Community Priorities Programme

Grant funding for community-led projects and initiatives

Key information for interested applicants

If you have any issues reading or understanding this document please get in touch with us at communityprioritiesprogramme@westminster.gov.uk

Context

The Community Priorities Programme is a grants programme funded by Westminster City Council and coordinated by the council's Communities Department. It is all about strengthening communities in the borough, specifically in the Queens Park, Westbourne, Church Street, Harrow Road, Maida Vale, Little Venice, Abbey Road, Lancaster Gate, Pimlico South, Vincent Square, St James's wards.

The programme was launched last year as a pilot in North Westminster and has successfully funded 24 community-led organisations and individuals to deliver meaningful projects. This year, it is being relaunched to additional wards in the North has been extended to also cover wards in the South, where there are higher levels of need.

The Community Priorities Programme invites proposals for local community-led projects that aim to:

- Empower young people
- Enable all adults to progress
- Build connections between people
- Make places safe, sustainable and welcoming

(See 'Key Criteria' below for full descriptions)

These criteria are based on research interviews and conversations carried out during spring 2021 with a wide range of residents from these wards. A further research drive was conducted in 2023 which included engagement with residents in wards from the South and validated these criteria. The Community Priorities Programme looks for projects and initiatives that meet one or more of these key criteria and that put connections and relationships within communities at the centre of their activities.

Applicants can apply for funding of between £2000 and £30,000.

Grants will be allocated to ensure diverse representation in the activities taking place and the individuals, groups or organisations delivering them, as well as considerations of geographical spread across the eleven key wards.

Important dates:

Interested applicants are welcome to attend our public information sessions in person on the following dates:

- Church Street Library (67 Church St, London NW8 8EU), Thursday 2nd March 2023, 3-6pm
- Maida Vale Library (Sutherland Ave, London W9 2QT), Monday 27th February 2023, 3-6pm
- Pimlico Library (Lupus St, Pimlico, London SW1V 3AT), Tuesday 28th February 2023, 28/02/23, 11-2pm
- Pimlico Library (Lupus St, Pimlico, London SW1V 3AT), Wednesday 1st March 2023, 3-6pm
- Victoria Library (160 Buckingham Palace Rd, London SW1W 9TR), Tuesday 21st February 2023, 11-2pm

These are walk-in sessions are not required to book sessions. If you have any questions, please get in touch: communityprioritiesprogramme@westminster.gov.uk

Our main aims as funder and programme coordinator

Our main aims as funder are:

- To fund new projects/initiatives, or ongoing work, that is in line with our key criteria and that puts relationships and connections within communities at the centre of everything
- To support and empower local groups, individuals, or grassroots organisations with project ideas that wouldn't usually apply for grant funding
- To fund individuals, groups or organisations that seek to benefit communities within one or more of the eleven key wards
- To create lasting relationships with project deliverers

Key criteria

We invite projects and initiatives that align with one or more of the following criteria. All projects and initiatives must also have connections and relationships within communities at the centre of their activities.

Empowering young people

Residents feel strongly about young people being able to access opportunities that channel their energy, skills and passions. It is an important part of young people's development, self-esteem and future potential.

If your project strives to empower and motivate young people to lead, learn, organise, create or be active, then this area is for you! We particularly encourage young people themselves to submit applications for this criterion.

Enabling all adults to progress

Opportunities to train/retrain, be creative, learn and grow, should not be limited once you stop being a young person. Residents want to be able to boost their own progression for personal and/or professional life.

If your project strives to enable and empower adults of all ages, identities, abilities and backgrounds to explore or expand their creativity, skills or personal development, then submit an application now!

Building connections between people

Our residents really want to connect more with others both inside and outside of their communities. Some feel isolated, especially those who are elderly, those living with mental health issues, those who have experienced homelessness, and those facing other inequalities.

Socialising and creating networks among and across different ages groups, cultures and backgrounds is seen as important to good community health and wellbeing.

If your project is all about making people and communities feel more connected with one another, then this criterion is for you!

Making places safe, sustainable, and welcoming

Feeling safe and happy in our local environment is important to a good quality of day-to-day living. We know from residents that feeling safe and happy locally is dependent on a range of factors including (but not limited to) how well community members know each other, the levels of anti-social behaviour taking place locally, greenery, and street cleanliness.

If your project aims to make a difference by helping local areas feel like safe, environmentally friendly, and/or welcoming places to live and be, then we want to hear from you!

Applications and timeframes

Applications open: Friday 17 February 2023

Applications close: Sunday 5 March 2023 at 11:59pm

To apply, please visit https://www.westminster.gov.uk/community-priorities-programme and click on 'Apply now' when applications open, and fill out the online form. You will also be asked to upload your budget and a simple project plan. Templates will be provided within the application form. For any support on your application or any questions, please get in touch so we can arrange for staff to assist you. Email us at communityprioritiesprogramme@westminster.gov.uk. Our staff can support you in English, Arabic, Hindi, and Bengali.

✓ Projects must start by April 2023 and should last a maximum of 12 months.

✓ We reserve the right to offer part-funding to some projects, if the assessment panel feel it is in the best interest of the programme's aims.

We would like to make our application process as accessible as possible. If you would like to submit a video or audio application, then please follow the guidance below, and once recorded, email us a YouTube, Vimeo or SoundCloud link. You can send the link directly to communityprioritiesprogramme@westminster.gov.uk

Important for video/audio applications: There are some details, such as contact information, that will still need to be submitted using our form. Please fill in the necessary part of the form via the

website, leaving blank the sections that are indicated as 'Video/audio applicants do not need to fill out this section'.

Video applicants will not be judged on the technical quality of the film and are not required to produce a video to a professional standard. The purpose of the video is to give applicants the opportunity to demonstrate what the project is and why it deserves to be funded.

Guidance if you are submitting applications via video or audio Please keep it no more than 5 minutes and make sure you cover the following questions:

1. Introduce yourself, your group or your organisation

2. Give us a summary of your project making sure you cover the following questions:

- How does it align with one or more of the key criteria of the programme?
- How does it put relationships and connections within communities at the centre of activities?
- What are the main activities of your project?
- Who would benefit from this project, and what ward(s) are they from?
- What specific outcomes do you hope for with this project?
- How long would you run this project for with this funding? (Remember max. 12 months)
- Tell us if you already have a place or space to deliver your project or if you would need support finding one.
- Tell us if there are any other non-monetary council resources that might be helpful for the delivery of your project. (Westminster Council will try to support where possible but it is not guaranteed)
- How will you let the community know about your project?
- Who will be the main people/person in charge of delivering the project? What will they be in charge of?

Who can apply?

No matter your background or experience, we want to hear from you if you have a project proposal that aligns with the criteria.

The Community Priorities Programme staff can support you and your application where needed. Just get in touch by emailing: communityprioritiesprogramme@westminster.gov.uk

We actively encourage organisations and individuals to make an application in collaboration with other organisations and individuals, either as joint partners or with one partner as the lead.

We also encourage large organisations thinking of applying, to apply in partnership with smaller grassroots organisations.

Individuals, groups or organisations that apply do not need to be based in the eleven key wards but must have a strong (and evidenced) connection to communities in the affected wards.

Groups, people and organisations eligible to apply:

- Constituted community group

- Individual or group of individuals (over 18 years old) (having a reference from a registered organisation, or being in partnership with one, is preferred and may strengthen your application but is not a requirement)
- Registered, exempt or excepted charity
- Charitable incorporated organisation (CIO)
- CIC limited by guarantee
- Charitable company (limited by guarantee)
- Registered charitable industrial and provident society, or charitable cooperative
- Faith groups
- Registered Community Amateur Sports Clubs
- Constituted but unincorporated club or association
- Constituted Tenants and Residents Associations
- Trusts
- Schools

Individuals between 16 to 18 years old can apply but must have an adult with a current DBS certificate present while delivering their project.

They also need the support of a partner organisation that would receive the funds. For example, City of Westminster College students could be backed by the college.

What we can and cannot fund

The Community Priorities Programme will fund projects and initiatives that align with our key criteria and put relationships and connections within communities at the centre of everything.

This includes funding new projects and extending or upscaling existing projects/initiatives for the benefit of residents in the eleven key wards.

We will support:

- staff costs for administration (related to the project directly), management, planning and delivery of the project
- competitively priced equipment* and materials relating to the activity being delivered up to £300 (if you expect your equipment or material costs to be more than this amount, we can't guarantee this will be funded)
- insurance and DBS certificate costs
- venue hire
- licensing, event notices and road closure costs (it will strengthen your application to have relevant permissions in place where necessary when you apply, but it isn't required)
- publicity and marketing costs
- costs for training volunteers and volunteer expenses (e.g. volunteer travel expenses)
- costs to make the activity more accessible to participants
- *Equipment may be purchased on condition the beneficiaries use it. It will remain with the beneficiary group or organisation once the project has ended, for its continuous use by said groups. This must be agreed upon with the fund manager before purchasing (a valid original purchase receipt will be required).

We cannot support:

- projects that don't align with any of the four criteria
- projects that take place outside the Queen's Park, Westbourne, Harrow Road, Church Street, Maida Vale, Little Venice, Abbey Road, Lancaster Gate, Pimlico South, Vincent Square, St James's Wards and that do not benefit the residents of these wards
- the organisation's general running costs that are unrelated to the project
- applications from departments within local authorities (however, applicants working in partnership with libraries, for example, should submit an application.)
- capital works on-premises
- staff travel expenses and parking costs
- previously funded equipment (that has not deteriorated beyond use)
- purchase of equipment, unless specifically used and retained by the beneficiaries
- activities that promote discriminatory or extremist views
- regular core running costs, loan repayments or VAT
- payments to suppliers on behalf of the grantee
- 'Business as usual' activities (such as normal maintenance or repairs, or projects that already have funding to continue)

Decision making

Once the application window closes, all applications will be viewed initially by Community Priorities Programme staff to determine basic eligibility of applications.

All eligible applications will then be scored by a community resident panel. No applicants will sit on panel. This will be facilitated by Community Priorities Programme staff.

We aim to notify successful applicants at the beginning of April 2023. See information document for more details.

Once the application window closes, all applications will be viewed initially by Community Priorities Programme staff to determine basic eligibility of applications. All eligible applications will then be viewed, deliberated, and scored by a community resident panel based on how far your project aligns with the chosen criteria and how far it puts connections and relationships within communities at the centre of activities. (No applicants will sit on the community panel.) This will be facilitated by Community Priorities Programme staff. We aim to notify successful applicants by the beginning of April 2023.