

Lancaster Community Fund - Guidelines

Eligibility for the Lancaster Community Fund and our guidance to applicants has changed for the 2026/7 year. We recommend that you read this document carefully before applying.

Overview

The Lancaster Community Fund was set up following the transfer of several charity funds which had been left to Lancaster City Council in bequests and endowments but over the years had fallen dormant. The fund will also distribute additional grants from Lancaster City Council, on an ad hoc basis.

The fund is intended to support grassroots projects and initiatives that support one or more of the fund's priorities.

What is the focus of the fund?

The fund provides grants toward projects that support one or more of its main priorities:

- Projects that increase community involvement, build community wealth and resilience.
- Projects that contribute towards carbon reduction and a more sustainable district.
- Projects that contribute to individual and community wellbeing.

When you apply, we'd like you to tell us which priorities you think your project supports, and how you've worked with your community to come up with your project idea.

What sort of projects could receive funding?

- Equipment for a youth club
- Activities for young people
- Training for volunteers
- Community sports activities
- Projects to reduce social isolation for vulnerable groups
- Cleaning up of grot spots
- Improvements to outdoor public spaces
- Social enterprise activities
- Money advice projects

This isn't an exclusive list - any projects that support the priorities will be considered.

If you are thinking of using funding to purchase equipment, you should also think about whether you could borrow what you need instead, or buy second-hand rather than new. If

you do buy equipment, you should consider how you could share it with other organisations in the future, for example by working through BayShare (www.bayshare.uk).

Who can apply?

Your organisation or initiative must be a not-for-profit, working within the voluntary, charity, faith and social enterprise sector.

While all voluntary or community groups that meet the eligibility criteria are welcome to apply, we specifically invite applications from new and small grassroots groups.

Those without a formal constitution are asked to seek support from an established organisation or group. If you are unsure how to go about this, please get in touch with us. Email Lancaster District CVS at funding@lancastercvs.org.uk or call 01524 555900.

Turnover and maximum project cost

To ensure that funding stands the best chance of reaching smaller local organisations, eligibility is restricted to organisations with a turnover of less than £500,000 in their previous financial year.

Grants from the Lancaster Community Fund will only be given in support of projects that have a maximum value of £10,000.

For example, you could apply as an organisation with a turnover of £499,000, for a project that will cost £10,000. The Lancaster Community Fund could fund up to £1,000 of the cost of that project.

How much is available?

You can apply for up to £1,000.

If you want to use a Lancaster Community Fund award either as match funding for other applications, or towards a crowdfunding appeal, make sure that this is clearly stated in your application. In these circumstances, the panel may choose to award a grant in principle but hold the money until a time where you have achieved the total you require to deliver your project.

Which areas are covered?

Projects must be delivered in the Lancaster district. This is the area covered by Lancaster City Council: Lancaster, Morecambe, Heysham, Carnforth and the surrounding rural areas.

Supporting documents

To support your application and for us to verify the information you provide, you must attach the following documents. If you are unable to supply these, please contact us for advice and support

- Your governing document i.e., your constitution or rules
- The group's latest annual accounts or income/expenditure document

- A recent bank statement for your group
- Relevant policies, which have been reviewed in the last 2 years:
 - Health & Safety Policy
 - Safeguarding Policy, if your project will work with adults or children who are at risk of harm
 - Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy (or similar)

Reporting

If you are awarded a grant, we will ask you to complete an online report, telling us about what your project achieved. You'll complete your report through the same online system you used to apply. Reports are usually due a year after the date of your grant award, unless we agree otherwise.

If your organisation has previously been awarded a grant from the Lancaster Community Fund or another fund we administer and a report is overdue, we will need to agree a new deadline for the outstanding report before releasing your grant payment.

Decisions

During the decision-making process, the panel are directed to give priority to initiatives taking place in disadvantaged areas of the community, to grassroots projects, and to projects and organisations that have not recently received support from the fund.

Key Dates

Round 1 Launch - 8 June 2026

Deadline for Applications - 5 July 2026, 11:59pm

Panel Meets - Wednesday 22 July 2026

Round 2 Launch - 5 October 2026

Deadline for Applications - 1 November 2026, 11:59pm

Panel Meets - 18 November 2026

Launch 3 Launch - 1 February 2027

Deadline for Applications - 28 February 2027, 11:59pm

Panel Meets - Wednesday 17 March 2027

If you have any queries about the fund, or about how to apply, please do not hesitate to get in touch with us by emailing funding@lancastercvs.org.uk or by ringing CVS on 01524 555900