

Cost-of-Living Community Grants

Introduction

Nottinghamshire County Council recognises the huge contribution that the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) has made to the lives of residents over many years, which has been brought into sharp focus during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Council has a strong record in supporting the VCS by empowering local communities to be more self-sufficient. This continues to be a key priority for the Council and supporting the VCS to grow and thrive is central to achieving this.

The Cost-of-Living Community Grants is a discretionary financial contribution awarded by Nottinghamshire County Council to support the delivery of projects through two streams: Food Insecurity Grant Scheme and Energy Cost Grants for Voluntary and Community Services.

This grant scheme will run until April 1st, 2024.

Applicants can request support from either one or both Cost-of-Living Community Grant streams.

The short-term aim of the grant is to prevent groups from closing due to increasing costs, we are not able to fund groups indefinitely and want to encourage a sustainable approach.

Below we have identified 4 key criteria for screening applications to ensure suitable projects are funded in keeping with the cost-of-living community grant schemes:

- Eligibility
- Funding
- Community Engagement
- Governance

1. Eligibility Criteria - What type of organisations are eligible to apply?

Submissions should only be made by applicants that provide a service or support to people living within Nottinghamshire County boundaries (this does not include Nottingham City residents).

Applications will be considered from:

- registered charities
- excepted charities
- voluntary and community organisations
- sports clubs with Clubmark
- parish and town councils who are actively responding to the needs of vulnerable people in Nottinghamshire communities
- churches and other faith-based organisations
- social and community enterprises

Applications will **not** be considered from:

- people applying for personal needs on an individual basis
- for-profit businesses

2. Funding Criteria:

A) All Grants

The project should:

- support the Council's strategic priorities
- have a clear purpose
- show evidence of community need and support
- primarily benefit Nottinghamshire County residents
- show that there will be inbuilt sustainability beyond the lifetime of the grant.
- use local assets to increase health and wellbeing for local communities
- encourage partnership working
- demonstrate how it will reduce demand on health and social care services.

B) Food Insecurity Grants

This grant scheme can be used by organisations to provide access to affordable, nutritious food for families and individuals who are experiencing food insecurity.

The project should work to one or more of the four areas of focus of the Food Insecurity Network:

- Food poverty and supply
- Food sustainability
- Community development
- Nutrition and Health

Projects handling food:

- Food banks are encouraged to be flexible with their criteria for assistance
- Projects involving cooked food must be registered with their [Local Authority's Environmental Health Team](#) and inform them of any significant change in food operation.

C) Energy Cost Grants

This grant scheme will contribute towards increases in fuel and energy bills incurred by community groups.

To be eligible for this grant, organisations must be:

- at risk of closure (either permanent or temporary) due to inability to cover energy bills; or,
- facing a reduction in service hours due to inability to cover energy bills; or,
- at risk of going into debt with their energy company; or,

3. Community Engagement Criteria

Organisations are encouraged to involve the community in the design, development, and delivery of the project.

4. Governance Criteria

The Council is accountable for public funds and therefore needs assurance that an organisation is:

- Operating in line with the law and relevant regulations; and,
- Operating in line with its own governing documents; and,
- Effectively managing public funds and fulfils the monitoring requirements.

Cost-of-Living Community Grants applicants must agree to abide by Nottinghamshire County Council's policies:

- [Safeguarding adults](#)
- [Safeguarding children](#)
- [Equality](#)
- [Health and Safety](#)

The project should be able to demonstrate achievement of agreed outcomes through effective monitoring and evaluation of the work.