

TOWER HAMLETS COUNCIL

Emergency Funding, FAQs

1) What is the purpose of the Emergency Funding Programme?

The Council has limited grant funding support available to local Voluntary and Community Sector Organisations, based in Tower Hamlets, who are experiencing an unforeseen emergency which is placing a council funded project at risk.

2) What is the maximum funding that can be applied for?

Grants of up to £20,000 are available for organisations to apply for. The average grant amount so far has been £10,000.

3) When you can bid?

This is a rolling fund; applications will be considered all year round.

4) Who is eligible to apply?

Applications can be submitted by voluntary and community organisations who meet the following criteria:

- Be a voluntary/community sector/ not-for-profit organisation
- Have a formal legal structure together with an appropriate governing document
- Have a base within Tower Hamlets or a demonstrable track record of successful service delivery within the borough
- Have a bank or building society account in the organisation's name
- The organisation is able to demonstrate clear plans for financial viability in the medium/long term
- Provides project activities that mainly benefit Tower Hamlets residents
- Is already in receipt of Council funding which may be at risk as a result of the emergency
- Provides evidence that their project/organisation is consistent with Council priorities as detailed in the Strategic / Community plan
- Is in danger of closing down or is unable to continue to provide core funded services at a 'reasonable level or standard'
- Has already taken/or is in the process of implementing reasonable measures to address the situation
- Is able to demonstrate that it can sustain itself once any emergency funding has been utilised
- Has a formal reserves policy

5) How do we apply?

Application forms can be found at:

http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgnl/community_and_living/community_grants/community_grants.aspx

6) How are decisions made?

Applications are assessed by the Council's Third Sector Team; with additional advice sought from other service areas as required. Additional information may be requested from applicants to provide clarification on certain points.

7) What items are likely and unlikely to be successful for funding?

As a general Guide, grants for the following are Likely to be supported
Building repairs (<i>for essential emergency work</i>)
Health & Safety equip/improvements
DDA Improvements
Redundancy costs
Staff salaries / wages (<i>to cover unforeseen med/long-term absences</i>)
Winding up costs

As a general guide, grants for the following are Unlikely to be supported
Accreditation fees
Computers / tablets / smartphones
Fundraising strategies
Business plans
Consultancy fees
Insurance
Delivering new project
Enhancing existing project
Furniture
Photocopying
Staff training
Team building away-days
Volunteer training
To pay LBTH debts
Project match funding
Volunteer expenses
Utilities (<i>gas, electricity etc.</i>)
Rent increases (<i>where due notice of the increase has been provided</i>)

8) Will there be maximum amounts for different things?

There are no maximum amounts for different items of expenditure although organisations are expected to demonstrate value for money in their application.

9) We are not sure if our costs are eligible or not. Can we contact you to discuss our application before submitting it?

If you have any queries on items you would like to apply for, please email us at thirdsector@towerhamlets.gov.uk in the first instance.

10) If an organisation is unsuccessful when can they reapply?

Organisations that are unsuccessful with their original application are eligible to submit further applications as they wish.

11) If successful for an application, say for £5K, will an organisation be able to submit another application in a few months' time?

Successful organisations are not eligible for funding for 12 months, from the date of their signed grant agreement. Previous funding must have been satisfactorily used in order to submit a new application.

12) What are the criteria on organisations holding reserves and applying for emergency funding?

All organisations that apply for Emergency Funding must have a reserves policy which clearly details the level of reserves that the organisation should hold. This should include details of reserves that are 'free' and those that are required if the organisation is at risk of closure.

Reserves that are deemed to be 'free' must be exhausted before Emergency Funding can be considered. Potential applicants should also bear in mind that the Charity Commission guidance suggests that reasons why organisations should build up reserves includes tackling '*the risk of unforeseen emergency and other unexpected need for funds*'.

Therefore, an organisation's 'first port of call' in dealing with an emergency, should not be an Emergency Funding application to the Council.