

Active Communities Fund

Spring and Summer 2016



Supporting communities to become more resilient, develop their own ideas and do more for themselves.

The Active Communities Fund aims to help communities to become more resilient, to develop their own ideas and do more for themselves. The fund provides two types of grant, micro grants of up to £1,000 and small grants of up to £5,000.

Micro Grants – very small, one off, grants of up to £1,000.

This scheme is suitable for start-up or pilot projects and for small scale community events. It particularly targets initiatives developed through ABCD projects. There are no specific deadlines. Applications are considered every two months by the Cabinet Member and a senior officer.

Small Grants – grants of £1,001 to £5,000.

Grants are made for up to a year with the possibility of a second year if the project is successful. This scheme provides follow on funding for successful projects funded via micro grants as well as new projects. There are two rounds of funding each year. Applications are considered by a panel of community representatives which is chaired by the Cabinet Member.

⊙ What will be funded?

The Active Communities Fund supports projects which show they will contribute towards one of the following priorities;

- Promote community cohesion, bringing together people from different backgrounds through events, awareness campaigns and other local projects
- Encourage women's participation and voice in areas where they are underrepresented
- Help young people gain confidence and provide opportunities for them to reach their full potential
- Help bring public land and buildings into community ownership and projects which are trying to prevent valued community assets from being lost
- Develop a community response to combating domestic abuse and sexual violence (DASV) and female genital mutilation (FGM)
- Work with children and families to help them to be more physically active, to eat well and maintain a healthy weight, or to take more control of their own health and lifestyle choices
- Supporting the public health goals set out in the 2013 -18 Health and Wellbeing Strategy; increased healthy life expectancy and reduced differences in life expectancy between communities; increased resilience and independence, and a positive experience of care
- Promote a broad, holistic approach towards food and fuel poverty
- Give access to good quality welfare benefits advice or provide community based information and signposting to advice and support
- Promote digital and financial inclusion

⊙ How much is available?

The total fund is £180,000 per annum.
 The maximum award for a micro grant is £1,000 and for a small grant it is £5,000.
 We will normally provide only one grant per group at any one time.

⊙ Will my group be eligible?

To be eligible;

Projects must be based in Croydon. Priority will be given to organisations which are also based in Croydon or close to the borough boundary.

Applicants should have expenditure of less than £30,000 per annum. The Council will also take account of reserves held by organisations. Where projects are initiated by larger organisations, they will only be funded if they become independently constituted bodies with separate governance, management and, banking arrangements.

Applicants should have no more than the equivalent of two full time paid staff.

Applicants must meet the Council's requirements on governance, management, financial competence and equalities.

A new group does not need to meet these requirements before it applies for funding, but, if it is successful, it will need to be before the grant paid.

Projects must demonstrate good value for money. The financial information provided with the application does not need to be complicated but must show that benefits are worth the money invested.

Priority will be given to new activities and to groups which have not previously received ongoing funding from the Council.

The eligibility criteria regarding the size of the organisation may be waived where the

application is to provide activities relating to the priority, Work with children and families to help them to be more physically active.

⊙ What's the process?

Applications for both Micro and Small grants are made using simple on line forms. You can find the application forms for at www.croydon.gov.uk/acf.

Guidance is included on the forms to help you complete them. The forms can be partly completed and saved for you to go back to later on. When you are satisfied with what you have put in the form you submit it to us through a secure server.

We will not see your form until you are ready to submit it and all the information you have provided will remain confidential.

Micro grants – The form can be completed and submitted to the Council at any time. You should allow at least three months between the time you submit your application and the time you want your project to begin. When you submit your form we will let you know when it is likely to be considered.

Small Grants - There is a simple on-line form for you to complete and submit to the Council by 5.00pm on **Monday 11 January 2016**.

Applications will be assessed and submitted to an independent panel representing the Council and the voluntary sector. Successful applicants should hear by **1 March 2016**. The first payments will be made in **April 2016**.

We will also let you know early in March if your application is not successful and you will be offered the opportunity to get some feedback.

⊙ Training Timetable

All Training will happen at Croydon Council, Bernard Weatherill House, 8 Mint Walk, Croydon CR0 1EA 

NOVEMBER 2015 Training Sessions

Monday	16	11.00  - 2.00pm
Thursday	19	5.00pm - 8.00pm
Tuesday	24	5.00pm - 8.00pm
Thursday	26	2.30pm - 5.30pm

DECEMBER 2015 Training Sessions

Monday	7	2.30  - 5.30pm
Tuesday	8	5.30pm - 8.00pm

To book a training place email: thirdsector@croydon.gov.uk or telephone **020 8604 7029**

⊙ If we are not successful, will my group have another chance to apply?

There will be more than one round of applications for small grants each year. The next round will open **April 2016** for projects to run from the Autumn 2016.

Micro grants has no deadlines so applications can be made at any time.

⊙ So what about the small print?

The fund is public money so there have to be some minimum standards about your group and the way you use the money if you are awarded a grant. A detailed list is set out with the application form, but these are the basics.

- You must use the grant for the purpose it was awarded for. If you don't, we might ask for the money back. We know that circumstances change but you will need to get our permission in writing if you want to use the money in a different way.

- You must have a constitution or set of rules which show you are a group which is set up not for profit. We cannot fund individuals. Your group does not have to be registered as a charity (unless by law it has to be) but if your application is successful we will ask to see your constitution and the names of your committee members before any funding is paid to you. We may also ask to see your membership list. If you need help putting together a constitution, help is available (see HELP! Box below).
- You must have a bank account in the name of your group with two signatories.
- You must keep a record of your income and expenditure and (as a minimum) somebody independent of your group should check your accounts each year.
- We expect groups we fund to advance equality and community cohesion. If you don't have your own equalities policy and you are awarded a grant we will expect you to agree a policy before any money is paid.
- The information you provide with your application will come within the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Data Protection Act 1998.

⊙ HELP!

There will be sessions for potential applicants to guide you through the application process.

Details can be found at www.croydon.gov.uk/acf

Other groups may be able to assist you in getting your group set up.

Croydon Voluntary Action
www.cvalive.org.uk

Croydon BME Forum
www.bmeforum.org

Asian Resource Centre
www.arccltd.com