

Grassroots Grants Programme

Guidance Notes

Introduction:

Grassroots is funded by the Office of the third sector via the Community Development Foundation and will be delivered in Worcestershire by Community First. We are working in partnership with Worcestershire Community Foundation who are committed to growing more than £1m from public and private donations that will be invested in a capital endowment for the benefit of grant giving into the future. Every £1 they raise, the government will match with 50p. Although our current budget of £660,000 is available over three years (until March 2011), efforts are already being made for the longer term.

The aim of Grassroots grants is to *'Build the capacity of small and emerging voluntary and community groups to deliver valuable services for the most disadvantaged communities and people in Worcestershire'*.

Grassroots can offer from between £250 and £5,000 to small grass root community and voluntary groups in Worcestershire either as a one off payment or as a grant spread over a maximum of the three year period (2008 – 2011) but not exceeding £5,000 in total. You must be looking to meet one of the following three aims:

- **Encouraging community citizenship – *'feeling included and part of your community'***
- **Safeguarding vulnerable people – *'feeling safe and healthy in your community'***
- **Enabling economic contribution – *'feeling pride and independence in your community'***

It is anticipated that the grant will build the capacity of voluntary and community groups to grow in a sustainable way and continually deliver improved services. Either capital or revenue expenditure, the grant should help organisations grow the service they currently offer or introduce new services for the benefit of an identified disadvantaged or disengaged community. Funding can be allocated for either direct service delivery or infrastructure development that will assist their longevity and impact.

Could you be eligible for Grassroots funding?

- Are you a voluntary or community group and locally managed? (you do not have to be a registered charity)
- Do you have a set of rules and a management committee?
- Are you predominantly volunteer led?
- Do you have a turnover of less than £30k?
- Do you have your own bank account with control of your own monies?
- Have you been active in your local community for not less than 12 months?

If you have answered yes to all of the above questions, then please contact Community First to have an informal chat about your ideas or arrange an outreach visit to help you shape your application to meet the programme criteria. If are not sure whether you are eligible, give us a call anyway to check.

What sort of activities can be funded?

- The purchase of equipment, like a computer, oven, furniture
- The costs of putting on a local event or workshop
- Staff costs to enable the employment of individuals
- Contribution to rent costs (related to activities / service delivery)
- The cost of attending a conference or event
- Training for volunteers
- Additional activities to expand an existing funded project
- Activities to support community activity
- Activities that meet an identified need in the local community
- Funding to support an organisation to achieve a quality or other standard relevant to their activities

These are only examples and we expect the Grassroots grant will be led by the needs of the local groups and local people.

What sort of activities will not be supported:

- Statutory organisations, such as Local Authorities, schools and the Police Force
- Regional or local offices of a national organisation
- Arms length public sector organisations that are controlled wholly or in part by for example, a Local Authority, a Primary Care Trust or agencies of these nature
- Any party political activity
- Commercial ventures
- Organisations that are for the sole benefit or relief of animals or plants
- Organisations or activities outside England

If you think you have a good idea but are not sure whether it would be eligible then get in touch with us and, again, we will aim to help you develop your idea so that it does meet the Grassroots criteria.

Eligible areas:

Whole of Worcestershire

Eligibility criteria:

- Have a turn over of less than £30K
- Have a set of rules (not necessarily be constituted)
- Be in charge of own bank account
- Be volunteer led
- Be improving service delivery to build stronger and more active communities
- Be able to demonstrate clear need and an ability to meet that need
- Be creative and innovative in approach to delivery that meets the need identified
- Have the capacity to manage successful delivery and deliver within budget constraints
- Have an independent management structure
- Have an understanding of the grant aims and objectives
- Be able to meet the contractual requirements and audit trails, including tracking of beneficiary details
- Have quality assurance, health and safety and risk management practices relevant to the work and size of application
- offer value for money
- Have a good idea

Eligible expenditure can include:

- New staff costs
- Volunteer expenses
- Training and development
- Venue hire
- Publicity and marketing
- ICT
- Overheads including rent

Any grant allocation will also look to create specific outputs that can be led by the applicant or at least contribute to:

- More people using new-improved facilities
- More people using new/improved services
- More people entering further learning or volunteering (informal or formal).
- More people engaging with community leisure activities
- More community facilities established/created
- More community services established/improved

We aim to fund at least 50% of the cost of a project but are prepared to fund 100% of the costs.

If you are unable to commit to the following, you should not invest your valuable time in completing the attached application form:

- Provide a reference with your application
- Delivery should be provided in a safe, healthy environment with all the necessary policies and procedures in place
- Spend, record and report on how the grant is spent, including a record of any asset acquired with your grant
- Use the provided logos for all publicity
- Deliver and achieve the project within an agreed timeframe
- Complete a mid way progress report
- Complete an end of grant report form telling us how your group has benefited from the grant and in turn the impact this has had for your service users
- Retain all evidence related to the project for at least six years
- Be prepared for an audit at anytime during the life of the programme

Now it is time to complete the application form. Remember:

1. The appraisal panel know nothing about your group or your idea – what you write is critical to their understanding
2. The appraisal panel want to know your activity is based on real and identified need
3. The appraisal panel want to ensure the grant is allocated to benefit the most disadvantaged communities in Worcestershire
4. The appraisal panel want to know your group and management committee have the skills to deliver the project successfully and that you have considered all the potential risks
5. The appraisal panel want to know this project is good value for money
6. Don't confuse the appraisal panel by providing a budget that does not add up correctly
7. The appraisal panel want to have confidence that you are working to agreed policies and procedures, particularly when the service involves children, young people or vulnerable adults.
8. Ideally, you will type your application as this helps the panel read it with ease.
9. You will restrict your answers to the application form as far as reasonably possible and not attach unnecessary sheets of paper. (Please do not simply say 'see attached')
10. For any capital expenditure, you will need to provide several quotes
11. Do not forget to send off for your own reference using the form provided

Contact Information:

Sophie Mead

Grassroots Outreach and Support

E-mail: grassroots@comfirst.org.uk

Tel: 01432 267820 (Monday, Tuesday and Friday) and 01684 312734 (Thursday)

Please ensure that you complete the correct application for the amount of money you are applying for:

- **Grants of £900 and under should complete the smaller application and send to us once complete. Your application will go through a fast track process and be looked at a panel straight away.** Wherever possible, we ask that you complete your application electronically and send via email as this helps speed up the process and for us to communicate with you quickly and formally. We know this isn't always possible and is certainly not a determining factor in who gets a grant.
- **Grants of £901 and higher need to complete the larger application and submit by the deadlines below.**

Deadline:

- **Monday 14th December 2009**
- **Tuesday 16th February 2010**
- **Tuesday 20th April 2010**
- **Tuesday 22nd June 2010**