What’s inside?

The National Lottery Community Fund uses money raised by National Lottery players to support people and communities to thrive. We want to work with you to make sure that we are maximising the potential of communities across the UK.

In England, we make grants of over £10,000 through Reaching Communities. The grants are awarded to voluntary and community organisations or social enterprises for up to five years.

We can fund a mix of project activities, operating costs, organisational development and capital costs. Communities come in all shapes and sizes, and National Lottery funding is there for everyone.

There is no closing date for Reaching Communities, applications can be made at any time. The amount of time it takes will vary depending on our ongoing conversations – in most cases we’ll try to give you a decision and feedback within three months of receiving a full application.

Our funding priorities

Through all of our funding in England we support ideas that:

- **bring people together and build strong relationships in and across communities** We’re particularly interested in activities that enable people to spend time together doing things they enjoy and benefit from, learning from each other and building networks, which help make life better for everyone.

- **improve the places and spaces that matter to communities** Communities are able to thrive when they have places and spaces to meet, which belong to the community and are open to all. This can be a community centre, a green space or an online network. We’re particularly interested in ideas that help to create sustainable places, both environmentally and financially.

- **enable more people to fulfil their potential by working to address issues at the earliest possible stage**

  We want to hear about ideas that provide people with the confidence and skills to achieve their ambitions. In particular, we want to support ideas that aim to take early action, and help to ensure people are ready for everything.
We are also looking for projects to be people-led, strengths based and connected

- **People-led**
  
  We believe that people understand what's needed in their communities better than anyone, so it’s important to us that you involve your community in the design, development and delivery of the activities you’re planning.

  **You might want to ask yourself:**
  
  - Have I spoken to the people in my community?
  - Have the people in my community told me what they need and what's important to them?
  - Have I listened to them and used what they've said to create my project?

- **Strengths based**
  
  We’d like to support people and communities to build on the knowledge, skills and experience they already have, to make the changes they want.

  **You might want to ask yourself:**
  
  - What’s already working in my community?
  - How will my project add to these positive things that are already working?
  - How will my project make the most of any resources that are already helping my community?

- **Connected**
  
  We want to know that you’ve a good understanding of other activities and services in your community. We’d like to see how you’ll compliment these, so you can add value to what’s already there.

  **You might want to ask yourself:**
  
  - Have I spoken to other groups in the area that are doing something similar to my project?
  - Have I thought about how we can all help each other?

**What we need to know**

Reaching Communities supports organisations with great ideas and when considering your funding, we need to know:

- **how you developed your idea and involved people who will benefit from it**
  
  We want to see that you’ve spoken to people and listened to what they have to say.

- **how you support what’s already working well**
  
  Use your knowledge of the skills and experience people already have and explore how you can build on it.

- **how you test new approaches**
  
  We’re interested in your original and creative ideas for achieving your mission and are keen to share what you learn with others.
• you understand the existing activities and services that do similar work
  Have you spoken to other groups? What can you learn from them, and how can you contribute to
  what they already do?

Talk to us about how you intend on fulfilling the ambitions of the communities you serve.

Equalities
We’ll want to know about your equalities policy. Please visit our website for more information on our
equality principles: tnlfundcommunity.org.uk/equalities

Environment
We’ll want to know about your environmental policy if we’re interested in your idea. Please visit the
Gov.uk website for more information: gov.uk/government/publications/environmental-responsibility-
for-charities

Safeguarding
We need to make sure that any children, young people or vulnerable adults that you work with will be safe.
We expect you to have a policy that explains how you make sure of this, and that the policy is put into
practice.

Who can apply?
We can fund the following types of organisations:

• voluntary and community organisations

• registered charity or charitable incorporated organisation (CIO)

• a group of organisations, as long as they are led by a voluntary and community organisation

• schools

• statutory bodies (including local authorities, town, parish or community council)

• Not for profit companies including companies limited by guarantee and Community Interest
  Companies with two or more directors (see below for ineligible CICs).

We cannot accept applications from:

• individuals or sole traders

• organisations based outside the UK

• applications made by one organisation on behalf of another

• organisations that are aimed at generating profits primarily for private distribution. This includes
  those without sufficient asset locks or organisations that can pay profits to directors or shareholders,
  which may include some CICs limited by shares.

• organisations without at least two unconnected* people on the board or committee. (*not a relation
  by blood, marriage, in a long-term relationship or people living together at the same address)
If you’re unclear whether you can be funded, please contact us.

We will consider funding unincorporated groups, but normally expect the groups to use our funding to incorporate, and where appropriate, register as a charity. If a group isn’t incorporated, the individual members are personally responsible for the debts and liabilities of the organisation, including for any misuse of the grant, payments to contractors and for any negligence or health and safety issues around their project. It is also a legal requirement that any group that would qualify as a charity registers with the Charity Commission once income is more than £5,000.

What can you spend the money on?

You can apply to us for funding to deliver project activities and staffing salaries, running costs related to your project, as well as small-scale refurbishment and the purchase of any equipment you need.

We’re also interested in supporting your organisation to develop, valuing your strengths and helping you identify how to increase your organisation’s skills and knowledge. You can include organisational development costs as part of your overall grant budget.

We can’t fund:

• activities where a profit will be distributed for private gain
• religious activity (although we can fund religious organisations if their project benefits the wider community and doesn’t include religious content)
• activity that replaces government funding, for example, we can only fund school activities that are additional to the curriculum
• activities that benefit individuals, rather than a wider community
• political activities
• retrospective costs and loan repayments.
How to apply

There’s no closing date for Reaching Communities – you can apply at any time.

1. Find out if we can fund you
   - Check that you’re eligible
   - Read our guidance
   - Talk to us (contact information is at the end of this guidance.)

2. Tell us your idea (online form, video, email, phone call or other)
   - Reviewed by panel
   - Accepted
   - Not accepted

3. Submit a full proposal (our Funding Officer will work with you)
   - Decision made by panel
   - (supported by Funding Officer’s report)
   - Successful
   - Not successful

4. Ongoing support
   We’ll support you to celebrate and promote your National Lottery funding and agree how you will update us with your progress.

1. Find out if we can fund you

2. Tell us your idea
   First, give us a brief outline of what you want to do. You can submit a form online, send us a video, or email us. If you have problem submitting your idea in any way, do call us. We’ll then get in touch to find out more about your idea. We appreciate you may not have all of the details of your idea, but to help us build a good understanding, please include responses to the following; We’ll ask:

   - what do you want to do and why?
   - who will benefit?
   - the difference the project will make
   - is it something new, or are you continuing something that has worked well previously?
   - the location of the project
   - how are people and communities involved with your project?
how much money do you need from us and for how long?
how does your idea fit in with other local activities?
The amount of information and level of detail we require at this stage will depend on the amount of funding you’re asking for and the complexity of the idea. In most cases, we would expect no more than two to three sides of A4 paper or a short video of a few minutes.
You can include information you’ve already prepared and send us links to your website. How you tell us about your idea is up to you.
This information will be presented to a panel of staff from The National Lottery Community Fund who understand the local context in which you’re operating, and have relevant thematic knowledge. We will make a collective judgement about whether the idea is something we might fund.
We will take into account how well your idea fits with our funding priorities and how well you have demonstrated that you are people-led, strengths based and connected.
We always receive far more applications than we can fund, which means that we have to make tough decisions about who is successful in getting our funding. We will communicate our decisions and provide feedback wherever possible, ensuring that your time is not wasted.

3. Submit a full proposal
If your idea is accepted, we will ask you to submit a full proposal.

Your application will be made up of:

• your proposal for funding
• organisation details

Guidance and an organisation details form will be sent to you by your funding officer. It’s worth noting that we only accept full proposals after we have said that we would like to know more about your initial idea.

Your Funding Officer will work with you and keep you informed every step of the way.

A funding decision on your proposal will be made by a funding panel, based on an assessment by the relevant Funding Officer.

If you are successful
You’ll get a call from your Funding Officer and an offer letter in the post.

If you are unsuccessful
You’ll get a call or email from your Funding Officer letting you know the decision and offering any relevant feedback.

4. Ongoing support
If your application for funding is successful, we’ll work together to identify the right level of support throughout the duration of your grant.
We’ll agree your payment plan, how often you will update us on your progress, and how we gain assurance for the funding we have awarded.

We’ll also discuss how we can support you to celebrate and promote your National Lottery funding, engage with the wider community and share your learning with others.

**Accessibility**

Please contact us to discuss any particular communication needs you may have. Contact information is at the end of this guidance.

**Extra information**

**Does your idea involve land or building development?**

We have additional requirements for proposals that involve a capital element. Please request our guidance and checklist for land and building projects or speak to one of our Funding Officers about your idea.

**Would you like to apply for under £10,000?**

Please check our website to find more information about National Lottery Awards for All: tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/under10k

**Do you require our guidance in larger print, hard copy or an alternative format?**

Call our Advice line, text relay or email us to request this.

**Data protection**

We expect all organisations that we fund to understand their responsibilities for collecting and using information about any organisations and individuals they will work with. Any ways in which you collect and use information must be in line with legal guidelines.

Our data protection and privacy notice gives more information about how we store and use personal data and the lawful basis for this. Please read the full notice which is published on our website at tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/data-protection or contact us to request a hard copy. The notice may be updated from time to time.

**Checks**

As an organisation that gives out public funds, we carry out some checks on the information you provide us. Learn more about our checks at tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/information-checks.

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**Get in touch**

general.enquiries@tnlcommunityfund.org.uk

tnlcommunityfund.org.uk

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