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**Covid-19 Fund**

**Guidance Notes**

Please read these guidance notes carefully and phone us for a brief discussion before applying. A discussion will help you to decide whether this is the right fund to apply for. If it isn’t, we may suggest that you apply for a grant under our [general funding](http://www.harpurtrust.org.uk/grants) programme. Or we may refer you to other organisations we work closely with such as [Bedfordshire and Luton Community Foundation](https://www.blcf.org.uk/). The [Community and Voluntary Service Bedfordshire](https://www.cvsbeds.org.uk/) also keep an up to date list of Covid-19 related funding opportunities.

**What are the aims of this fund?**

The second phase of the Harpur Trust’s Covid-19 fund aims to:

* support key local voluntary sector organisations which have been negatively impacted by the pandemic so that they can keep providing vital services
* support local voluntary sector organisations which are experiencing increased demand for their services as result of the pandemic
* enable the development of new services meeting new needs directly resulting from the pandemic

**What can you apply for?**

You can apply for support for:

* the costs of a specific project, or for the core costs of running your organisation
* help to change the way you work, in order to continue to meet the needs of people in changed circumstances and to meet new needs arising from the pandemic (costs might include digital support, staff training and support and service redesign)
* to help your organisation combat loss of revenue streams and prevent loss of services. Funding might support core costs, mergers, restructure or consultancy

**How much can we apply for?**

The fund will award grants of between £5,000 and £50,000.

**How long is the funded period?**

You can apply for support for a period of up to 18 months. We are not offering support for a longer time period as the current situation is fast moving, uncertain and liable to change. This fund is designed to help you through a period of change. Our general (non Covid-19) funding does not have this restriction.

**What is the deadline?**

Our **first** deadline will be on **Monday 15 February 2021.** Applications made in time for this deadline will be considered by our Grants Committee on 9 March and decisions will be communicated by email. Further deadlines will be publicised on our website and social media.

**Which groups will be prioritised in this phase of funding?**

Through this funding we will give particular priority to supporting:

* **established, effective** voluntary groups based in **Bedford Borough** or **Bedfordshire** and already delivering work in **Bedford Borough**
* **established** organisations which provide **important services** to local people so that the organisations can **adapt,** **survive and continue their work**
* **established** organisations to **develop** new or **expand** existing services to meet emerging or increased needs which are a direct result of the pandemic

The organisations we support will have a clear track record and be able to demonstrate the impact of their work. Many of the groups we fund will have already worked with us. Feedback from stakeholders, including people who have used the service and other funders will play a role in deciding which groups receive investment. We are particularly interested in organisations that are part of an ecosystem of support, working with others to provide a joined up approach.

The Harpur Trust recognises that some communities and individuals have been more significantly affected by the pandemic than others. These tend to be people from more marginalised communities and those already experiencing disadvantage. We particularly welcome applications run by and providing services for these communities.

We will prioritise organisations providing frontline services to people in need. However, we know that many organisations providing recreational activities and facilities or community venues are struggling as a result of losing earned income. We may consider applications from groups running community assets of this type if can demonstrate that they play an important role in keeping the community together, and that they are used by a broad section of the community, including the most disadvantaged.

**Who can apply?**

It’s important to make sure your organisation is eligible to apply.

The work you are seeking funding for **must**be legally charitable.

Your work **must** benefit people from Bedford Borough. If you are a national organisation planning a project in Bedford to tackle the impact of the pandemic, we will consider your application if it fills gaps not met by existing provision or complements local provision.

You will need to show that you are aware of existing local provision.

We may consider applications from **new** voluntary organisations providing **new** services, but we will prioritise support for **existing** voluntary groups whose work we are already familiar with.

We can only take applications from the following types of organisation:

* Registered, exempted or excepted charity
* Charitable incorporated organisation (CIO)
* CIC limited by guarantee
* Constituted but unincorporated club or association
* Constituted community group

In all cases, your organisation must have at least three unremunerated, unrelated Trustees or Directors.

**Are there any particular priority themes or groups?**

We have spent time throughout the pandemic talking to local and national funders, grantee organisations, statutory services and many other stakeholders. We are trying to understand the impact of the pandemic on our community and how best to support people. One thing we’ve realised is that some long term needs and solutions are still emerging and the organisations and individuals who might provide solutions are still developing ideas. So this list is neither final nor exhaustive:

* loneliness and isolation
* specific mental health support (for example bereavement support, eating disorders)
* domestic abuse
* debt and money advice
* employability and training
* homelessness and housing advice
* support for older people
* support for people marginalised before the pandemic and facing widening gaps

**What can the funding be used for?**

Please note – if an existing funder has given you flexibility to use your grants to support your costs, you should use this flexibility first, and only request new funding for anything not covered. We expect organisations to have taken advantage of any government funded Covid-19 support.

There are some things that we are not able to fund, including:

* costs that should be covered by public funding and government Covid-19 funding schemes
* work that isn’t charitable or doesn’t benefit Bedford (as stated in the earlier section)
* work which promotes a particular faith

**When can we start the work if we are funded?**

You can start the work as soon as the grant is awarded to you.

**What other information is available to help with our application?**

We will be holding an online information session to give an overview of this programme and answer key questions about how to apply.

**Any questions?**

Please call us on 01234 369533 or 01234 362507. You can also contact us to request resources in a different format.