

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 £46 million to support Sussex communities since 2006. In a typical year we give around £2 - £3 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, unless otherwise advertised. Funding programmes

and opportunities will be publicised on our website, and in our Grants ENews-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 are 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 equal opportunities, child protection, vulnerable adults, health and safety etc).

Please note that all first time applicants are required to submit copies of the documents listed above in order to be considered for funding. If you have already received a grant from us, you will only be asked to submit your most recent accounts and a bank statement from within the last three months.

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 organisation (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

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.

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

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 and the Westdene 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 on our [grants page](#). 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 your project.

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 via email. 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 application, you will be agreeing to the Terms and Conditions detailed at the end of the form. The application 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 guide you through the process.

Some programmes and funds will have a separate application form and criteria. This information will be available on our website.

Document checklist

This is the list of documents you will need to provide as part of your application to us. Please note that we are unable to consider your application without this information:

For all applicants:

- a signed copy of your latest annual accounts
- a photocopy of one bank statement, dated from within the last three months

For all new applicants:

- a signed copy of your latest annual accounts
- a photocopy of one bank statement, dated from within the last three months
- a signed copy of your constitution or set of rules (if you are a CIC, please also supply your CIC 34 report)
- if applying for a grant to purchase equipment, please send copies of written estimates or catalogue pages
- the names and addresses of all management committee members, with cheque signatories identified
- your equal opportunities policy, covering both the Equalities Act 2010 and the nine protected characteristics

Depending on the nature of the project or activity, we will also 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

We will contact you to confirm we have received your application, and if we require 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 (one General Awards grant per year). 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 also re-apply at any time if you are unsuccessful but do contact us for feedback to help strengthen any future applications to us.

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 shortly afterwards.

If you are offered a grant, you will receive payment using the bank details provided to us.

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

Monitoring

When your project is finished, you are asked to complete a monitoring form online. We expect to receive this twelve-months after your grant is awarded. We require grant monitoring forms to be

completed before we can approve any further grants to you. We will send you a link to your monitoring form when you are awarded your grant. The information requirements for this are straight forward and follows the questions we ask in the application form. We do not need you to submit detailed evidence of expenditure, although we do ask that you keep these records as we may ask for this as part of programme evaluations.

Knowledge gained from monitoring and evaluation is vital to support our organisational learning. We use this form to highlight achievements and good practice, and to help shape our future grant making practice. Monitoring and evaluating your funded project is important not just to us and our donors, but can also be helpful to your organisation for planning and future funding applications.

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.