of CICs) with objectives which are charitable and similar to the CIC

Such organisations must confirm that they meet these conditions at the time of applying and, in any case, no later than the closing date.

¹ Where advertised - a small number of programmes allow larger organisations to apply (ie some national programmes and/or for larger awards) - though we recommend checking with us before making an application.

We do not normally accept applications from individuals or from organisations that are part of central, local or regional government. However, some specific funds are able to support these applications, including the Paul Rooney Foundation, the Westdene Fund and the Shoreham Air Show Fund. Further details are available on our website, but if you are in doubt please contact the Grants team to check your eligibility.

How do I apply?

We have an online application process which you can access at www.sussexgiving.org.uk/apply. In most cases you do not need to specify which of our funds you want to apply for. We will match your application to the donor we think is most likely to fund you.

If you wish to save your application in draft please use the 'Submit as Draft' button right at the end of the form. You can then return to your work via the unique link to the form which you will already have been sent. Our online form allows you to submit your supporting documents as electronic attachments at the same time as the application form. Once you have submitted the form, you will receive an acknowledgement of your application, together with a copy for your records.

By completing our online form you will be agreeing to the Terms and Conditions detailed within. The form will also ask you to provide details for the bank account into which, should your application be successful, you would like the grant to be paid. If you are unable to access the online form please contact the office (either by e-mail to grants@sussexgiving.org.uk or by phone 01273 409440) and we will provide you with a copy of the application form.

Occasionally a fund will have a separate application form. Details of these and the application forms will be available on our website.

Document checklist

Here is a checklist of the documents you will need to provide:

- a signed copy of your latest annual accounts
- a signed copy of your constitution or set of rules (if you are a CIC, please also supply your CIC 34 report, if this has been made available).
- if applying for a grant to purchase equipment, please send copies of written estimates or catalogue pages
- a photocopy of one bank statement from the last three months
- the names of all management committee members, with cheque signatories identified.
- Depending on the nature of the project or activity, we will need you to send us the following, where relevant:
 - child protection or vulnerable adult protection policy (if you are working with these groups)
 - health and safety policy
 - equal opportunities statement.

If you have made a recent application for a grant, you may not need to re-send your supporting documents. Please call to check or make a note of this on your application. We will contact you to confirm we have received your application and if we need any further information.

How often can I apply?

Generally you may only make one grant application per round and only be in receipt of one grant at a time. However some funds are available as additional funding, ie. in addition to an award through our general round. Details of these will be available on our website. Please contact the Grants Team if you would like to discuss applying for an additional grant. You can re-apply at any time if you are unsuccessful.

What happens once you receive my application?

Once we receive your application, we will check that you are eligible and have supplied the information we need. The application will then be assessed against a number of set criteria in line with the questions in the application form. The assessment includes a review of the need in your local community, the project plan and budget, a set of measurable outcomes and evaluation tools and a plan to sustain the activity and/or support for beneficiaries going forward.

Depending on the outcome of our assessment, your application will then be matched to our funds, and presented to relevant donors and fund panels for consideration. Our Grants Committee then meets to consider all the applications and to allocate any further funds.

This process takes about eight to ten weeks and we will let you know the outcome of your application very shortly afterwards.

If you are offered a grant, you will receive payment up front, once you have agreed to our terms and conditions. You have to return a monitoring form to us once you have spent your grant/completed your project.

Monitoring

When your project is finished, you are asked to complete a monitoring form online. We will send you a link to this when you are awarded your grant but, if you would like to preview the form, you can view it [here](#). If you are unable to complete the form online, please get in contact with the office using the details below.

What can't you fund?

Sussex Community Foundation does not support requests from or for:

- Organisations or activities which don't benefit communities in Sussex
- Organisations that discriminate on the basis of race, religion, national origin, disability, age, or sexual orientation
- Organisations where the service provided is used as a vehicle or means to promote religious beliefs
- Political activities
- Small contributions to major capital appeals or campaigns
- Grants which will be used to make awards to a third party
- Projects which only benefit animals
- Organisations who have not returned monitoring from previous grant awards
- Retrospective funding for activities or projects that have already taken place

Where can I get more help?

If you have any questions about this guidance or our application process, please contact us at grants@sussexgiving.org.uk or by calling 01273 409440. We will be happy to help.