

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. We have so far raised over £50 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 across Sussex.

Where does the money come from?

We manage funds on behalf of local donors, connecting them to groups and communities in need of support. Each fund has its own criteria, often addressing a particular theme, area of need, or particular geography. Collectively these funds enable us to fund a wide range of issues across Sussex.

What can I apply for?

Our grants help to address disadvantage and deprivation and build resilience across Sussex. Although our funding is open to all, we particularly welcome applications from organisations led by and supporting people from underrepresented communities. This includes but is not limited to people underrepresented in terms of race, religion, sexuality, disability, and age, as well as geography or economic disadvantage.

You might want funding for something like:

- Youth work and young people's activities
- Lunch clubs and support for older people
- Health and well-being initiatives
- Projects working to improve digital inclusion
- Climate action, community gardens, or environmental projects
- Projects supporting homeless and vulnerably housed people
- Community advice and support
- Food banks and projects
- Projects addressing drug and alcohol misuse

Your grant can cover costs such as:

- Equipment and materials
- Staffing and volunteer expenses
- Training and skills development
- Rent or hire
- Marketing
- Organisational development, eg. business planning, fundraising or capacity building

You can see more of the sort of work and projects we fund on our [website](#).

How much can I apply for?

Grants are up to £10,000 unless otherwise advertised. Funding programmes and 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 are advertised on our website. Applications received after each closing date will be carried forward to the next grant round. We do also have special funds and programmes with particular deadlines, application forms, and requirements – please see our website for more information about these. On the whole, special funds can be applied for in addition to holding or applying for a general round grant.

Am I eligible to apply?

Most of our grants are awarded to not-for-profit volunteer-led organisations whose annual income does not exceed £2 million. However, our funding is particularly aimed at supporting smaller voluntary groups across Sussex, many with an annual income of less than £100,000. 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 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 charitable activities. However, these organisations must have:

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.



- 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 that 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.

We are currently unable to accept applications from individuals or from organisations that are part of central, local or regional government. However, some specific funds can support these applications, including the Paul Rooney Foundation and the Westdene Fund both of which provide funding for individuals. Further details are available on our website, but if you are in doubt please contact the Grants team to check on eligibility.

How do I apply?

We have an online application process which you can access at www.sussexgiving.org.uk/apply. Once you have registered you will be sent a web link to complete your application.

If you wish to save your application as a draft, please use the 'Submit as Draft' button right at the end of the form. You can then return to it via the original form link. 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 pdf copy for your records.

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 or fund we think is the most suitable for the work you are planning.

By completing our online application, you will be agreeing to the Terms and Conditions detailed at the end of the form. The form will also ask you to provide details for the bank account into which you would like the grant to be paid if your application is successful.

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.

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 or record of expenditure
- a photocopy of one bank statement from the last three months



For all new applicants:

- a signed copy of your latest annual accounts or record of expenditure
- a photocopy of one bank statement from 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 of management committee members, with cheque signatories identified.
- Your equal opportunities policy, covering both the Equalities Act 2010 and the nine protected characteristics.
- Other policies relevant to your work such as child protection or vulnerable adult protection policy, health and safety policy, environmental or sustainability policy

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 receive one grant at a time in any twelve-month period. 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 several 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?

- Organisations or activities which don't benefit communities in Sussex
- Organisations that discriminate based on 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 and we will need this before we can approve any further grants to you. We will send you a link to your form when you are awarded your grant. The information requirements for this follow the kinds of 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.

If you are new to applying for grants, or to applying to Sussex Community Foundation, you may wish to approach your local infrastructure organisation (Voluntary Action) for advice. Voluntary Actions offer a wide range of information, support and training for voluntary sector organisations. They can help with funding applications and give guidance on what you need to include when putting together your funding submission. They can also help identify a range of funding opportunities for your organisation or project.

You can find details of the infrastructure organisation for your area at <https://sussexgiving.org.uk/apply-for-grants/how-it-works/further-funding-advice/>

