

Micro Grants Criteria

This document explains what we look for in deciding which organisations to support. It comprises five sections:

1. [Our priorities](#)
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Our priorities

Our Micro Grants of **up to £2,000** are focused on supporting grassroots not for profit community organisations, small charities, and Community Interest Companies (CICs). The Harpur Trust recognises that applying for grants can be daunting for those with little experience and the programme includes guidance throughout the application process.

We prioritise organisations that:

- Are new to grant applications.
- Have clear goals and success measures.
- Need funds for projects or equipment.
- Want to develop their funding application skills.
- Are open to support from Bedfordshire Community Voluntary Service (CVS).
- Can demonstrate community need.

Our eligibility criteria

Organisations must be part of their community, have an active committee/board, have previously delivered an activity of some kind, and have evidence that their project or organisation is responding to a clear need.

The organisation must...

- Be based in Bedford Borough.
- Have a minimum of 80% of beneficiaries resident in Bedford Borough.
- Have been operating for less than 2 years. *
- Have an annual income under £25,000.
- Possess limited reserves and no substantial assets.

[* Exceptions may apply for more established organisations with new, inexperienced leadership or no, or very limited, prior grant success.]

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Governance requirements

Organisations should have:

- A governing document (i.e. a constitution, company articles or set of rules).
- A bank account with at least two unrelated signatories
- Safeguarding and Equality policies
- An active board/committee of at least three unrelated members

If you lack any of the above, you may still submit an Expression of Interest. However, an application cannot be submitted until these requirements are fully met. Support may be available.

Your Board/management committee/directors

You need to have an active board/committee of at least three unrelated trustees/committee members/directors. Where these are related, we will consider the relationship, conflicts of interest and the balance of power of the related Trustees/committee members.

For example, if two of four trustees are related, we are likely to view this as that they hold too much influence and that there is a conflict of interest; whereas if two out of ten trustees are related and there are clear procedures in place to manage any conflicts of interest, then this is likely to be seen acceptable if mitigations are in place.

If you are unsure, please get in touch and discuss your situation with us.

Exclusions

We do not fund:

- Inactive or newly formed groups.
- Sole traders or private businesses.
- Branches of international, national or regional organisations.
- Projects which promote a religion or faith.
- School PTAs or 'Friends of' groups.
- Member-only benefit groups.
- Building improvements.

Grant conditions

- All funds must be spent within one year.
- Work with our grants team during application.
- Meet with our team as needed.
- Collaborate with Bedfordshire CVS if required.

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How to apply

Applying

1. Email an Expression of Interest to grants@harpurtrust.org.uk including:
 - Organisation name.
 - Lead contact details.
 - Organisation type and purpose.
 - Brief overview of the project and of the funding request.
2. A grants team member will contact you to discuss eligibility and arrange a meeting with members of the board/management committee.
3. You will receive support to develop your application to help you think strategically, identify gaps, strengthen your case for support, and plan for challenges.
4. Submit your application by the agreed deadline.
5. Receive feedback and funding decision.

Note: Support is available during the application development phase, but this may be limited based on staff capacity and project timelines.

Receiving a grant

Once the grant agreement is signed and returned, the full amount will be paid. Progress and final reports may be required depending on project duration. Your grants team member will assist with reporting.

What we aim to learn about your organisation?

This process helps develop a relationship between ourselves and your organisation, which is why we like to complete some aspects in person rather than remotely or via a telephone call. During meetings, we assess the:

- Organisation's mission and impact.
- Leadership and volunteer roles.
- Funding needs and intended outcomes.
- Vision for post-grant improvements.

Contact us

For an informal discussion telephone 01234 369500. To submit an expression of interest or make an enquiry email: grants@harpurtrust.org.uk