

Wandsworth Grant Fund

Prospectus

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Forward by Councillor Akinola

I am delighted to introduce the Wandsworth Grant Fund 2026. Wandsworth's voluntary and community sector plays an extraordinary role in supporting residents, strengthening neighbourhoods, and helping us respond to the challenges and opportunities facing our borough. Your work is creative, compassionate, and rooted in deep local knowledge. The Wandsworth Grant Fund exists to support and sustain that work.

We know in recent years the funding landscape has changed for charities and community organisations. It has been more difficult to secure the funding you need to deliver your work. So we have listened carefully to the voluntary and community sector and reviewed the programme in direct response to your feedback. Your insights have helped us strengthen our guidance and ensure the fund better reflects the realities and pressures faced by local groups, today.

You have said that community organisations, large and small, need flexibility, stability, and the security to innovate, to grow. That is why we're now investing in both one year and multi-year funding and remain committed to investing in projects that support people in Wandsworth – from children and young people, to strengthening mental wellbeing, or building greener neighbourhoods. The fund is now designed to be practical, accessible and responsive to change.

We heard that applying for funding can sometimes feel daunting. This Prospectus sets out clearly what we are looking for, who can apply, and how we will assess applications. We want every organisation that brings value to Wandsworth to feel able



Councillor Kemi Akinola
Deputy Leader, Wandsworth Council

to step forward. If you have an idea that could make a difference - whether by piloting something new, expanding a successful project, or deepening work that is already underway - I encourage you to engage with with the VCS team, attend a meet the funder session or speak to your local councillors.

Lastly thank you to the groups and communities: volunteers, activists, artists, carers, leaders, and residents, and others who continue to make Wandsworth a great place to live. I hope through this fund we can help support your vision, your energy and your commitment to improving lives.

The Wandsworth Grant Fund

The Wandsworth Grant Fund (WGF) is a practical grants fund for 'not-for-profit' projects and activities benefitting residents and communities of the London Borough of Wandsworth. The Fund is guided by six principles:

- 1) We invest in the voluntary and community sector to help organisations become sustainable and maximise their impact.
- 2) We fund projects that drive innovation, test new approaches, and respond to local needs.
- 3) We support collaborative projects that build strong partnerships between the VCS, residents, and wider stakeholders.
- 4) Our grants expand the range of services and activities available to residents.
- 5) We back initiatives that help communities develop the skills and confidence to lead local change.
- 6) We enable organisations to remain flexible and responsive so they can tackle local challenges and emerging needs

Eligibility criteria

Who can apply?

- **UK charities registered with the Charity Commission** including Charitable Incorporated Organisations (CIO)
- **Companies Limited by guarantee**
- **Community Interest Companies** - CICs must provide clear public benefit and avoid private gain, with most directors unpaid and any pay or benefits for directors being reasonable, proportionate, and approved by non-executive directors. CICs should have an asset lock and charitable objectives aligned with their purpose.
- **Community groups and unincorporated associations**
- Organisations must be able to show at least 12 months of operational activity to be eligible to apply.

Broadly we cannot accept applications from for-profit organisations or individuals. However, in some circumstances we may be able to accept applications from individuals who are operating as a sole trader – this will most likely be the case for Arts Professionals looking to deliver arts/cultural activity in the borough under that theme.

Schools are welcome to apply, as are charities working in partnership with them. However, to be eligible, the project must offer something *additional* that the school isn't already required to provide by law. In other words, the activity can't be part of the school's statutory duties.

Applicants must also have and be able to provide and confirm the following:

- **Governing document:** A signed governing document must be in place that is appropriate for your organisation (a constitution, set of rules, or articles of association).
- **Trustees/directors:** Your organisation must have a minimum of 3 unrelated trustees, directors or members of the management committee (for unincorporated groups).
- **Accounts:** Applicants must be able to show at least 12 months of operational activity by providing yearly accounts or equivalent financial records. If you are a registered charity or charitable company, please send us the accounts for your most recent financial year. **These accounts should include income, expenditure and a balance sheet.**

If you are a community group, unincorporated association, or a newer organisation that has not yet finalised your first set of annual accounts, we can accept internal financial information such as management accounts or income and expenditure summaries.

- **Bank Account:** Applicants must have a bank account in the organisation's name.
- **Policies:** You must have policies and insurances in place appropriate for your organisation, including a safeguarding document and public liability insurance.
- **Location:** Applicants do not have to be based in the borough, but the project must benefit Wandsworth Residents, and we would expect the bulk of delivery to take place in Wandsworth.
- **Councillor Endorsement:** All applicants **must** secure an endorsement from a Wandsworth Councillor to pass eligibility. For projects based in one ward, only one endorsement is needed. For projects spanning two or more wards, two councillor endorsements are needed. You can identify councillors representing your project area via the Wandsworth Council website here: <https://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/the-council/councillors/find-your-councillors/>

Our funding

There are two types of grant within the Wandsworth Grant Fund, the Innovation & Growth Fund and Multi-Year Grant Fund:

Innovation & Growth

The **Innovation & Growth** fund is designed to support voluntary and community sector organisations that are testing new ideas, expanding successful approaches, or strengthening the sector through creative and forward-thinking methods. Core aspects of this fund include:

- Single year funding for projects delivered up to 12 months
- Available grants of £500 - £10,000
- Three rounds of funding each year

- A focus on approaches that are driving positive change and meet the following criteria:
 - Piloting completely new activity or that which is new to the sector or borough.
 - Making use of new technology or tools.
 - Responding to new local trends or issues.
 - Using existing approaches to scale-up activity or spread work to other communities
- Applicants can apply with an existing project, as long as they can show how it meets the Innovation & Growth criteria outlined above.

Multi-Year Grant Fund

The **Multi-Year Grant Fund** is designed to support projects delivering over two years, providing organisations with longer-term stability for deeper and more sustained impact. Introduced in response to direct feedback from applicants and grantees, who highlighted the need for longer term funding, core aspects of this fund include:

- Funding is available for two-year projects delivering for a maximum of 24 months
- Up to £10,000 is available each year of delivery for a maximum grant of £20,000.
- There is just one funding round for this fund per year
- Applicants must have received a grant from Wandsworth Council towards a project they would like to continue through the Wandsworth grant fund multi-year funding
- Applicants must apply for an existing project and be able to demonstrate at least 6 months delivery of the project - we cannot fund new or pilot projects under this fund.

You may submit one application per fund per round. However, some restrictions apply for organisations who currently have a WGF grant:

Innovation & Growth Fund - If you have an Innovation & Growth grant, you can apply again one year after the date of your last successful application. If your current project is still running when you apply, any new grant offer will include a condition that you must finish your existing project and submit your end of project report before starting the new one.

Multi-Year Grant Fund - If you have a multiyear grant, you may apply for an Innovation & Growth grant once your multiyear project has finished and your End of project report has been submitted; however, you cannot apply for another multiyear grant until 12 months after the end date recorded in that report.

This means that:

- You **cannot hold more than one WGF grant at a time**. If your organisation has an active grant in either fund, you cannot apply to the other fund.
- If you have a multi-year project, once this has come to an end you can apply for Innovation & Growth funding but must wait 12 months to apply again for Multi-Year funding.
- If you have an Innovation & Growth grant, you may re-apply while your current project is still running, but any new funding will only be released once your existing project is completed and your report has been submitted.
- If you do not currently hold WGF funding, you can apply to both funds when they are open

- If your application is unsuccessful, you can reapply to the next round —there is no waiting period.

Thematic Priorities

There are six thematic areas, and your project must demonstrate a clear link to at least one of them. Each theme also includes specific priorities, and your application should show exactly which of these priorities your project will addresses.

Funding will be prioritised where projects support young unpaid carers, vulnerable adults, and communities facing discrimination, ensuring resources reach groups with the greatest need. Priority will also be given to projects that improve residents' individual and financial resilience to cope with the cost of living.

Raising Aspirations

We are committed to helping working-age residents who are unemployed, economically inactive, or at risk of social exclusion. Our goal is to build stronger, more resilient communities by raising aspirations and developing local skills.

Theme Priorities include:

1. **Supporting residents into employment, training, or enterprise** - Including outreach to those who are hard to reach, people out of work long-term, residents aged 40+, and adults with learning disabilities, as well as support for people starting their own business.
2. **Building skills, confidence, and job readiness** - Including training, digital skills, interview preparation, and support that helps people sustain employment once they start work.
3. **Connecting residents to real job opportunities in growth sectors** - Including training linked to vacancies in areas like creative industries, tech, construction, and healthcare.

Arts and Culture

As part of our legacy from our time as London Borough of Culture, we seek to support the development and delivery of creative projects designed with, and for, Wandsworth residents that support the cultural life of the borough.

Working across all art genres (e.g. community festivals, choirs, performances, visual arts), this funding is designed to support all residents accessing, engaging and/or participating in creative activities. WGF applications should align with the Arts and Culture Strategy 2021–31, and help to contribute towards at least one of the seven goals

We are keen to support projects that work with residents from a wide range of backgrounds and reach new and/or hard to reach audiences, including those who might not have access to technology and resources.

Theme Priorities include:

1. **The development and delivery of high quality, flexible and responsive arts led activities** - from across all art genres
2. **Developing strong partnerships** - that also help to build applicants knowledge and understanding of groups, networks and organisations in the borough
3. **Research and development/pilot activity** - that tests new ways of working, that has clear benefit to residents and the cultural offer in the borough

4. **Sustainable skills development** - opportunities for Wandsworth-based artists, organisations and residents to develop their skills, practice and/or ways of working to help ensure their cultural offer can be maintained and sustainable

Environment and Attractive Neighbourhoods

We're working to make Wandsworth greener and cleaner for everyone by cutting emissions and pollution, adapting to climate change, and supporting sustainability and the circular economy.

Theme Priorities include:

1. **Tackling climate change and reducing carbon emissions** - reducing the borough's carbon footprint, improving energy efficiency and increasing renewable energy generation, and supporting delivery of Wandsworth's Environment and Sustainability Strategy.
2. **Improving local environmental quality and biodiversity** - Includes enhancing green spaces, boosting biodiversity, improving local air quality and adapting to our changing climate including flooding and overheating
3. **Reducing waste and promoting a circular, low waste lifestyle** – Projects that encourage low waste, circular lifestyle choices — supporting increased reuse, composting, and recycling — to cut resource use and reduce carbon emissions from waste
4. **Encouraging sustainable travel and developing green skills** - including active and sustainable travel initiatives, as well as increasing climate awareness and green skills—especially for children and young people.

Children and Young People

We want to improve opportunities for children and young people aged 0–19 (or up to 25 for those with disabilities). We're especially focused on supporting those who need extra help to thrive, including young people with disabilities, from low-income families, young carers, those at risk of exploitation or exclusion, in care or leaving care, and those facing discrimination due to ethnicity, gender identity, sexuality, or other factors.

Theme Priorities include:

1. **Early help and prevention for vulnerable children and young people** - Including support through key life transitions, safeguarding those at risk, involving young people in decisions, and providing safe spaces, trusted adults, and positive activities.
2. **Activities that promote healthy lifestyles, safety, and personal development** - Covering opportunities for 8–19 year olds to build life skills, stay active, develop confidence, and reach their full potential within their communities.
3. **Support for structured youth provision and community groups** - Including funding for uniformed groups (such as Scouts, Guides, Cadets) to purchase equipment, improve buildings, support transport for educational trips, and deliver new activities.

Citizenship and Civic Engagement

We aim to encourage active citizenship so that residents feel empowered to take part in community life and shape the places where they live.

Theme Priorities include:

1. **Increasing active citizenship, voice, and participation** - Encouraging volunteering, supporting residents to build confidence and communication skills, and helping people—

especially underrepresented groups—speak up for themselves and take part in local opportunities.

2. **Strengthening community leadership, cohesion, and intergenerational connections** - Building confidence and leadership within communities and supporting projects that bring different ages, cultures, and faith groups together.
3. **Supporting inclusion and engagement for underrepresented communities** - Ensuring disadvantaged or marginalised groups can access the borough's opportunities and play an active role in community life.
4. **Enhancing the sustainability and engagement of community organisations** – projects that help neighbourhood and residents' associations improve engagement, leadership, and long-term sustainability (except where already funded by Housing).

Health and Wellbeing

We support community led projects that help Wandsworth residents improve and maintain their health and wellbeing by building on local strengths and making good use of community based opportunities.

Theme Priorities include:

1. **Active Lifestyles and Healthy Eating** - Supporting activities that increase physical activity, promote healthy eating, improve access to nutritious food, and strengthen community capacity to provide healthy food.
2. **Supporting mental wellbeing, connection, and inclusion** - Reducing loneliness and social isolation, promoting mental wellbeing, improving digital inclusion, and providing cultural appropriate, community or peer led support.
3. **Strengthening support for carers and vulnerable groups** – Providing opportunities for unpaid carers to maintain their own wellbeing alongside their caring responsibilities, and ensuring accessible, inclusive support for residents with physical, sensory, or learning disabilities and other vulnerabilities.
4. **Aligning with local health priorities and strategies** - Projects supporting the aims of the Wandsworth Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy and contribute to wider borough health goals.

What can we fund?

We can fund a broad range of project related costs to help your project happen, including staffing, venue hire, equipment, training, volunteer expenses, transport, utilities, and reasonable food costs. Small scale capital (building) projects and refurbishments are also eligible.

We are **unable** to fund the following items/projects however:

- Activities that another organisation or public body has a statutory duty to deliver.
- Faith based activities that promote religious beliefs or mainly benefit a faith group's own members.
- Work that promotes political views or purposes.
- Tuition or university fees, or personal household items.
- General fundraising appeals.
- Contingency costs, bid writing fees, or recoverable VAT.
- Any work carried out before a grant is approved (retrospective costs).
- Projects that are not charitable or do not benefit Wandsworth residents.

- Sponsorship of individuals or re granting funds to individuals or other organisations.
- Organisations with more than one late filing to the Charity Commission, Companies House, or other regulators in the last two financial years.
- Activities that another organisation or public body has a statutory duty to deliver.

Developing your application

If you have questions about the fund criteria or the process to apply, please read our FAQs, in the first instance [here](#), and our guide to applying [here](#).

If your question isn't answered in our FAQs please reach out to Kieron Wasdall, Senior Voluntary Sector Grants and Project Officer on 020 8871 5802 who will be pleased to help. You can also email us at: wgf@wandsworth.gov.uk

All prospective applicants are strongly encouraged to discuss their application with Thematic Lead Officers within the Council, who can talk through your ideas and provide extra guidance and support to strengthen your application. You can find their contact details here.[\[INSERT LINK\]](#)

Submitting an application

Submission

Please submit a signed copy of your application with all your supporting documents to: wgf@wandsworth.gov.uk.

If you feel you may struggle to submit your application online, please reach out to the Grants Team at wgf@wandsworth.gov.uk to discuss this.

There are three rounds of WGF funding per year. Please check the [WGF webpage](#) for confirmed dates and sign up to [our newsletter](#) to stay up to date.

How we assess your application

After you submit your application, the Grants Team will complete initial eligibility checks to confirm that your organisation and application are eligible to apply. At this stage, if we have any questions, we will be in touch to clarify or request further information. We anticipate that a large number of groups will apply for grants, so we need to ensure that funding is directed to where there is most need. Due to the large number of applications, we may not always be able to contact you if the application is incomplete or we feel you have not provided enough evidence of need.

We recognise that demand for funding is high and that many organisations across the borough need support. As a result, competition for grants can be significant. To ensure fairness and transparency, we assess all applications against a range of factors. These considerations may

change over time in response to local needs and priorities, but typically include—though are not limited to the following:

- How well your project fits the criteria for the fund you're applying to.
- We look at how your project aligns with our priorities and whether you've shown clear evidence of need.
- We consider who will benefit, how they've helped shape the project, and the impact your project will have for residents.
- We review your past performance if you've been funded before.
- We look at your organisation's finances, reserves, and overall sustainability.
- We check whether your budget is reasonable, offers value for money, and how the project will continue after our funding ends.

What Comes Next

If you are **not** awarded funding

If you are not awarded funding, Officers will send you a notification letter informing you of the Council's decision. Officers are happy to provide further feedback upon request to support applicants with future applications – Please email wgf@wandsworth.gov.uk. Organisations are also encouraged to access other advice and support available from WCA at: <https://www.wandsworthcarealliance.org.uk/>

If you are awarded funding

If you are awarded funding, you will receive a grant offer letter and the Grant Terms and Conditions. To accept the grant, an authorised representative of your organisation must sign and date the Terms and Conditions and return them to wgf@wandsworth.gov.uk within one month of the letter being issued. Further details about the process will be provided in the offer letter.

Promoting your grant award

Once you have been awarded funding, we ask that you acknowledge the support of the **Wandsworth Grant Fund** and **Wandsworth Borough Council**. This might include publications, reports, press releases, publicity materials, or other promotional content related to your funded project. The acknowledgement doesn't need to be extensive — just a simple, clear reference that helps recognise the contribution of the Fund and the Council. Further guidance may be provided if you are awarded funding.

Monitoring requirements

All projects in receipt of an award will be required to monitor the progress of both activity and benefit to the participants. Projects will be expected to carry out a baseline measurement at the start of each project, using suitable methods related to the individuals and the intended benefits the project will provide e.g., increase in physical activity, improved air quality or entering employment. The monitoring of progress should be regular, aimed at the individual with identifiable progress being evaluated at the end of the project.

All projects must submit a completed reporting template within 30 days of the project's end. Please note that we cannot award funding for future funding rounds if any monitoring or reporting requirements remain outstanding.

Emergency Grant Process

There is provision within the Wandsworth Grant Fund for grants of between £500 and £5,000 to be made, on an exceptional and emergency basis, outside of scheduled bidding rounds on the grounds of urgency. To qualify for an emergency grant, applicants must be able to:

- Demonstrate the urgent nature of the request and why it is not possible to use the normal WGF process.
- Demonstrate that the proposed activity is of benefit to the residents of the borough and represents good value for money.
- Demonstrate that the emergency grant can be deployed in quick measure to reflect the urgency of the requirement.
- The standard eligibility of the Wandsworth Grant Fund must be met in terms of meeting the thematic priorities that we want to support, who we can fund and what we can fund.

This shouldn't be seen as a second chance of funding. If your project has been turned down under a previous round of funding we won't be able to support it via emergency funding.