Eligibility Criteria and Guidance for Online Applications

The Milton Keynes Community Foundation makes grants to support a wide variety of projects and activities that improve the quality of life for people in Milton Keynes. This Information Sheet will help you find out about:

If after reading this Information you still have questions, or if you would like to speak to someone from the Programmes Team, call us on 01908 690276.

Eligibility

Both the GROUP and the PROJECT must be eligible in order to apply, so make sure you have checked the criteria for both.

Is my group eligible for funding?

Eligible Groups:
We fund 'Not For Profit' organisations supporting beneficiaries from Milton Keynes, including, but not limited to, the following:
- Local community groups
- Voluntary Sector Organisations
- Registered Charities
- Charitable Incorporated Organisations
- Social Enterprises
- Sports Clubs
- Faith groups
- Community Interest Companies
  Must include evidence that Directors are not be paid above a level that would make the provision of grant funding inappropriate, and must have a management committee who provide oversight and strategic guidance, comprised of at least four unpaid, unrelated members, not living at a shared address, to apply. There must be clear, evidenced community benefit.
- Companies limited by guarantee
  Must provide evidence of being not for profit in governing documents, showing that any surplus revenue is used toward the company's social purpose and that the company is set up with an asset lock. Must have a management committee who provide oversight and strategic guidance, comprised of at least four unpaid, unrelated members, not living at a shared address, to apply.
- Companies limited by shares
  As 'Companies limited by guarantee' (above) and company shares are limited to no more than 100 shares of £1 each.

Ineligible Groups:
The Foundation does not accept applications from the following types of organisation:
- For-profit companies
- Political parties or groups affiliated to a political party.
- Individuals
- Groups who do not have, as a minimum, a constitution, a management committee, and relevant policies.

Statutory Bodies:
Statutory bodies are generally not eligible for grant funding, but funding for non-statutory work may be considered at the discretion of the Community Foundation, and we will accept applications from PTAs or 'Friends of' statutory organisations for eligible projects**.**

Is my Project eligible for funding?

Eligible Projects:

The Foundation awards grants to a wide range of projects, including but not exclusively:

- Start-up costs for new organisations or new projects
- Extension and Development of existing projects
- Pilot Projects (a project that is going to research and gather evidence for a later project)
- Continuation costs after a pilot; the Foundation may fund an additional 12 months following a pilot project where evidence is given that the pilot was successful
- The purchase of equipment and resources
- Leverage; where a grant from the Foundation would release significant funding from other sources.
- Conservation projects; we will fund the aspects of conservation based projects where the funding will directly cover volunteer training, community development, education and so on.
- 'Total Cost Recovery' - Groups can apply for funding to cover any core costs that are legitimately related to the wider project.

Ineligible Projects and Things We Cannot Fund:

- Ongoing core costs not related to a particular service or activity.
- Goods or services that should be provided by a statutory body, such as equipment for a school or hospital.
- Purchase of equipment that will become the property of a statutory body.
- Animal Welfare
- Projects involving political or campaigning activities
- Projects promoting religious beliefs
- Anything that has already been bought or committed to, except where the paying of deposits is necessary (at the discretion of the Programmes Team).
- Medical research or treatment
- Deficit funding or the repayment of Loans
- Unspecified expenditure (i.e. we will only fund specific items within the budget on the application).
- Specific fundraising events. However, groups may provide an opportunity for people to make a donation to the group's charitable aims at a funded event.
- Small Grants that are to be distributed to other groups.
- Projects not benefitting people from Milton Keynes.

Key Information

Beneficiaries:
- All applications must benefit the community in the Unitary Authority Area of Milton Keynes, or individuals from the Unitary Authority Area of Milton Keynes.

Timescales - Application Process:
- Complete applications must be with the Programmes team by the relevant deadline to be included in the coming round. Information about deadlines can be found on the website.
- Applications received by the deadline which are missing supporting documentation and/or without all of the questions answered are not considered complete. Incomplete application may be deferred or withdrawn from the round.

Timescales – Projects:
- All projects must start within 6 months of the grant being awarded.
- All projects, once started, should be planned to run for no more than 12 months.
- If equipment is being purchased, the group must retain it for a minimum of 12 months from the time of purchase.
- If groups do not start to use the money within 6 months of the award, they may be asked to return it.

Frequency of Applications:
- We cannot accept more than one application per programme per round for any group or organisation.
- It is not recommended that you apply repeatedly for the same project.

Resubmission of Applications:
Unfortunately, we are not able to fund all the applications that are submitted to us. We are not always able to accept resubmissions of unsuccessful applications, but if you would like to resubmit please call the Programmes Team to see if you may be eligible.

Scoring

All the applications we receive are carefully assessed by the team, before being scored by a panel or committee who decide if the application has been successful. We assess and score each application based upon several criteria.

Scoring Process:

Our Micro Grants are assessed and approved by the executive team.

Our Small Grants are assessed by the executive team and approved by a panel. Each application is given a single score from each panellist to capture the need for the project, the feasibility and sustainability of the project, projected impact and outcomes, and availability and priority of funds. These scores are averaged out to give a final assessment score, and determine if the application has been successful.

Our Community Grants are assessed by the executive team and approved by a committee. Each committee member scores on a range of criteria, as listed below. These are added together to give a total from each committee member. These totals are then averaged out to give the final assessment score, to determine if the application has been successful or not.

Scoring Criteria:

In order to maximise the potential for success in any programme, and especially our Small and Community Grant programmes, you should make sure you have persuasively addressed each of the areas in the scoring criteria on the next page, as these are what the assessors look for.

Please bear in mind that the bullet points under each heading are not criteria to be 'ticked off' for higher marks, and that addressing each point will not mean you are guaranteed funding. They are intended as pointers when considering how an application might meet the criteria. For example, a project may score highly for reach because it is a community event that 2000 will attend. Another project might only be reaching 20 people but could score just as well for reach because they are working with a 'hard to reach' or underserved demographic.

Need & Demand
- The group has provided evidence that there is a need for this project.
- This need is not being satisfactorily met locally by other agencies, i.e. this is not a duplication of an existing service.
- This is the best way to meet this need.
- There are limited opportunities for these funds to be raised elsewhere.
- For equipment funding, it is clear why it is necessary, what needs it will satisfy and why this particular brand / variety / quantity / etc. has been specified.

Sustainability
- The project will build useful skills and resources for the local community.
- The applicant has begun to strategise / investigate long term funding options that will enable this project to continue past the end of this grant.
- There is realistic expectation that long term funding can be secured following the end of this grant.
- There are other long-term benefits to the community from this project.
- If the project is not long term, the costs and financial projections offered are realistic and sustainable for this project. 'Good value for money.'

Reach & Impact
- The applicant is well-placed to deliver these services to the relevant individuals in the community, and possesses the skill to ensure they are delivered effectively.
- The project will serve under-funded geographical areas, communities.
- The application shows an understanding of and plans for effective outreach.
- The group has addressed barriers to provision (e.g. cost, access, cultural divisions).
- The project will serve a hard to reach demographic and there is evidence that the group will be able to work well with this demographic.

Innovation / Creativity
- The project is innovative and/or unique in the area and is it a creative approach to addressing a need.
- Will the project help our community to get 'ahead of the curve' in meeting a still-emerging need in our community before it gets more critical or damaging

Group Profile
- Previous grant monitoring been submitted on time, to a good standard and includes testimonials, stories and photographs
- Is there a good record of sound financial and project management
- The organisation has reputable endorsements from individuals and or other organizations
- The organisation has a record of enterprise or fundraising
- The organisation has a history of reaching hard-to-reach beneficiaries and/or supporting Vital Signs priority areas

General Guidance Notes:

The more information and detail you can give in your application the better.

You will find info bubbles throughout the online application form to guide you.

Mandatory fields are marked with a red line. You cannot submit the application unless these are completed.

The form does not accept '£', so fill in all cost fields with numbers only.

Some sections can be a bit more difficult, so here are some handy pointers for the areas where groups get stuck most often:

- **Organisation Start Date** – if you are not entirely sure, please estimate as closely as possible.
- **Bank Account** – this cannot be an individual's account, and must have at least two signatories. If you do not have an account but a third party will be willing to accept an award on your behalf, please give us a call.
- **Income, Expenditure, and Reserves** – please give your income and expenditure for the last financial year, including free reserves. If you are part of a larger national organisation but have a local branch, these should be the details of the local branch.
- **Project Name and Cost** – in Section 2 we want the whole cost of the entire project, which may be more than you are requesting from us. Please tell us the whole amount you expect to spend.
- **Other Funding Bring Raised** – We'd like the names of other funding bodies you've approached or are planning to approach, and the outcomes of your bids to them.
- **Living Wage** – as a Living Wage funder, where our grant making goes towards the cost of staff wages or salaries, we aim for these to always be at the Living Wage or above, as set by the Living Wage Foundation. This is not a criterion for applying and will not affect your chances of securing a grant, as we recognise that this level of pay is not always possible for smaller organisations, but you may be asked about it during assessment.
- **Project Start and End Date** – Some projects will have a clear start and end, and you can put these dates in here. If your project is ongoing, please select a start date and set the end date as a year from that date (e.g. if you select start date: 1st Jan 2017, select end date 1st Jan 2018).
- **Description of Project, Need, Outcomes etc**. – please write as much as possible related to these sections, and keep the scoring criteria above in mind.
- **Beneficiaries** – we will ask for both the number of direct beneficiaries, and the number of indirect beneficiaries in the application. Please think carefully about the realistic figures for each of these.
- **Project Budget** – in each section it is important that you give a clear breakdown of costs. You can separate what you are requesting funding for and other costs in the breakdown section, and you will need to supply quotes for the items your requesting funding for in the attachment section. For example, if you are applying for some of your equipment related to a project, you might fill in the form as follows:
  - **Requested amount** – 56
  - **Total cost** – 100
  - **Breakdown** –   Requested: Facepaint, £15, Stickers, £11, Colouring in Books, £30
                       Other: Pencils, £4, Fancy Dress Costumes, £40.
- **Document Upload** – due to restrictions in the online forms you can only upload 6 files with your application, but we may need more. Additional documents should be sent via email or post. Please refer to the 'Supporting Documents' section to check what you need to send.

If you still have any questions, or would like to discuss your project before applying, please contact the Programmes Team on the information below:

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Charity Registration No. 295107