

Monthly Funding Information October 2026

This document includes information about current grants and funding opportunities primarily for Voluntary & Community Sector Groups and Organisations, Charities and Social Enterprises. Where the Grant title includes an asterisk (*), Local Authorities and other partner organisations may also be eligible to apply for the funding.

Please also note the grants that are **NEW** to the bulletin.

This document, along with information about other sources of funding and associated support, can also be accessed via the [Leicestershire Communities Grants and Funding page](#).

Please use the links in the contents table below to go directly to the relevant section:

[Funding for projects which support Adults \(including older people, veterans and adults with disabilities\)](#)

Grant Fund	Closest Deadline
Army Benevolent Fund – Grants	6 th Oct 2026
McCarthy Stone – Festive Connections Grants (New)	15 th Oct 2026
HM Govt. – Pathways to Work Innovation Fund * (New)	26 th Oct 2026
Concertina Charitable Trust – Grants	31 st Oct 2026
MOD – LGBT Financial Recognition Scheme (New)	12 th Dec 2026
Flutter UK & Ireland – Cash4Clubs (New)	Open

[Funding for projects which support Young People \(including young people with disabilities\)](#)

Grant Fund	Closest Deadline
Alec Dickson Trust – Volunteer Support (New)	4 th Oct 2026
Universal Music Sound Foundation – Individual Funding	7 th Oct 2026
Arts Awards Access Fund (New)	9 th Oct 2026
Wembley Stadium Foundation – Targeted Fund (New)	11 th Oct 2026
Genius Within CIC – Blooming Genius Grants (New)	24 th Oct 2026
Linnean Society of London - Our Local Nature Grant	25 th Oct 2026
Strategic Legal Fund (SLF) – Vulnerable Young Migrants (New)	26 th Oct 2026
Active Together – Young People Sport Hardship Fund (New)	30 th Oct 2026
Barclays Community Sport Fund – Female Coaches for Girls Grant	4 th Nov 2026
British Science Association – Curiosity Grants (New)	4 th Nov 2026

Paul Hamlyn Foundation – Teacher Development Fund	11 th Nov 2026
The Frederick Soddy School Awards	30 th Nov 2026
Nuffield Foundation – Essential Employment Skills Fund (New)	10 th Dec 2026
The Edina Trust – School Science Grant (New)	Open
Tesco – Fruit and Veg Grants (New)	Open

Funding for projects which support broader community outcomes

Grant Fund	Closest Deadline
Bagri Foundation – Arts and Culture Grants (New)	5 th Oct 2026
East Midlands Freeport – Skills and Community Equity Fund (New)	6 th Oct 2026
Aviva Foundation – Financial Futures Fund	7 th Oct 2026
HM Govt. - Common Ground Award (New)	12 th Oct 2026
Henry Smith Foundation – Maternity Equity Fund	14 th Oct 2026
Ofcom – Community Radio Fund (New)	14 th Oct 2026
National Grid – Community Matters Fund (New)	16 th Oct 2026
Stop Loan Sharks - Community Fund (New)	16 th Oct 2026
National Archives – Research and Innovation Grants *	17 th Oct 2026
Elephant Trust – Main Fund (New)	18 th Oct 2026
EEM - Community Spaces Fund	19 th Oct 2026
Wildlife Trust – Green Community Grants (New)	21 st Oct 2026
Henry Smith Foundation – Domestic Abuse Counselling Fund (New)	21 st Oct 2026
Visa/Nationwide - Let's Celebrate Towns *	25 th Oct 2026
Armed Forces Covenant – Reveal and Respond *	28 th Oct 2026
Church Urban Fund – Windrush Day Grant Scheme 2027 * (New)	29 th Oct 2026
National Garden Scheme – Community Garden Grants (New)	30 th Oct 2026
Tree Council – Trees Outside Woodland Fund *	31 st Oct 2026
Consortium – LGBT+ Get Active Fund (New)	4 th Nov 2026
Armed Forces Covenant – Family Focus Programme * (New)	4 th Nov 2026
OPCC – Community Action Fund – Neighbourhood Crime (New)	8 th Nov 2026
Better Community Business Network Grant (New)	9 th Nov 2026
Leeds Building Society Foundation – Small Grant (New)	11 th Nov 2026
Great British Energy – Community Fund (New)	12 th Nov 2026
School for Social Entrepreneurs – DPS Social Commitment (New)	16 th Nov 2026
Wise Music Foundation (New)	30 th Nov 2026
UK Research and Innovation - Gambling Harms Research Grant (New)	8 th Dec 2026

<u>International Tree Foundation – Community Tree Planting Grants</u>	11 th Dec 2026
<u>Skipton Building Society Charitable Foundation</u>	Dec 2026
<u>Woodland Trust – Free Trees for Schools and Community Groups</u> (New)	Jan 2027
<u>Harborough District Council – Community Grant Schemes</u> (New)	Open
<u>VAL – VALidate Training Grants</u> (New)	Open

Funding for projects which support Adults

Army Benevolent Fund - Grants

Summary

Funding is available for UK-registered charities and Community Interest Companies to deliver frontline services supporting serving Army personnel, veterans, and their families (including the bereaved).

Whilst the primary focus of the Army Benevolent Fund will always be on meeting individual need as it arises, it does expect to be able to support up to 100 other charities and organisations annually.

Key Criteria

- Applicants must provide a service that directly supports the Army family, meeting an evidenced need that is not currently being met by statutory or other, including other charitable, providers
- Applicants must be going concerns that can demonstrate financial sustainability evidenced through a least one years audited accounts, good governance, and impact
- Preference for funding will be given to those charities and organisations that are members of the Confederation of Service Charities (Cobseo)
- The grant will not normally fund specific (i.e. named) posts and salaries, but will consider contributing to an organisation's core operating costs of which it recognises general salary costs will be a part of.
- Only one grant will be awarded per eligible organisation in each financial year (April to March)

Amounts available: Not disclosed, but grants to new applicants are unlikely to exceed £20,000.

Application deadlines: 6th October 2026 (Decisions in November 2026). There are three rounds of funding each financial year with decisions in June, November and February.

McCarthy Stone – Festive Connections Grants (NEW GRANT)

Summary

Funding is available for small charities, constituted community groups and CIC's to deliver festive activities designed to support people aged 65 and over, with a particular focus on creating opportunities for social connections, tackling loneliness, and reducing social isolation.

The type of activities that could be supported include community Christmas lunches or festive meals, community transport to get people to an event, venue hire, befriending activities and the delivery of Christmas gifts or hampers where these are provided as part of a wider social connection or befriending activity.

Key Criteria

- Organisations should have an annual income of less than £250,000
- Activities need to take place between 1st December 2026 and 2nd January 2027
- CIC's must be limited by guarantee
- Applicants should have less than 12 months of running costs in unrestricted reserves
- The activity itself can be open to a wider age group, but the funding must be used to benefit people aged 65 and over

Amounts available: Maximum £750

Application deadlines: 15th October 2026 (Decisions by 30th October 2026)

HM Govt. – Pathways to Work Innovation Fund * (NEW GRANT)

Summary

Funding is available for UK-based charities, voluntary organisations, social enterprises, community interest companies, businesses, universities, research organisations and public bodies to test new approaches that help disabled people and people with long-term health conditions prepare for work, find or retain a job, or progress in their careers.

The fund has two objectives:

- To support disabled people and people with long-term health conditions move towards, enter, stay and progress in work
- To build evidence about what works and for whom, so that successful approaches can be adopted more widely

Key Criteria

Approaches must be new. The continuation of existing services without a significantly different approach or significant learning opportunity are not eligible

Amounts available: There is no minimum or maximum grant request. Up to £10 million is available in 2026. A further £50 million will be available for the second funding round, which is expected to open to bids early in 2027.

Application deadlines: 26th October 2026

Concertina Charitable Trust – Grants

Summary

Funding is available to charities and care homes for activities which provide musical entertainment and related activities for the elderly.

Key Criteria

- Please submit your application in good time so the administrator can review it to ensure there are no omissions and that it is suitable before submission to the Trustees
- One of the most common mistakes smaller organisations make is not including their accounts or financial statements with the application
- No email applications will be accepted. Please send hard copy applications in the post

Amounts available: Maximum £250

Application deadlines: 31st October 2026

MOD – LGBT Financial Recognition Scheme (NEW GRANT)

Summary

Individuals affected by the Armed Forces LGBT Ban between 1967 and 2000 can apply for the Financial Recognition Scheme and other forms of recognition.

Whether you were dismissed, discharged or affected in other ways, it's worth checking what's available before the deadline.

Dedicated advisers are available to answer questions, explain the schemes, talk through what applicants may be eligible for and support them throughout their application.

- Dismissed or Discharged Payment – if you were dismissed or discharged because of the LGBT Ban you can apply for a financial recognition payment of £50,000
- Impact Payment – if you were affected by the Ban in other ways while serving, for example you experienced harassment, investigations, disciplinary action or other forms of mistreatment you can apply for a financial recognition payment of £20,000
- Non-financial scheme – everyone affected by the Ban can request forms of non-financial restorative measure including receiving an official letter of apology or a restoration ceremony

Key Criteria

- The scheme is open to anyone who was impacted by the LGBT Ban, regardless of their actual sexual orientation or gender identity. This means that veterans or personnel who experienced mistreatment under the policy due to the perception of others are able to apply.
- Persons of Sufficient Interest can apply for Non-Financial Restorative Measures on behalf of a deceased affected veteran, but not for either of the two financial payments.

Application deadlines: 12th December 2026

Flutter UK & Ireland – Cash4Clubs (NEW GRANT)

Summary

Funding is available to not-for-profit sports organisations, charities, community groups and formally constituted clubs for activities which sustain or expand opportunities for adults, aged 18 and over, to take part in sport.

The funding is unrestricted so organisations can use it as they see fit, whether that's to purchase new equipment, gain coaching qualifications or invest in the sustainability of their club.

Key Criteria

- Organisations that also run activities for children or young people under 18 are not eligible to apply.
- Priority will be given to organisations working in disadvantaged areas and with groups that are under-represented in sport, including women, racially diverse communities, disabled people and LGBT+ people
- The funding should be spent within a six-month period

Amounts available: Maximum £2,000

Application deadlines: 1st January 2027

Funding for projects which support Children and Young People

[Alec Dickson Trust – Volunteer Support](#) (NEW GRANT)

Summary

Funding is available to individuals or groups of young people aged 30 or under who aim to make a difference through volunteering or community service and to help them put their ideas into action and run projects that benefit the lives of others, particularly the most marginalised and disadvantaged.

The Trust is looking for projects that identify a specific need, and propose to carry out activities that will clearly help to address this need. It also likes to fund projects that involve lots of volunteers, and/or encourage these young people so stay engaged as volunteers in the long term.

Key Criteria

The Trust does not fund:

- Overseas trips or gap year projects
- Uniforms, equipment or training for personal benefit (e.g. university course fees, laptop for an individual)
- Direct expenditure for a fundraising event (such as venue hire)

Amounts available: £500

Application deadlines: 4th October 2026

[Universal Music Sound Foundation – Individual Funding](#)

Summary

Funding is available for students (up to year 11) in full-time education in the UK to help purchase musical instruments or equipment.

Key Criteria

- Applicants must be an EU/EEA (European Economic Area) national, British, or overseas applicant ordinarily/habitually resident in the UK.
- All individuals applying for funding must be in full-time education at the time funding offers are made (detailed above) and either be in school (year 11 and below) and having regular music lessons or enrolled on a certified music course, studying full time at college / university / conservatoire (year 12 and beyond)
- A reference is required from a current independent music teacher
- If your application is successful, you will have approximately 2 months to pay the balance on your item (if applicable) and claim our donation (exact dates will be provided at the time of our offer), so you need to consider if you will have raised the balance in that time frame.

Amounts available: Maximum £1,000

Application deadlines: 7th October 2026 (Funding awarded in January).

Arts Awards Access Fund (NEW GRANT)

Summary

Funding is available for registered Arts Award Centres in the UK to support projects with young people who are excluded from the arts.

Priority will be given to centres that:

- Are working with young people who experience barriers to access and inclusion
- Will use the grant to support them to pilot, embed or develop their Arts Award work with these groups

Key Criteria

- The person writing and submitting the application must be a trained Arts Award adviser
- The Fund cannot provide funding that is required less than 6 weeks after the application deadline, as it cannot guarantee that it will be able to get the grant to applicants in time.
- Young people benefitting from the Access Fund grant should be enrolled for Arts Award by the end of the project and will aim to successfully complete a Discover, Explore, Bronze, Silver or Gold Arts Award

Amounts available: Between £100 and £1,500 (The amounts available are linked directly to the number of young people being supported).

Application deadlines: 9th October 2026

Wembley Stadium Foundation – Targeted Fund (NEW GRANT)

Summary

Funding is available for registered charities to deliver projects that improve access to sport, movement and performing arts for children and young people aged up to 25.

Funding can support new or existing activities, with full cost recovery covering direct project costs and contributions towards core costs.

Priorities for this round include:

- Targeted interventions designed for young people facing a specific barrier to participation
- Projects delivered outside of London, Birmingham, Newcastle, Manchester & Liverpool
- Projects delivered in community settings rather than mainstream education

Key Criteria

Applicants must have an annual income between £100,000 and £1 million in the most recent accounting year

Projects must contribute to all three of the outcomes:

- Enhanced sense of belonging
- Increased participation in sport, movement or performing arts
- Reduced barriers to participation for young people

Amounts available: Maximum £50,000 (Up to £25,000 per year for up to two years)

Application deadlines: 11th October 2026 (For expressions of interest)

Genius Within CIC – Blooming Genius Grants (NEW GRANT)

Summary

Funding is available for grassroots organisations to support neurodivergent children under 18 and their families.

There is a focus on communities that often lack adequate information and support around neurodiversity, ensuring they receive the resources and recognition they deserve.

Key Criteria

Applications are capped at 200 per funding window

Amounts available: Not disclosed, but generally grants are from a few hundred up to about £2,000

Application deadlines: 24th October 2026 (Decisions on 5th December 2026).

Linnean Society of London - Our Local Nature Grant

Summary

Funding is available for projects that help young people lead initiatives that promote local biodiversity awareness or improve access to nature and local green spaces.

The scheme aims to benefit groups of young people, typically aged 16 or under, with proposals expected to be youth-led and supported by schools, home educators, community organisations, small charities or student groups.

Funding can cover costs such as materials, room hire, publicity, speakers, training, transport and project-specific staff.

Key Criteria

- The Fund is available to individuals and organisations who are linked with a group of young people within the UK. There must be evidence that the applicant is linked with a group of young people.
- Successful projects will take place between 7th December 2026 and 6th July 2027.

Amounts available: Maximum £1,000

Application deadlines: 25th October 2026

Strategic Legal Fund (SLF) – Vulnerable Young Migrants (NEW GRANT)

Summary

The SLF funds strategic legal work in any area of law where migrant groups are experiencing disadvantage or discrimination as a result of migration status.

Strategic legal work is defined as work where the impact is likely to go beyond an individual case, and to result in changes to law, policy and practice that will benefit a wider group of people.

Applications can be made to fund one of two kinds of strategic legal work:

- The research and development of cases pre-litigation
- Third party “interventions” in existing cases, which allow a non-party intervener to assist the court in arriving in its decision in a case, acting as an amicus curiae, a friend of the court.

Key Criteria

- Whether applicants are not-for-profit organisations or firms of solicitors, they must provide specialist level legal advice to people discriminated or disadvantaged by their migration status
- If you work for a Not-For-Profit organisation regulated by the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC) and are applying to undertake work in the asylum or immigration field, you must confirm that staff leading on the proposed work are accredited at Level 3, Advocacy and Representation, in the relevant category of law.
- The maximum grant length is 12 months.

Amounts available: Maximum £30,000 (Average grant size is between £12,000 and £15,000).

Application deadlines: 26th October 2026. (There are five funding rounds per year).

Active Together – Young People Physical Activity and Sport Hardship Fund **(NEW GRANT)**

Summary

The fund is aimed at helping young people overcome financial constraints affecting their involvement in physical activity and sport as a participant, official, coach, volunteer or talented sportsperson. Funding is available for individuals as follows:

- Participant – for young people who are not able to access ongoing sport or physical activity due to the cost of membership fees/subs or who may need support with the purchase of kit or equipment required to participate.
- Coach/Official – for young people who have a passion for coaching or officiating in sport but are unable to access coaching or officiating courses/qualifications due to the cost of training.
- Volunteer – for committed young people who would like to give their time to volunteer in sport or physical activity, however they may face barriers such as the cost of transport to access the activity.
- Talented sportsperson – for young people who compete at a Regional, National or International level however cost is a barrier to travelling to competitions, purchasing equipment etc.

Key Criteria

The fund is for individual young people. Clubs, groups or other organisations are not eligible

Young people must live in Leicestershire, Leicester or Rutland and be between 7 and 18 years old by the application deadline, or up to the age of 25 for young people with special educational needs and disability (SEND).

For young people under the age of 18, applications must be completed by a parent or guardian on their behalf.

Priority will be given to:

- A young person's financial need, including (but not limited to) household income, free school meal eligibility, nature and cost of the sport or activity.
- Applications from young people from low socio-economic backgrounds, ethnically diverse communities and those with a disability or long-term health condition.
- Young people who have not received funding from other organisations.

Amounts available: No minimum or maximum amounts are stated, but most grants are in the region of £200 to £300.

Application deadlines: 30th October 2026.

Barclays Community Sport Fund – Female Coaches for Girls Grant

Summary

Funding is available for sports clubs, youth groups, charities and community organisations to make football, cricket and tennis more accessible to women and girls in underserved communities across the UK.

The fund will cover the cost of a Level 1 or equivalent coaching qualification and any additional safeguarding and first aid requirements for their chosen sport.

Key Criteria

To be eligible for funding, the female coaches you put forward must meet the following criteria:

- Aged 16+ (or 18+ depending on specific course eligibility)
- Already coaching girls or would like to start
- Part of a club or group with women and/or girls' provision where they would like to begin or continue coaching (e.g. current player, parent of a player, volunteer etc)
- Can undertake their coaching qualification within 12 months (subject to course availability)
- It particularly welcomes applications from female coaches from diverse backgrounds and with lived experience, to help ensure the programme reflects the communities it serves

Amounts available: Maximum £400 (towards the cost of two qualifications at £200 each).

Application deadlines: 4th November 2026 (although the fund may close early if oversubscribed).

British Science Association – Curiosity Grants (NEW GRANT)

Summary

Funding is available to support schools in challenging circumstances to create opportunities for underrepresented young people to engage with the skills, concepts, stories and people behind research and innovation, and to build the school capacity to embed these experiences in everyday learning.

This may include helping students to:

- Explore how new knowledge is created (research), in any discipline
- Experience how existing science and tech is used to solve real-world problems (innovation)
- Learn about the people and careers in science and technology

Key Criteria

- College/FE, secondary, primary school, special school, and alternative provision educators supporting young people aged approximately 5-19 are eligible to apply. However, the funding priorities are more likely to be met by schools working with older students (i.e. aged 11+ or working at that level).
- The following criteria must be met:
 - The school is state funded. Registered independent special schools that receive local authority funding for places are also eligible to apply
 - The school is not academically selective
 - The school also meets at least one of the following criteria:
 - A minimum of 30% of students are from ethnic minority backgrounds*
 - A minimum of 30% of students experiencing economic deprivation: In England eligible for free school meals (FSM**) or pupil premium
 - The school is located in a designated area classified as rural
- Activities/events can commence as soon as funding is received, and delivery is to be completed by 31st July 2027.

Amounts available: Maximum £600

Application deadlines: 4th November 2026

Paul Hamlyn Foundation – Teacher Development Fund

Summary

Funding is available for primary schools and arts/cultural organisations to support arts-based learning and professional development in primary education.

All projects should focus on how arts-based approaches can build equity in schools so that pupils who experience systemic inequity can access and make progress in their learning.

Key Criteria

- Arts organisations can be charities, community organisations, social enterprises and not-for-profit companies active in the arts and culture sector
- Participating schools can be mainstream, specialist SEND or alternative provision settings, working with primary-age children
- Projects should last for two academic years
- All applications must have solid partnerships in place
- Each partnership must include one or more arts/cultural organisations
- A minimum of six and a maximum of ten schools should be involved in each project, regardless of whether the lead applicant is an arts/cultural organisation or a school
- Each participating school should commit at least two teachers and one senior leader to the project, though flexibility can be offered to small, rural schools

Amounts available: Maximum £165,000 (over two academic years).

Application deadlines: 11th November 2026 (For first stage applications, decisions by 10th December 2026).

The Frederick Soddy School Awards

Summary

Funding is available to schools in the UK and Ireland planning geography fieldwork and expeditions that include a strong element of human geography.

The grants aim to enable students aged 5 to 18 years to gain the valuable experience provided by fieldwork, regardless of background or circumstances.

Key Criteria

- Grants are awarded on the merits of each project, with priority given to schools who were not funded the previous year
- The grants cannot support the costs of physical resources
- Successful applicants will need to submit a risk assessment approved by their institution before funding can be released

Amounts available: Between £200 and £700

Application deadlines: 30th November 2026 (Decisions on applications are normally communicated by mid-March).

Nuffield Foundation – Essential Employment Skills Fund (NEW GRANT)

Summary

Funding is available for UK organisations to evaluate existing programmes that help 16 to 24-year-olds facing significant barriers to employment develop essential employment skills and access good jobs.

Applications are sought from partnerships which bring together programme delivery organisations and independent evaluators. Delivery partners may include third-sector organisations, education and training providers, employers, and organisations working with young people. Independent evaluators should have appropriate expertise in impact and process evaluation.

Key Criteria

- Partnership teams will require expertise in both evaluating and delivering frontline programmes
- It is essential that the partnership is established prior to applying and that the research design is co-developed
- A programme must have an explicit focus on developing at least one essential employment skill among the young people participating, although most programmes are likely to address more than one.
- A programme must be based on a clear and compelling theory of change, underpinned by prior testing of this or similar programmes and/or relevant theoretical literature.
- Earliest possible start date for projects is September 2027

Amounts available: Maximum £500,000 (It is anticipated that most grant awards will be between £200,000 and £400,000).

Application deadlines: 10th December 2026 (For outline applications with shortlisting decisions communicated in February 2027).

The Edina Trust – School Science Grant (NEW GRANT)

Summary

Funding is available for primary schools, nurseries and special schools in Leicester to run science projects.

Grants can be used for science weeks, science-related school trips, science equipment, and science subscriptions; improving school grounds for science and gardening resources.

Key Criteria

- The grant scheme will only run in Leicester City for the 2026 - 2027 school year
- The grant scheme is not competitive. Grants are guaranteed as long as the school is located in one of the current eligible areas
- PVI (private, voluntary or independent) nurseries are not eligible

Amounts available:

- Primary and Special Schools - maximum £1,000
- Nurseries - maximum £700

Application deadlines: Open

Tesco – Fruit and Veg Grants (NEW GRANT)

Summary

Tesco has launched its new Fruit & Veg Grants programme which replaces Tesco Stronger Starts.

Funding is for Schools, PTAs, charities and other not-for-profit organisations to help children and young people access healthy, nutritious food.

Projects could include providing fruit or healthy snacks in school, introducing or supporting breakfast or holiday clubs, cooking or gardening initiatives to grow your very own fruit and veg or providing much-needed half time power for a sports club.

Key Criteria

- CIC's which are less than two years old are not eligible
- Match funding is not required

Amounts available: Grants are £500, £1,000 and £1,500

Application deadlines: Open (Applications are accepted on a rolling basis, with projects shortlisted every four months for the customer blue token vote).

Funding for projects which support broader community outcomes

Bagri Foundation – Arts and Culture Grants (NEW GRANT)

Summary

Funding is available for a range of non-profit arts organisations to support initiatives focusing on traditional or contemporary Asian culture, and featuring established or mid-career artists from Asia or its diasporas. The scheme supports a wide range of cultural activity including crafts, exhibitions, performance, literature events, and public commissions.

Key Criteria

Organisations requesting grants over £75,000 should contact the Foundation before applying

Where organisations are based does not matter, as long as the outcome is in the UK or Europe. If organisations are working in partnership with one or more UK or European organisations, they may apply collaboratively.

Projects must fulfil all the requirements below to be eligible:

- Be hosted by established organisations with a track record of delivering artistic projects
- Promote the sharing of traditional or contemporary Asian culture
- Include established or mid-career level artists from Asia or the diasporas
- Result in a tangible public outcome
- Align with the Bagri Foundation mission

Amounts available: Maximum £100,000 (Grants usually cover 10-30% of total project costs and average about £20,000).

Application deadlines: 5th October 2026 (For stage one applications).

East Midlands Freeport – Skills and Community Equity Fund (NEW GRANT)

Summary

Funding is available for community organisations and charities to deliver activities that strengthen skills and employability, raise aspirations, remove barriers to training and work.

Applications are particularly welcomed from projects supporting young people, underrepresented groups, people furthest from the labour market and communities facing disadvantage. Projects could include aspiration-raising activities, employability support, technical or transferable skills training, or practical help to address barriers such as transport, health, confidence or digital exclusion.

Initiatives should align with the Funds objectives:

- Promote East Midlands Freeport (EMF) opportunities among hard-to-reach groups and less advantaged communities
- Support access to existing skills training and funded schemes that address target-sector skills gaps, increase enrolment and target economic inactivity
- Raise aspirations, particularly among young people
- Support young people not in education, employment or training (NEETs) to access employment
- Provide transferable skills and behaviours needed to access EMF roles
- Address inequality by supporting underrepresented groups into the workforce

Two types of grants are available:

- Standard grants: for time-limited projects focused on areas such as training, upskilling, employability and raising aspirations.
- Strategic grants: supporting longer-term or potentially multi-year projects that contribute to the Freeport's skills and community objectives.

Key Criteria

- Projects must benefit people, communities or employers within Derbyshire, Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire. Please see the [Area of Benefit Map](#) where initiatives should take place.
- Organisations based outside the area may apply where they can clearly demonstrate that the funded activities and intended beneficiaries are located within the three counties.
- Partnership applications are welcome, but one organisation must act as the accountable lead

Amounts available:

- Standard Grants maximum is £50,000
- Strategic Grants may exceed £50,000

Application deadlines: 6th October 2026

Aviva Foundation – Financial Futures Fund

Summary

Funding is available to UK-registered charities and other non-for-profit organisations for projects that improve financial resilience in the UK, particularly for people experiencing inequality, financial hardship or exclusion.

The fund will support projects that:

- Build financial confidence and capability – helping people manage their money and plan ahead.
- Improve access to fair, affordable, and inclusive financial services – such as savings, protection, and pensions.
- Support people through financial shocks and hardship – including access to essentials and opportunities to build savings.
- Address systemic issues – such as debt, housing insecurity, and digital exclusion, which can undermine financial resilience.

There are also five funding priorities. Aviva is looking for organisations and initiatives that are:

- Transformational – aiming for long-term, sustainable change in financial resilience.
- Impact-driven – focussed on measuring and demonstrating the difference they make.
- Inclusive – supporting people and communities with low financial resilience, especially those facing inequality or discrimination.
- Community-rooted – working closely with communities and embedding diversity, equity, and inclusion in everything they do.
- Learning-focussed – committed to sharing insights and influencing wider change.

Funding can cover core operating costs and overheads as part of the overall grant request.

Key Criteria

- Applicants must have an annual income of at least £1 million
- Organisations with annual income of under £1million may be eligible to apply for support through Aviva's [Communities Fund](#)
- Organisations must have submitted at least one year's annual accounts to the Charity Commission or Companies House
- Grants are generally awarded for a three-year period

Amounts available: Minimum grant £100,000. No upper limit stated. Budget for 2026 is £3million.

Application deadlines: 7th October 2026. Shortlisted applicants will be invited to an interview.

HM Govt. - Common Ground Award (NEW GRANT)

Summary

The Common Ground Award is designed to recognise and reward best practice in promoting social cohesion. It will provide capital investment into voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) organisations in England that are delivering services that bring people from different backgrounds together to build community cohesion and resilience.

Funding will support the cost of physical facilities, spaces and equipment that allows people from different backgrounds to come together.

Organisations must work directly on one of the following core themes:

- Encouraging and enabling social mixing, promoting understanding and reducing divisions between different communities and people from different backgrounds
- Reducing prejudice, discrimination and hatred directed toward individuals and communities because of their background
- Resolving conflict and addressing tensions across and between communities

Key Criteria

- A wide range of community- based organisations can apply, but their annual income must be below £5 million
- Applicants must have building social connections across and between different communities and people from different backgrounds as a core focus of their work
- If your organisation is applying as part of a consortium, you are not eligible to make a separate individual application and visa versa
- Organisations can apply individually or as part of a consortium even if they have previously applied to the 2025 to 2026 Common Ground Award, regardless of the outcome of your application
- Grant funding should be spent by 31st March 2027

Amounts available:

- Single organisation can apply for between £20,000 and £50,000
- Consortiums can apply for between £100,000 and £250,000

Application deadlines: 12th October 2026 (Decisions in December 2026).

Henry Smith Foundation – Maternity Equity Fund

Summary

Funding is available for a range of charitable organisations including CIC's registered and working in the UK to deliver preventative maternity support during pregnancy and birth. It will help organisations improving access, experience and outcomes, and those that are open to learning, partnerships, and shared practice. This includes knowledge exchange with health professionals and other funded organisations.

The Fund aims to reduce unfair and avoidable maternity inequities by:

- Improving access, experience and outcomes during pregnancy and birth.
- Strengthening trusted community-led organisations delivering preventative, trauma-informed and culturally safe maternity support.
- Building and sharing learning about what works to improve maternity equity, influencing wider practice and systems over time.

Key Criteria

- Eligible organisations must have an annual income of between £20,000 and £1.5 million and proven experience of addressing maternity inequalities.
- To be eligible, projects must focus on any of the following groups including Black, Asian, Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, people living in deprived areas, and those experiencing complex or multiple disadvantages.
- Organisations should have proven experience of working with communities facing maternity inequities

Amounts available: Maximum £185,000 (over three years).

Application deadlines: 14th October 2026 (for expressions of interest).

Ofcom – Community Radio Fund (NEW GRANT)

Summary

Funding is available for UK community radio services. There are two funds available:

- The Equipment Stream: for studio, transmission and accessibility equipment to analogue community radio services
- The Sustainability Stream: for job roles or projects improving long-term sustainability of the radio station. For example, Fundraising, Station Management or Volunteer Management roles. Multi-year funding is available.

Key Criteria

- Equipment Stream is open to Analogue Community Radio services who have been on air for 10 or more years and must be on air at date of application.
- Sustainability Stream is open to Analogue Community Radio stations and C-DSP stations who are on air at the date of application.
- Organisations may apply to both funding streams in the same year
- There should be a minimum of fifteen months remaining on the Ofcom licence from the closing date for grant applications.
- Applications can only be submitted by, and grants awarded to, the entity which holds the licence

Amounts available:

- Equipment Stream maximum £2,000
- Sustainability Stream maximum £100,000

Application deadlines: 14th October 2026 (Decisions expected in January 2027).

National Grid – Community Matters Fund (NEW GRANT)

Summary

Funding is available for charitable organisations in the Midlands, Southwest England and South Wales working to tackle fuel poverty and improve energy affordability in their communities.

Applications should support one or more of the following themes:

- Distributing warm packs or energy efficiency measures for households, such as warm blankets, radiator keys, insulated curtains and draught excluders
- Visiting isolated households to help residents make their homes warmer and more energy efficient
- Running warm spaces in community buildings
- Improving the energy efficiency of community buildings used as warm spaces
- Providing advice on tariff switching, energy saving, Winter Fuel Payments and other fuel poverty support

Key Criteria

- Applicants must be a registered charity, non-profit company limited by guarantee or a constituted charitable organisation with no charity number
- Funding must be sent by 31st March 2027
- Recipients of a grant from the Community Matters Fund in 2026 are not eligible to apply
- Projects based around requests for food, clothing, or direct fuel top-ups are not eligible

Amounts available:

- Up to £5,000 for registered charities and non-profit companies limited by guarantee
- Up to £2,000 for constituted charitable organisations that do not have a charity number

Application deadlines: 16th October 2026

Stop Loan Sharks - Community Fund (NEW GRANT)

Summary

Funding is available to local residents, charities, community and voluntary groups, schools and statutory agencies for creative community projects that help raise awareness of the dangers of loan sharks and illegal lending and meet the following criteria:

- Contribute to raising awareness of the dangers of using loan sharks
- Prevent crime and disorder and publicises the Stop Loan Sharks message
- Promote the work of the Illegal Money Lending Team (IMLT) in communities
- Encourage reporting of loan sharks

Key Criteria

- Funded projects should be delivered by 1st September 2027
- If your project idea involves working with a school/schools, you must have agreement and engagement from the schools before submitting your bid. The same is true of partner agencies.

Amounts available: Maximum £5,000

Application deadlines: 16th October 2026 (Decisions by 31st October 2026).

National Archives – Research and Innovation Grants *

Summary

Funding is available for organisations with archivists and heritage professionals to conduct research, innovate and create transformative projects that will contribute to building a sustainable and innovative archives sector.

There is a focus on the three challenge areas of digital transformation, environmental sustainability and inclusive practice.

Key Criteria

- Public bodies, charities, not-for-profit organisations and commercial organisations can apply, but applications from individuals are not eligible
- Organisations must be based in England or Wales with collections held in the UK

Amounts available: Maximum £10,000

Application deadlines: 17th October 2026

Elephant Trust – Main Fund (NEW GRANT)

Summary

Funding is available for artists, galleries, and small organisations to deliver new works or exhibitions that might otherwise not happen due to a lack of funding.

Key Criteria

- Successful applicants should leave a minimum of two years before reapplying for help with a new project
- Projects with a total budget exceeding £30,000 will not be supported

Amounts available: Between £2,000 and £5,000

Application deadlines: 18th October 2026

EEM - Community Spaces Fund

Summary

Funding is available for a range of community buildings including village halls, sports clubs, scout/guiding huts and faith halls to make improvements to their buildings which benefit the wider community and help the organisation remain viable into the future.

The scheme can fund:

- Energy efficiency and green improvements
- Accessibility upgrades
- Building work that helps you serve your community better
- Equipment that keeps your venue sustainable long-term

Key Criteria

- Organisations/venues can be located in Leicester, Leicestershire, Rutland, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire, Derby & Derbyshire
- Organisations should own the building or have a long-term lease of at least 10 years and be responsible for the management of the building
- Funded activity to take place between 1st January 2027 and 31st December 2027
- This fund will not support activities but is looking to support the sustainability of community venues who provide a safe and warm spaces for residents

Amounts available: Maximum £5,000

Application deadlines: 19th October 2026 (Decisions by 23rd November 2026).

Wildlife Trust – Green Community Grants (NEW GRANT)

Summary

Funding is available to not-for-profit organisations in England, Scotland and Wales for projects which fit with one of the two funding themes:

- Contributing to nature recovery and responding to the climate emergency
- Improving nature-rich spaces and access to them

Whilst the organisational objects or purpose should fit one of these two themes, funding can also be used for a wider range of sustainable activities, including recycling, litter picking, beach cleans or sustainable transport.

Key Criteria

Applicants must have operated for at least 12 months

Priority will be given to organisations:

- Which have an annual income between £10,000 and £250,000.
- That work in communities located in the top 15% of the Index of Multiple Deprivation
- Whose main activities are focused on supporting marginalised groups. This could include, but is not limited to, disabled people, communities experiencing racial inequity, and LGBT+ people
- Whose objects or purposes within its governing document relate to habitat or species restoration/protection

Amounts available: Between £10,000 and £25,000

Application deadlines: 21st October 2026

Henry Smith Foundation – Domestic Abuse Counselling Fund (NEW GRANT)

Summary

Funding is available for a range of community-based specialist domestic abuse organisations to provide longer-term counselling for domestic abuse survivors. In terms of specialist organisations this means:

- Your organisation's primary purpose is to support people who are experiencing, or have experienced domestic abuse
- Your services are specifically designed to meet the needs of victim-survivors
- Support is delivered by specially trained staff with a deep understanding of domestic abuse

Proposed services should be offering one-to-one, person-centred, holistic and trauma-informed support of at least 12 sessions. Ideally sessions would be weekly and for one-hour.

Fifteen grants will be awarded, five of which will be for organisations providing longer-term counselling to children and/or young people.

Key Criteria

- Eligible organisations must have an annual income below £2 million
- Applicants must have at least three years' experience delivering counselling to victim-survivors
- Counsellors must be a member or student/trainee member of BACP, UKCP or equivalent

Amounts available: Maximum £250,000 (£50,000 per year for five years).

Application deadlines: 21st October 2026 (for expressions of interest)

Visa/Nationwide - Let's Celebrate Towns *

Summary

Funding is available to reward initiatives that are tackling challenges head-on and helping businesses, communities and high streets to thrive.

Towns can be entered in five categories:

- High Street Revival
- Backing Local Business
- Protecting Valued Places
- Connected Places
- Community Pride

The scheme will highlight leading examples of how communities are responding to local challenges supporting businesses, reimagining high streets, and creating places people value. Together, they show what it takes to build thriving local economies.

Key Criteria

- Applications will be accepted from MP's and local leaders, local authorities and town councils, community groups and organisations
- The population of the Town must be between 5,000 and 225,000

Amounts available: Maximum £20,000 (one award for each of the five categories).

Application deadlines: 25th October 2026

Armed Forces Covenant – Reveal and Respond Programme *

Summary

Funding is available for UK-registered charities, CICs and local authorities to improve mental health and wellbeing support for people from specific underrepresented Armed Forces communities.

The programme is particularly keen to hear from projects supporting specific cohorts within the following identified groups:

- Female personnel
- Neurodivergent personnel
- LGBTQ+ personnel
- Ethnic minority and non-UK personnel
- Service children with SEND and their parents
- Serving and ex-serving personnel (or their partners) with caring responsibilities
- Bereaved service families
- Early service leavers and those experiencing unexpected or abrupt transition

There are two funding strands:

- Strand 1 for two-year discovery and pilot projects that will help organisations understand barriers, test approaches and develop tailored support for underrepresented groups within the armed forces community.
- Strand 2 for projects lasting two to three years which build on approaches that have already been tested or developed and are ready to be scaled, embedded, replicated or strengthened.

Key Criteria

Organisations may submit more than one application, as long as each application is for a clearly different project and the projects do not overlap

Projects must contribute to the following two outcomes in a way that is proportionate to the funding strand you apply to:

1. Underrepresented groups in the armed forces community are more able to access mental health and wellbeing support, because the project has removed or responded to previously unmet need.
2. Learning and understanding of the barriers, needs and experiences of underrepresented groups within the armed forces community is increased, shared and applied to improve support, practice and collaboration.

- Strand 1 projects must clearly address Outcome 1
- Strand 2 projects must address both programme outcomes

Amounts available:

- Strand 1 grants of £20,000 to £40,000
- Strand 2 grants of £150,000 to £300,000

Application deadlines: 28th October 2026. Decisions by end of February 2027.

Church Urban Fund – Windrush Day Grant Scheme 2027 * (NEW GRANT)

Summary

Funding is available for a range of community-based organisations to deliver activities or events as part of the Windrush Day celebrations in 2027. The grant scheme will focus on bringing communities together, across different ages and ethnic backgrounds focussing on one of the following aims:

- Raise awareness of the historical facts and experiences of the Windrush story. This includes the pioneers who arrived on the MV Empire Windrush in 1948, and those who came on vessels and aircraft in the decades after WW2
- Foster pride and recognition of the historic and ongoing contributions made by the Windrush generation and their descendants to UK society. To proactively support and encourage people from different backgrounds to embrace, celebrate and commemorate this aspect of our shared history
- Encourage and inspire the descendants of the Windrush Generation to become young leaders, pursue their aspirations and contribute to the shared values of UK society.

Key Criteria

- Proposals should be designed with or by representatives of the Windrush community and have a positive social impact, whilst also demonstrating a genuine commitment to encouraging engagement and participation from people of diverse backgrounds, including those beyond Windrush communities
- Where proposals are led by local authorities, applicants must provide clear evidence that the proposal has been developed in partnership with the Windrush Generation and/or their descendants, and relevant local community organisations have been included in the planning and execution of the project.
- Applicants should hold their lead event or activity between Saturday 19th and Sunday 27th June 2027, but all activity should take place between 8th June and 31st July 2027

Amounts available: Between £5,000 and £25,000

Application deadlines: 29th October 2026

National Garden Scheme – Community Garden Grants (NEW GRANT)

Summary

Funding is available for a range of community-based organisations to create or complete a garden or similar project (such as an allotment) that has a horticultural focus for the benefit of the local community or charitable group.

Projects should aim to bring a community together by creating or developing a space that people can share, by the acquisition and sharing of gardening knowledge and skills, and by inspiring a love of gardening.

Key Criteria

- Applicants must be a fully set up community group, registered charity or Community Interest Company (CIC) with a functioning non-personal bank account.
- Local authorities (including parish councils) are not eligible to apply
- Applications from groups that were successful in securing a National Garden Scheme Community Garden Grant in the prior year are not eligible
- Only the first 300 eligible submissions will be considered for a grant

Amounts available: Between £1,500 and £5,000

Application deadlines: 30th October 2026 (Decisions in April 2027).

Tree Council – Trees Outside Woodland Fund *

Summary

Funding is available for local authorities and registered charities to establish trees outside woodland to create or enhance green spaces using a range of tree sizes, species and planting types.

The funding is intended for projects which are planned for the 2026/27 planting season.

Key Criteria

- Registered charities planning to deliver the project in England must have an annual income or turnover of more than £100,000.
- Projects must comply with biosecure tree sourcing requirements
- Projects must be completed, and all reporting submitted, by 5th March 2027
- Organisations should ensure that public liability insurance is in place for every planting event
- Organisations should obtain written landowner permission for each planting site before planting takes place

Amounts available: Between £10,000 and £40,000

Application deadlines: The fund will remain open until 31st October 2026, or until all funding has been allocated. Applications will be reviewed in the order they are received; early applications are strongly encouraged.

Consortium – LGBT+ Get Active Fund (NEW GRANT)

Summary

Funding is available for UK-based, LGBT+ led non-profit groups and organisations to support community-based sport and physical activity.

Physical activities is any activity that intentionally and explicitly facilitates increased physical movement and wellbeing. Examples include hiking, skateboarding, football, ballroom and vogue, gardening, frisbee, dance, and circus skills.

Priority will be given to under-resourced grassroots organisations supporting LGBT+ communities facing additional barriers to participation.

Funds can be used for project and activity costs, subsidising training or activity costs, core or running costs, collaborative work between organisations and coaching qualifications.

Key Criteria

Applicants must:

- Be registered or based in the UK and be led by and for LGBT+ people.
- Be an LGBT+ sports or physical activity organisation that has run recent, or runs existing project(s) focused on sports or physical activities

OR

- A non-sporting LGBT+ organisation that runs existing project(s) focused on sport or physical activities
- Have been operating for at least six months at the time of applying

Amounts available: Between £5,000 and £25,000 per year for up to two years.

Application deadlines: 4th November 2026 (Decisions in February 2027).

Armed Forces Covenant – Family Focus Programme * (NEW GRANT)

Summary

Funding is available to UK-registered charities, CICs, Local Authorities and NHS organisations for projects supporting armed forces families with care needs to access support, improve wellbeing and resilience, and prepare for the future, either during service or transition and civilian life.

Projects should last two to three years.

All projects must meet at least one of the following outcomes:

- Armed forces families with care needs report increased knowledge of, and confidence in accessing, information, advice, guidance and services relevant to their circumstances.
- Armed forces families with care needs report reduced loneliness and isolation, improved emotional wellbeing and increased resilience.
- Armed forces family members in a caregiving role develop skills, knowledge or confidence that improves their readiness to pursue volunteering, training or employment when the time is right for them.

Key Criteria

- Project planning should involve people with lived experience
- Charities and CIC's should have been registered for at least three years
- Charities and CICs can apply even if they don't have strong recent experience of supporting armed forces communities. But they must deliver the project with one or more organisations that do have this experience
- For this programme, substantial recent experience of supporting armed forces communities means your organisation either specifically exists to support veterans, serving personnel or armed forces families, or can demonstrate that supporting these groups forms a significant and regular part of your current work
- Local authorities and NHS bodies are expected to work in partnership with other relevant organisations and must demonstrate that all proposed activities are additional to their statutory responsibilities

Amounts available: Between £100,000 and £200,000

Application deadlines: 4th November 2026 (Decisions February 2027)

OPCC – Community Action Fund – Neighbourhood Crime (NEW GRANT)

Summary

The OPCC's 5th funding round is designed to support local communities with tackling neighbourhood crime, reducing anti-social behaviour and helping residents feel safer in the places where they live, work and visit.

Projects can be wide ranging could include:

- Crime Prevention Workshops – Sessions for residents, schools or community groups on personal safety, home security, fraud awareness and crime prevention.
- Youth Diversion Activities – Programmes that provide positive activities, mentoring and skills development opportunities for young people who may be at risk of involvement in anti-social behaviour or crime.
- Community Safety Events – Local events that raise awareness of crime prevention, encourage community engagement and build stronger neighbourhood networks.
- Anti-Social Behaviour Awareness Campaigns – Projects that educate communities about the impact of anti-social behaviour and promote positive community values.
- Environmental Improvements – Community-led initiatives that improve public spaces, reduce opportunities for crime, and increase feelings of safety, such as signage, community clean-ups, or planting projects.
- Community Cohesion Projects – Activities that bring people together, reduce isolation, and help foster a stronger sense of belonging and shared responsibility for community safety.
- Heritage Crime Prevention Projects – Initiatives that help safeguard local heritage assets from criminal damage, theft, vandalism, anti-social behaviour and arson. Funding could support security improvements such as CCTV, lighting, alarms, locks and other protective measures at locations including churches, historic buildings, war memorials, heritage railways and community heritage sites.

Key Criteria

- A wide range of community organisations can apply including charities, schools, constituted community groups and Parish Councils
- Organisations may submit more than one application
- Organisations must have fewer than 30 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff. Volunteers and school staff are not counted in this total

Amounts available: Maximum £10,000

Application deadlines: 8th November 2026

Better Community Business Network Grant (NEW GRANT)

Summary

Funding is available to a range of community-based organisations for initiatives that have a positive impact on their local community.

Key Criteria

- To be eligible, all organisations and community interest groups must be registered with a recognised governing body (such as the Charity Commission or Companies House) for a minimum of 18 months
- Projects must address a community issue or support a local community initiative; and provide benefits to the local community.
- Core/ Running costs and expenses (on-going venue hire, staff cost and salary, bills, printing) are not eligible

Amounts available: Maximum £3,000

Application deadlines: 9th November 2026 (There are three rounds per year).

Leeds Building Society Foundation – Small Grant (NEW GRANT)

Summary

Funding is available for UK registered charities to support people experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity. The fund can be used for core costs, project costs, or capital expenses.

Activities could include support for financial hardship, access to housing, and tenancy sustainment.

Applications must meet one or more of the following funding priorities:

- Financial stress
- Security and refuge
- Quality and suitability of housing

Applications can also apply under the theme 'Health and wellbeing support for those experiencing homelessness' if it's part of wraparound support and the application also meets at least one of the other themes.

Key Criteria

Charities must have an annual income of under £500,000

Amounts available: Maximum £2,500

Application deadlines: 11th November 2026 (Decisions 2nd December 2026). There are four rounds per year.

Great British Energy – Community Fund (NEW GRANT)

Summary

Funding is available for community organisations to develop and build community-owned clean energy projects.

Three funds are available:

- Feasibility grants - to test whether your project idea is viable before committing significant time or money.
- Development grants - to turn a viable idea into an investment-ready project.
- Capital grants - to help a construction-ready project bridge remaining funding gaps

Key Criteria

- Eligible organisations include community benefit societies, community interest companies, co-operative societies, development trusts, registered charities and Town or Parish Councils.
- Project must be designed to be at least 50% community owned when operational
- Applicants must demonstrate evidence of support from the local community, including how local people, organisations or stakeholders have been engaged in the development of the project
- All grant funding must be claimed by 31st March 2028

Amounts available:

- Feasibility grants of up to £40,000
- Development grants of up to £100,000
- Capital grants of up to £3 million (or 50% of total project value)

Application deadlines: 12th November 2026

School for Social Entrepreneurs – DPS Social Commitment (NEW GRANT)

Summary

Funding is available for charities and social enterprises tackling homelessness and housing insecurity in England and Wales. There are two schemes:

- The Activate Programme: aimed at earlier-stage organisations. Offers grants alongside business development support, coaching and peer learning over a nine-month period.
- The Scale Programme: for more established organisations that are ready to grow. Offers grants alongside business development support, coaching and peer learning over a nine-month period.

Key Criteria

- The Activate Programme is generally for organisations with an income below £100,000.
- The Scale Programme is generally for organisations with an income of over £100,000
- Both programmes are for organisations which are based in and have a majority of beneficiaries in England or Wales and which either helps people access or sustain a home – some or all of which should be in the private rented sector or reduces homelessness and rough sleeping.

Amounts available:

- The Activate Programme up to £7,000
- The Scale Programme up to £10,000

Application deadlines: 16th November 2026

Wise Music Foundation (NEW GRANT)

Summary

Funding is available to small UK charities supporting vulnerable people facing hardship, distress, illness, or poverty.

Priority is given to projects that help:

- Children
- The homeless
- The elderly
- People with disabilities

Key Criteria

- Charities with an annual turnover of up to £500,000 are eligible
- Due to the volume of applications, the Foundation is unable to advise in all cases when an application has been unsuccessful. If you do not hear from it within three months of an application, please assume that your application has not been successful on that occasion.

Amounts available: Between £500 and £5,000

Application deadlines: 30th November 2026 (Decisions in December 2026). There are four rounds per year.

UK Research and Innovation - Gambling Harms Research Grant (NEW GRANT)

Summary

This funding opportunity aims to deliver high-quality research projects and build capacity in the research ecosystem. It welcomes applications addressing any question or challenge that deepens understanding or supports solutions for the prevention and treatment of gambling-related harms.

Key Criteria

- Project leads must be based at a UK research institution eligible for [UK Research and Innovation \(UKRI\) funding](#).
- Applications must be team based and must bring together diverse people, expertise, experiences, places and wider stakeholders. This includes people with lived and learned experience from gambling and gambling related harms.
- By lived experience, the funder is referring to people with direct experience of gambling related harms.
- The full economic cost (FEC) of your project can be up to £2 million, for up to three years.

Amounts available: Maximum £2 million (up to 80% of the cost)

Application deadlines: 8th December 2026

International Tree Foundation – Community Tree Planting Grants

Summary

Funding is available to a range of community-based organisations including schools, community groups and parish councils for tree planting schemes. Projects should:

- Create and conserve indigenous trees and woodlands, forests, habitats and associated biodiversity
- Foster community engagement in tree planting to promote reforestation and to increase awareness of the importance of trees and forests to environmental and human wellbeing
- Encourage social cohesion and inclusion
- Be planting between 100 and 10,000 trees

Key Criteria

Projects must:

- Take place on public or publicly accessible land. This can include private land that is being used for a social purpose or private land with permissive access/rights of way
- Have signed permission from the owner or manager of the land indicating that the project meets all legal requirements
- Plant indigenous tree species. This may include traditional fruit trees and 'honorary natives' where appropriate
- Engage community members in tree planting and enjoying the benefits of woodlands
- Have clear plans for maintenance and sustainability

Amounts available: Maximum price equivalent to £2.15/tree (inclusive of tree protection and mulch). In addition, these projects also receive two maintenance grants equivalent to £0.10/tree, both in the first and second summers after planting.

Application deadlines: The fund will remain open until 11th December 2026. However, the first round of proposal assessments will take place on 1st October 2026. After this, grants will be issued on a first come first served basis, dependant on remaining funds.

Skipton Building Society Charitable Foundation

Summary

Funding is available for registered charities to address housing needs and assist with the financial wellbeing of people who are disadvantaged or facing deprivation.

Funding can cover core costs such as salaries and utilities, as well as project expenses like equipment and materials

Priority is given to charities operating in the top 50% of the UK Index of Multiple Deprivation.

Key Criteria

- Applicants must be registered charities established for at least three years with a minimum of three trustees
- Following a successful application, a charity must wait for a minimum of three years before reapplying. If a charity has been unsuccessful, a charity must wait one year before reapplying.

Amounts available: Maximum £5,000

Application deadlines: Opened on 1st September 2026. The scheme will close as soon as 75 applications are received. Decisions are made in December 2026.

Woodland Trust – Free Trees for Schools and Community Groups (NEW GRANT)

Summary

Schools, clubs and community groups across the UK can now apply for free tree packs from the Woodland Trust to encourage nature recovery and community wellbeing.

The scheme provides different species packs of 15, 30, 105 or 420 saplings which are then available for delivery in March 2027. Each sapling is 20-60 cm tall. Please note free tree packs don't include protection.

Key Criteria

- Eligible applicants include schools, sports clubs, faith groups, Scouts and Guides, local councils and residents' associations
- Applicants must secure landowner permission and provide a six-digit grid reference of the planting site
- Organisations can request up to four packs as long as the total does not exceed 420 trees

Amounts available: Packs of trees are provided free of charge.

Application deadlines: Open. The scheme is expected to close in January 2027.

Harborough District Council – Community Grant Schemes (NEW GRANT)

Summary

Funding is available to a range of community-based organisations for local projects and initiatives across the district. Both grants support a range of capital and revenue projects and are administered through the same application and assessment process, enabling the two sources of funding to work together where appropriate.

The two grant funds are:

- Ward Member Community Grant - Each ward member has an allocation of £35,000 to support projects that benefit residents and communities in their ward.
- Rural Grant - provides additional funding for smaller villages and rural communities

Key Criteria

- Organisations wishing to apply for either grant scheme should first discuss their project with their [ward member](#), who will decide which project or projects they wish to support
- The Rural Grant is available only to communities in [eligible parishes](#)
- You do not need to decide which grant your project should be funded from. Ward councillors, supported by officers, will identify the most appropriate funding route to ensure the available funding is used effectively across the district

Amounts available:

- Ward Member Community Grant minimum £500
- Rural Grant between £500 and £20,000

Application deadlines: Open.

VAL – VALidate Training Grants (NEW GRANT)

Summary

The fund aims to support small VCSE organisations across Leicester and Leicestershire to access accredited training that will strengthen their skills, knowledge and capacity and provide validation to the delivery of their projects, services and activities.

Key Criteria

Organisations must:

- Be a charity or community group operating in Leicester and or Leicestershire
- Have an annual income of less than £100,000
- Be able to demonstrate how the training will benefit the organisation and the communities that it supports
- Qualifications requiring ongoing or substantial funding are not eligible
- Training courses already completed are not eligible

Amounts available: Maximum £200 (Contribution of £100 per place on a training course).

Application deadlines: Open

Support available for Voluntary, Community & Social Enterprise Sector organisations in Leicestershire

Voluntary Action Leicestershire



Leicestershire County Council has a contract with Voluntary Action LeicesterShire (VAL) to provide support to voluntary and community sector organisations in Leicestershire, including help with identifying and securing funding.

If you are a VCSE sector organisation who is seeking to apply for funding, or bid for contracts, please contact VAL's Sector Support Team for assistance, advice, and guidance. VAL can provide assistance with searching for funding opportunities, checking the relevance of the fund to your funding aspirations, and a read and review of your bid.

You can also [sign up](#) for further e-bulletins from VAL, including [news](#), [events](#), [training](#), [funding opportunities](#) and updates from the Government and Charity Commission. There are currently two newsletters which you can select to receive by ticking the appropriate box. At present, funding and commissioning items are included in the Voluntary Sector Support newsletter.

Please check the [Upcoming Events](#) page for the latest information on training opportunities.

Contact Details:

Tel: (0116) 257 5050

Email: helpline@valonline.org.uk

CASE – Support for Social Enterprises in Leicestershire



Co-operative and Social Enterprise Development Agency (CASE) is a social enterprise and co-operative which provides advice, guidance, and support to existing and emerging co-operatives, social enterprises and community enterprises in Leicester and Leicestershire. CASE supports co-operatives and social enterprises to develop and grow, through the promotion of co-operative ways of working.

Leicestershire County Council has a contract with CASE to provide support to people currently running (or thinking of setting up) social enterprises in Leicestershire.

Contact Details:

Tel: (0116) 222 5010

Email: enquiries@case.coop

Leicestershire & Rutland Community Foundation



The Leicestershire & Rutland Community Foundation is a charity which helps local individuals and companies to give money, in a tax efficient way, directly to local needs. It does this by helping set up new local family and company charitable funds and then supports those donors to give grants to local charitable groups of their choice through the Making Local Life Better Fund (previously the Donor Matching Scheme).

The Community Foundation also administers local and national grant schemes on behalf of those organisations. These vary throughout the year, please check the website for the funds currently available.

Contact Details:

Tel: (0116) 262 4916

Email: grants@llrcommunityfoundation.org.uk

Commissioning Opportunities



VCSE organisations are encouraged to explore opportunities to receive income through delivering contracts for services commissioned by the public sector. You can register to receive details of commissioning opportunities through the following websites:

[Source East Midlands](#)

[Due North](#)

[Gov UK Contract Finder](#)

Easy Fundraising



This is a leading fundraising platform that gives organisations access to an unlimited fundraising source, that helps you to raise FREE cashback donations through online shopping. Register your group/organisation as a good cause with easyfundraising to receive free cashback donations when anyone connected to that organisation shops online with over 8000 retailers including Argos, Amazon, Just eat and Booking.com. It doesn't cost the shopper a penny more so it's an easy way for your community to support your organisation just by shopping online as they usually would.

Leicestershire Communities Grants and Funding Webpage



The Leicestershire Communities website contains a range of useful information to help local people to actively participate in their communities, including information for people involved in community groups, charities and social enterprises. This section of the website provides a range of support, information and resources related to Grants and Funding, including Monthly Funding Bulletins, information from a range of funders, along with details of support provided to voluntary and community sector groups, charities and social enterprises, by other relevant organisations.