**Rochdale Communities Fund – Wider Essentials Support Fund**

**Guidance Notes**

The Rochdale Communities Fund is a mutual fund to invest in and strengthen Rochdale Borough’s VCFSE sector. It funds groups and projects which directly benefit local people and communities, delivered by VCFSE organisations with roots in the borough.

Thanks to funding from Rochdale Borough Council’s Public Health team, Action Together is offering small grants of up to £1,000 for VCFSE organisations to provide Wider Essentials to individuals and communities within the Rochdale Borough.

The fund priorities have been co-produced with The Anti-Poverty foundation group facilitated by Action Together.

**Your project could fall within one or more of the following priorities:**

* **Digital Access and Inclusion:** Provide laptops, iPads, software, broadband support, and assistance with phone bills.
* **Wellbeing:** Offer free mental health and emotional support services and other holistic support services
* **Travel:** Cover public transport costs, vehicle repairs, bicycle purchases and fuel expenses.
* **Identification Support:** Fund and assist with obtaining passports, driving licenses, and other forms of identification to facilitate access to essential services.
* **White Goods:** Provide large pieces of household equipment (such as refrigerators and washing machines)
* **Other essentials:** Including clothing, toiletries, hygiene products, cleaning products etc

While the above priorities reflect key areas identified by the Anti-Poverty Foundation Group, the fund remains open to supporting additional essential needs as they arise.

**Grant amount:** Grants of up £1,000 are available.

**Deadline:** Monday 24th June 2024

Please be aware before submitting your application that all projects must be complete by March 2025.

**What we can fund:**

* Equipment, project resources and running costs
* Staff time and staff and volunteer expenses

We are willing to provide this grant for cash first schemes. If you’d like to apply for cash first project, you are required to get in touch before applying so we can really understand your thinking and process behind this approach. If you are selected to use this approach, Action Together would like to work to provide mentorship and support.

**We cannot fund:**

The funding is to support ongoing, established wider essential support projects being delivered within the Rochdale Borough. We are unable to fund projects that aren’t currently being delivered.

The funding is for organisations providing items or support that is listed in the priorirties to individuals, families and households, rather than for the community organisation’s own use. For example; you are giving laptops /software to those that need it, not buying laptops to support your core services.

Please note, we encourage all groups submitting an application form to include your management costs within the budget for your project.

For a clear and simple introduction to calculating the full costs of a project, read the [National Lottery Community Fund’s full cost recovery guidance](https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/funding-guidance/full-cost-recovery).

**Who is the funding for:**

* you are a voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise (VCFSE) group locally rooted or actively working in the borough of Rochdale; ***and***
* you are a member of Action Together CIO (you can register for free to become a member [here](https://www.actiontogether.org.uk/become-member))
* you are formally constituted.
* you have a turnover of less than £150,000

To ensure limited funds reach as many groups as possible, there is also a limit on the number of times groups can apply to the Rochdale Communities Fund. Action Together members can apply to our funding if you have already received funding through the Rochdale Communities Fund as long as:

* The applications are for different projects, or you can show the project needs to continue
* You have submitted all monitoring for previous projects
* You are in contact with your Community Development Worker
* You have not already received a grant from the categories above the one you are applying for (i.e. a small grant and you’re applying for a micro grant)

**Decision making process:**

Grant decisions under £1000 are made by Action Together. Decisions will be made once the fund has closed for applications. You may be asked for further information or to redevelop aspects of your proposal.

All applications must be sent to [hayley.tomlinson@actiontogether.org.uk](mailto:hayley.tomlinson@actiontogether.org.uk) and you will receive the decision via email.

**Monitoring:**

At the end of your project, we will ask you to fill out a monitoring form to tell us:

* The story of your project
* How many people benefitted
* Any other plans you have for your community following the project
* Photos, feedback sheets, promotional materials or anything else relevant to the project.

Our Community Development Workers will check in with you during the project and can help you plan how you want to share the impact and success of your project.

**Please note:**

* Action Together is an accredited Living Wage Funder. This means we encourage organisations that employ staff to become an accredited [Living Wage Employer.](https://www.livingwage.org.uk/become-a-living-wage-employer)

**Completing the application form**

* Please ensure that ALL boxes on the application form are completed.
* When completing your budget, please clearly evidence how you have arrived at your costings and use exact figures.
* If you have any queries about the application form or application process, please contact Hayley Tomlinson on 0161 339 2345.
* Please note, we can only accept one application per organisation.

**Please note that the Rochdale Community Fund is ongoing therefore our approach will be under constant review. If there are any changes, these will be communicated appropriately.**