

## **Local Authority Partnership Programme**

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

**Q) Can local charities apply?**

VCSE organisations and other delivery partners cannot apply directly. The Expression of Interest (EOI) applications are only open to local authorities across the UK.

Where a VCSE wishes to participate in the programme, they should work with their local authority to submit an EOI by Monday 12th October 2026 at 5:00pm .

**Q) Does the local authority need to also invest funding?**

Yes, local authorities submitting an EOI will be required to invest funding into the partnership. As such, all applicants will be asked to indicate the amount of local funding they propose to contribute alongside Greater Change's match funding.

**Q) When will we know how much match funding we have been awarded?**

The final level of Greater Change match funding will be confirmed at the award stage in November 2026.

**Q) How will the level of Greater Change match funding be determined?**

Greater Change's contribution is expected to make up between 20% to 50% of overall programme funding, depending on the programme proposed. The final level of Greater Change funding will be confirmed at award stage, following assessment of the EOI and progression to interview stage.

**Q) Is there a minimum or maximum funding request?**

Across our current partnerships in 2026/27, local authority investment has ranged from £50,000 to £500,000 and these levels of investment have tended to produce and deliver the most impactful and transformative programmes.

EOIs submitted looking to invest between £80,000 to £250,000 will be favoured in assessment. But we understand budgets and local needs vary significantly between authorities, so we welcome proposals at a range of investment levels. The strength of your case matters more than hitting a specific figure.

**Q) Can we apply for multi-year funding?**

Yes, we welcome applications for multi-year funding. Each funded programme runs on an annual basis, and partnerships, including the level of match funding, would be reviewed at the end of each year, with continuation into the next year agreed jointly by the local authority and Greater Change based on that review.

**Q) How is Greater Change's match funding raised?**

Greater Change's match funding is secured through fundraising, supported by a strong network of Major Donors, Trusts and Foundations, Corporate partners and individual supporters who share our ambition to make personalised budgets available to everyone experiencing or at risk of homelessness across the UK.

**Q) What funding can local authorities invest into a programme with Greater Change?**

Greater Change is currently delivering personalised budget programmes across 35 local authority areas, with many partners investing through existing homelessness, prevention and related service budgets, including the Homelessness Prevention Grant, and Crisis and Resilience Fund (available since April 2026).

Applicants should set out the proposed source, value and approval status of their local contribution as part of the EOI.

**Q) Can personalised budgets be used for crisis support?**

No, personalised budgets should not be used as a general crisis response fund, fund accommodation where the local authority has a duty to accommodate, fund statutory services or team budgets, or emergency food parcels or vouchers. Funding should be used for flexible, one-off support, personalised to and decided alongside each client, which helps remove a specific barrier to preventing homelessness, securing or sustaining accommodation, or moving towards greater housing stability.

**Q) Can the same client be referred for a personalised budget more than once?**

While we would encourage a single, larger transformative grant that addresses someone's most significant barriers, we recognise that circumstances change and people often need support at different points in their journey. Multiple referrals for the same client are permitted for example, an initial grant might provide housing stability, with a later grant helping the client move into education, training or employment, or supporting their integration into the local community.

**Q: How does a personalised budget reach the client?**

Personalised budgets are not transferred directly to the client. Once a referral has been approved by Greater Change, funds are made available to the referring team, who spend on the client's behalf using a suitable payment mechanism, typically a purchasing card. In some cases, Greater Change will make a third-party payment directly, for example paying a landlord, supplier or service provider on the client's behalf. This means the client never needs to manage funds or navigate a separate application or reimbursement process themselves; the referring team or Greater Change handles the transaction directly, keeping the process fast, flexible and low barrier at the point of need.

**Q) What payment mechanisms need to be in place to deliver personalised budgets?**

Purchasing cards are important because personalised budgets are designed to be flexible and responsive to individual client needs. Frontline staff need to be able to make agreed purchases quickly, without lengthy approval chains or reliance on third-party payment processes that could delay support or restrict what the budget can be used for.

**Q) What if our local council does not permit purchasing cards?**

We recognise that some local authorities have restricted or have removed access to purchasing cards due to internal finance or governance requirements. Although Greater Change is able to make third party payments, a workable payment mechanism is essential to the effective delivery of personalised budgets, as spending needs to happen quickly and flexibly in response to individual need.

Where a council team does not have access to purchasing cards, we would encourage applicants to consider a delivery model involving a VCSE partner(s) with an appropriate payment mechanism already in place, ensuring personalised budget spending remains timely, flexible and responsive.

Where purchasing cards are available, access should not be limited to management level alone. Frontline staff making spending decisions with clients require practical access to funds, and a clear process should be in place to replenish cards regularly, ensuring a sufficient working balance is maintained to meet personalised budget spending as it arises.

**Q) What could delay the process?**

The main cause of delay is likely to be the review and signing of the Service Level Agreement or Grant Agreement, particularly where local authority legal, procurement or governance teams need to review and approve the documentation.

Other delays can arise where partnership arrangements are not yet formalised or where finance processes, including the source and approval of local match funding, have not been confirmed.

We therefore encourage applicants to involve relevant legal, finance, procurement and delivery colleagues as early as possible to help avoid delays to contracting and mobilisation.

**Q) How will we access the personalised budgets?**

Following award, the agreed local authority contribution will need to be transferred to Greater Change to manage together with Greater Change's match funding as a single programme pot.

Greater Change will then administer the combined funding for personalised budgets throughout the programme.

**Q) Does our match funding need to be fully approved when we submit our EOI?**

Applicants should provide as much certainty as possible about their proposed contribution, including the amount, proposed funding source and current approval status.

Where final approval has not yet been secured, applicants should set out the route and expected timescale for confirmation.

The final funding arrangement will be confirmed at the award stage.

**Q) How long should referring staff be working with someone?**

Referring staff should normally be able to case manage and support the individual for a minimum of 3 - 6 months, allowing sufficient time to understand their circumstances and develop a trusting relationship in order to agree an appropriate personalised budget and follow up on impact outcomes. We understand that caseworking models vary across organisations and teams, but caseworkers should have regular contact with their clients - either in person or over the phone, and clients should be able to contact their caseworkers directly.

**Q) What if we are not sure which teams will refer?**

If you are hoping to identify internal council teams as the referring teams, we strongly encourage you to share your thinking and ideas regarding who they might be in the EOI and the engagement which you have done already to decide on the most appropriate teams. There is lots of information in the prospectus to help you identify relevant teams. The strongest applications will demonstrate engagement from internal operational leads at this stage. If successful, we will ask for representative(s) from internal referring teams are available to attend the interview.

**Q) How much information do you need regarding potential voluntary sector partners for the application?**

We strongly encourage local authorities to engage with potential voluntary sector partners and discuss their suitability for the partnership as early as possible. The strongest applications may demonstrate co-production with the voluntary sector partners, evidence that they have helped to shape the referral, a good indication of shared understanding of the programme, how it is delivered and their capacity to participate. We understand that you may not have had a chance to confirm all aspects of programme design with your VCSE partners at EOI stage, however this will be discussed in detail at interview for shortlisted applicants. If you are shortlisted at this stage, you may be asked to bring relevant staff from voluntary sector partners to the interview.

**Q) Can we contact Greater Change before submitting?**

Yes. Applicants are encouraged to review the programme guidance in full and attend the Q&A webinar on Thursday 17th September, 1:30pm - 2:30pm. You can register [here](#)

We have also set up a dedicated inbox for enquiries about this partnership, the email address is [lapartnerships@greaterchange.co.uk](mailto:lapartnerships@greaterchange.co.uk). We encourage applicants to reach out with any questions or to arrange an informal chat ahead of completing the EOI.

**Q) What happens if our application is not successful?**

All applicants will be notified of the outcome of their EOI. Where an application is not shortlisted, we will offer feedback via a call (preferred) or email. Our goal is to keep working with you and support you to be ready to deliver a personalised budget programme with Greater Change in the near future.