Corporate Voluntary and Community Sector Grants 2020-2022

Guidance Notes for the Redbridge Grant Fund

The closing date for receipt of applications is Friday, 21 February 2020 at 5pm
(Applications received after this date will not be considered)
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1. Council Priorities and Ambitions

The new Voluntary and Sector Grants Programme is framed around the Borough Partnership Plan, which was published in 2018 in partnership with Redbridge Council for Voluntary Services, the Metropolitan Police, Redbridge Clinical Commissioning Group and New City College.

The Plan was developed in consultation with residents to set the priorities for the borough in the future and will inform how the Council will deliver its services. By aligning the grants to the Borough Plan we are ensuring that resident priorities are met.

The three priorities are:
1. Regenerate the borough to benefit our residents and integrate new communities
2. Be a great place to live as a family
3. Tackle the root causes of social challenges

2. Corporate Voluntary Sector Grants Funding Framework for the Borough - 2020 to 2022

The new Corporate Voluntary and Community Sector Grants Programme will run from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2022. In designing how the funding is distributed there is a clear need for different approaches and sizes in the money awarded. To reflect this, four strands of funding will be offered:

Social Action Fund
A small grants pot will provide small one-off funding of up to £2,000 to help start new sustainable projects or organisations. The funding will be used to promote community cohesion at a grassroots level. It is expected that bidders will demonstrate need and how their project reaches different community groups.

Redbridge Grant Fund
Funding will be provided of up to £20,000 per year for two years to organisations that provide voices for the lesser heard communities of Redbridge. This will provide the organisation with some stability for their future funding, rather than be a single grant award, however the organisation’s sustainability should be taken in to account.

Commissioned Via Grants
Taking into account the Borough Plan priorities, the needs identified in Voluntary Sector engagement and the needs of the Council, direct service delivery is required within the Voluntary and Community Sector. The intelligence that can be gathered from a responsive voluntary and community sector which can build close relationships with a wide breadth of our communities is essential to inform service delivery. Three service strands will be commissioned for two years:
1. Infrastructure support for Voluntary and Community Sector, placing an emphasis on funding generation / support for organisation and building a profile within the business community.
2. Enhancing the information, advice and guidance offer in the borough to help ensure that residents can access the support that they need from the right place first time, and inform the Council of changing needs in the communities.
3. Supporting those with complex needs to have a voice in Redbridge and to live fulfilling and independent lives.

**Community Development**

Engagement activities with the Voluntary and Community Sector have emphasised the need for the Council to maintain and improve the relationship with the sector. This pot of funding will be utilised to continue to hold events, explore additional funding revenues for the sector such as the development of a local lottery and promotion of opportunities within the sector. In addition it will support the continuation of the Public and Voluntary Sector Partnership.

**Amount of Funding Available**

The total budget for the 2020 to 2022 Grants Programme is £370k per annum broken down as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grant Strand</th>
<th>£m</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social Action</td>
<td>0.020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redbridge Grants</td>
<td>0.080</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commissioned via Grant</td>
<td>0.240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Development</td>
<td>0.030</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.370</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Redbridge Grants Fund and Commissioned Via Grants Fund will be open for application between December 2019 and February 2022, with funding being awarded to successful bidders for the period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2022.

The Social Action Fund will be open for bids periodically throughout the period April 2020 to March 2022, with bidding round ceasing once all funding available had been exhausted. Further information about this fund and the format of bidding rounds will be published on the Council’s website in spring 2020.

The Community Development fund will be used throughout the two years of the Grants Programme to support the Public and Voluntary Sector Partnership, and explore opportunities to support and develop the VCS sector as outlined above. The Council will maintain ongoing discussions with the sector as to how this money can be best spent.
3. The Application Process

The London Borough of Redbridge values the contribution made by a strong and diverse voluntary and community sector to improve the quality of life of residents of the Borough. In its Strategic Delivery Plan published in 2018 the Council recognised that:

“One of the best ways to address the root causes of social problems is to support the voluntary and community sector.”

In support of this, the Council has established a new Voluntary and Community Sector Grants programme for the period 2020 to 2022. These Guidance Notes are for organisations interested in applying for funding from the Redbridge Grant Fund only.

Application Forms
Please download the relevant application form from https://www.redbridge.gov.uk/about-the-council/voluntary-sector-grants/

Send the completed form with all required supporting documentation by email to: spgrantmonitoring@redbridge.gov.uk Please include the name of your organisation and which fund strand you are applying for in the email subject heading.

If you are unable to download the application form or require help with completion, please contact:
Policy Equalities & Communities Team on 020 8708 6230 or by email: spgrantmonitoring@redbridge.gov.uk
Redbridge Council for Voluntary Service on 020 8553 1004 or by email: info@redbridgecvs.net

Acknowledgement of Your Application
Applicants will receive an auto-reply email acknowledging receipt of their electronically submitted applications.

Funding Surgeries
Information sessions will be held in early 2020 for voluntary organisations that have questions about the grants process. Officers will be available at the sessions to offer advice and answer questions about the application process.

Details of the dates, times and venues of these surgeries will be published in early January online at https://www.redbridge.gov.uk/about-the-council/voluntary-sector-grants/

If you would like the details of the surgeries to be emailed to you once they are confirmed, please register your interest by emailing spgrantmonitoring@redbridge.gov.uk

Closing Date
Organisations must email completed application forms together with all supporting information/documents by:

**Friday, 21 February 2020 at 5pm**
(Applications received after this date will not be processed)
4. Application Eligibility and Assessment Criteria

Organisations Applying for Funding Must

- Be a Registered Charity with one of the following entities:
  - Company Limited by Guarantee
  - Unincorporated Association
  - Trust
  - Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)
  - The Council will also consider applications from groups that can demonstrate that they are in the process of achieving charitable status

- Have a structured Management Committee/Board of Trustees comprising of 3 or more unrelated individuals that are authorised to enter into an agreement on behalf of the organisation
- Must have insurance cover appropriate to the nature of the organisation’s activities, for example: Public Liability and Employers’ Liability.
- Demonstrate that the grant requested is for the delivery of services that meet the charitable aims and objectives of the organisation.
- The organisation is working within an appropriate quality assurance system.
- A governing document specifying Redbridge as an area of benefit.

Financial Requirement Criteria

The organisation must either:

i) Provide **signed copies of the organisation’s financial accounts** in either SORP format or under the UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice showing the last three years’ accounts, for example: 2016/17, 2017/18 and 2018/19.

ii) **Or in exceptional circumstances where there is a need to address a gap in existing provision, or develop the capacity of an organisation:**

   a) If your organisation has been running for over one year but less than three, **you must attach a full set of accounts** showing a breakdown of annual income, expenditure and carry forward balance. If you are a new organisation (less than 12 months old), then **you must attach a recent bank statement plus an annual budget/cash flow forecast showing estimated income and expenditure or any other relevant documents** that can substantiate the organisation’s financial position signed by your Treasurer.

   b) Have a bank account in the **name of the organisation** (not a personal account) requiring at least two signatures.
Policies Required

- The organisation must have in place Safeguarding Policies and Procedures for adults and/or children (whichever is applicable), if your organisation works with children or young people (under 18) or vulnerable adults, or the activity you are applying for will involve working with them. **Staff and volunteers are required to receive a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check where appropriate.**

- The organisation must also have in place other relevant policies and procedures including: equal opportunities, health and safety and financial management.

- A clear reserves policy. It is for each voluntary organisation to decide the level of reserves they need. However, in circumstances where the level of reserves is considered too high, the amount of funding the council may be able to offer to the group may be adversely affected. In exceptional circumstances where an organisation holds high levels of reserves for a specific purpose, evidence must be supplied in the supporting information to explain this. It may be a condition of the grant that you work towards improving your reserves.

Assessment and Scoring

We will assess your application using a scoring criterion and where relevant, we will use information from the Charities Commission, Companies House or other regulators’ website to assist in the process. The Council’s Legal and Finance Services will also be involved in the process.

How much can you apply for?

The maximum grant amount that can be applied for is £20,000 per annum. No more than 50% of the grant applied for can relate to core costs. A minimum of 50% the grant applied for must be either maintain existing or fund new service/project delivery. Securing match funding is not an essential requirement, but any match funding secured will be taken into consideration when bids are scored.

How long will the funding be for?

The award of the Redbridge Grant Fund will be for 2 years.

What we will not fund

Grants will not be awarded for the following purposes:

- The cost of providing services already funded/commissioned by the Council or another statutory body unless applicants can demonstrate the need for additional services or added value.
- The associated management and overhead costs that relate to the services provided on contract with a public body.
- Retrospective costs of the organisation.
- Religious (e.g. single faith promotion), party political activities or non-community based activities.
Freedom of Information and Declaration
Any information given to the London Borough of Redbridge in support of a grant application may be discussed with other organisations for the purpose of making proper assessment of the application.

Under the conditions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Council may be directed by regulatory authorities to disclose information provided in the application if they consider it to be in the overriding public interest to do so, or they do not accept the exemption we claim. If this should happen the organisation may be advised of the information to be disclosed in advance.

Organisations should also agree in advance with the Council any information supplied that may be considered confidential. The Council will not normally accept information in confidence unless it is essential for the organisations work.

Data Protection Act 2018
We will hold the information that organisations have given during the application process on file for officers to monitor and process grants and for community development. We have to protect the public funds we manage and so we may use your information to prevent and detect fraud.

We may reveal the organisations information to our legal representatives, other local authorities, the police, other funders and other professional advisors. We may also ask these individuals, other funders or relevant organisations for information about your organisation.

Tips for Completing Your Application
Try to be as concise as possible as you will need to keep to the word and character limits in the application forms

- Where appropriate give clear targets and/or benefits to be delivered and explain how you will evidence that these have been met.
- Your application will be assessed by a scoring system. All questions will contribute to the final score. Your final score will also be considered alongside evidence of planning, financial viability (including reserves) and good organisational management.

Outputs and Methodology
The application form asks you to explain what you will do to support outcomes linked to the Borough Plan.

To answer this question, briefly describe what you will do, how many and whom the funding will benefit. These are called your outputs.

- Outputs are defined as all the detailed activities, services and products you actually do or provide (Charities Evaluation Services).
- These output targets will be used to monitor your grant should your application be successful. It is therefore essential that your output targets are measurable but are also a realistic estimation of what you will achieve in one year.
Example:
Outcome – Improve employment opportunities for people with a mental health condition
Output targets
- Drop-in employment café offered 3 times a week in Ilford
- One to one career advice and mentoring provided to 47 people annually
- Weekly evening peer support groups organised and facilitated for those in employment to sustain jobs for 48 weeks per year

5. Recommendations for Award of Grant

Cabinet Decision
The authority to agree the Redbridge Grant Fund grants has been delegated by Cabinet to the Cabinet Member for Transformation and Engagement and the Corporate Director of Strategy.

The decisions made are not subject to an appeals process.

Successful Organisations
Organisations recommended for funding will be contacted to agree a set of performance indicators. These indicators will reflect those outlined in your Application Form. A Grant Agreement will be sent to each Organisation for signing by their ‘authorised signatories’ (usually Chair and Treasurer or Chair and Vice-Chair), setting out the terms and conditions of the grant. Successful applicants who have not previously been funded by the Council will need to register online as a supplier to the Council so that payments can be made to them (full guidance on this will be provided). The initial grant payment will be subject to receipt of the signed Grant Agreement and subsequent payments will be subject to satisfactory monitoring returns during the contract period.

Unsuccessful Organisations
Organisations not recommended for funding will be notified in writing via email.

Monitoring
All funded organisations must take part in the Council’s monitoring and evaluation programme that is carried out every 6 months. The 6-month monitoring form provides a brief update on progress towards annual targets and flags up any challenges experienced. A breakdown of expenditure against your budget will also be required.

The annual monitoring form requires full reporting on progress towards outcomes and evidence of beneficiary feedback and evaluation that forms part of your quality assurance system.

Withdrawal of Funding
Withdrawal of funding will be recommended where an organisation continually fails to meet the performance indicators after being given reasonable opportunities to do so. The new 6 monthly monitoring system enables organisations to report challenges and there will be opportunities to work with the funding officer to agree an improvement plan. Any withdrawal of funding will be subject to a three-month notice period, given in writing.