Prospectus – Mayor’s Community Grant Programme

2023 to 2027

24/04/2023

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## Foreword



As Mayor, I have seen the crucial role the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) plays in supporting residents with important services and activities, and this has become even more vital in the current cost-of-living crisis.

For too long, the Voluntary and Community Sector in Tower Hamlets has been at the back of the queue when it comes to funding and investment, and I am determined to ensure it receives all the support it needs.

My vision is to support and invest in a thriving and diverse VCS to enable it to improve outcomes for residents, providing them with the vital services they need and deserve.

That’s why I am pleased to announce the launch of the Mayor’s Community Grants Programme, which will provide £3.5 million of annual funding for the VCS over the next three and a half years. In addition to this programme, we will be launching a new Small Grants Programme in December 2023 worth an annual £800,000 over five themes.

To develop the programme, we have engaged extensively with the VCS, residents, and partners to ensure that it addresses the challenges people in the borough face. This new programme will address the needs of the community and provide funding for projects that achieve the objectives outlined in our ambitious [Strategic Plan 2022-2026](https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/Documents/Strategy-and-performance/Tower-Hamlets-Council-Strategic-Plan-2022-2026.pdf).The programme will focus on the following themes:

* Tackling the cost-of-living crisis
* Accelerating Education
* Boosting Culture, Business, Jobs and Skills
* Investing in Public Services
* Empowering Communities and Fighting Crime

I want to ensure that our grants programme supports a diverse range of groups and benefits all sections of our community. That is why we will aim to ensure the grant supports small, medium, and large organisations who provide borough-wide coverage.

We have a range of support available for organisations seeking to apply for the grant. Please see page 9 for further information.

I wish you all the best with your application.

# **Lutfur Rahman**

# **Executive Mayor Tower Hamlets**

# **Introduction**

The council’s vision is to support and invest in a thriving and diverse voluntary and community sector (VCS) to enable it to improve outcomes for Tower Hamlets residents.

The Mayor’s Community Grants Programme (MCGP) will support VCS organisations to provide services that address the challenges our residents face which are set out in in the [Tower Hamlets Council Strategic Plan 2022-2026](https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/Documents/Strategy-and-performance/Tower-Hamlets-Council-Strategic-Plan-2022-2026.pdf) and [Tower Hamlets Voluntary And Community Sector Strategy 2020-2024](https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgnl/advice_and_benefits/voluntary_organisations/voluntary_organisations.aspx#:~:text=Tower%20Hamlets%20Voluntary%20and%20Community,the%20public%20and%20private%20sectors.)

The MCGP has been developed through engagement with residents, local VCS and Council services. The principles of the programme are to:

* Support a wider range of services and groups to ensure all sections of the community benefit from a grants programme and address the challenges facing Tower Hamlets residents.
* support services and activities that are inclusive, promote cohesion and are designed and delivered with residents
* provide long-term funding to VCS organisations in return for efficient and effective services
* achieve value for money
* improve partnership working between local VCS organisations.

The purpose of this prospectus is to provide information to VCS organisations who are considering making an application to the MCGP and guidance on how to develop high quality applications.

All documentation relating to bids to the MCGP is on the council’s website at [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/mcgp](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/mcgp). Information is also on the [Tower Hamlets Council for Voluntary Services (THCVS)](https://thcvs.org.uk/news/mcgp/) website.

# General guidance

This part of the guidance sets out some of the key facts about the Mayor’s Community Grant Programme and some of the main points to consider before you decide to apply for funding.

The council has also produced a frequently asked questions document (FAQs) which will be updated regularly up to the closing date for bids. You can find the [FAQs](https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgnl/advice_and_benefits/voluntary_organisations/Council-Grant-Programme-for-VCS.aspx).

## Eligibility

The Mayor’s Community Grant Programme is for projects and initiatives that will benefit Tower Hamlets residents.

Funding is available to:

* voluntary and community organisations
* registered charities, including charitable incorporated organisations
* registered not-for-profit companies
* registered community interest companies
* faith-based groups, where the funding is for inclusive activity that is open to all
* Organisations who have a registered office in Tower Hamlets, have a base within Tower Hamlets, or can demonstrate a track record of successful service delivery within the borough for at least two years.

Funding is not available to:

* individuals
* sole traders
* profit making companies
* political organisations
* religious activities - the council will not fund activities that propagate a particular faith or faiths.

## How much funding is available?

The total budget for the Mayor’s Community Grants Programme is £3.5 m per year. Funding will be provided for 3.5 years between 1 November 2023 and 31 March 2027.

The budget has been allocated across five themes:

:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Theme** | **Annual budget** |
| Tackling Cost of Living | £900,000 |
| Accelerate Education | £700,000 |
| Culture, Business, Jobs and Skills | £650,000 |
| Invest in Public Services | £800,000 |
| Empower Communities and Fight Crime | £450,000 |

## How many projects can organisations apply for?

Due to limited funds and our commitment to fund a wider range of projects, organisations are restricted to applying for a maximum of 5 projects across all the themes. If you are applying as a member of a consortium, it will count as one of your fiveprojects.

## 

## How much can organisations apply for?

There is a maximum limit of £40,000 per annum for each project.

Please note that for the cost-of-living theme, we welcome consortium bids. For consortium bids, there is no maximum award within the budget assigned for the theme but for individual projects there is a £40,000 limit.

Your organisation should apply for the funds it needs to be able to deliver its projects effectively, whilst being mindful of the overall budget available for each theme and the scope of the schemes and priorities within it.

The council is seeking to achieve maximum impact for local people from a limited budget. Therefore, we may offer an amount lower than the funding applied for and where this happens, we will discuss and agree the level of service you can achieve with the amount of funding offered.

## What can the funding be used for?

MCGP funding can be used to cover all the costs of delivering a project, including:

* + - * staff salaries and associated costs. Note: all staff of the organisation applying must be paid at least the London Living Wage. Organisations offered a grant award may be expected to confirm adherence to London Living Wage - both before project commencement and when project is live and monitored - by making payslip/payroll evidence available to the Council
      * room hire
      * equipment, materials, and other project resources
      * organisational or core costs (including rent, heat, light, insurance) proportional to the size of the project.

Funding cannot be used:

* + - * for capital works or major building works
      * for general charitable appeals
      * to pay back debt or cover past expenditure.

Projects will need to demonstrate that they will provide value for money.

## Outcomes Focus

MCGP is an outcome focused funding programme. Outcomes are the changes that your project aims to bring about over time. They are usually described using change words, such as ‘reduced’ ‘increased’ or ‘improved’.

Each of the MCGP funding schemes includes a set of outcomes, which have been developed in partnership with residents and the VCS.

Your organisation will be expected to work towards one or more of the outcomes under the theme to which you are applying to and to describe your own specific project outcomes.

Below is an example for a project working with older people:

**Outcome: Theme 4, Scheme A, Outcome 1:** Improved physical and mental health outcomes for older people

| **Example Project Outcome** | **Example Indicator** | **Indicator level**  **(Targets)** | **Timescale** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Older people in the borough report improved mental health well-being because of support from project and taking part in project’s activities | The number of older people reporting improved mental health well- being due to project support. | 45 older adults report improvements in their mental health | By the end of each project year |
|  |  | 40 older people report a reduction in feelings of social isolation due to participation in project activities | By the end of each project year |
|  |  | A total of 135 older people report that they have improved mental health due to participation in the project | By the end of the project |

## Co-design

Co-design means working collaboratively with stakeholders, including service users, volunteers, and staff, to design and develop the way your project is run. We expect your application to demonstrate how you will incorporate continuous co-design into the life of your projects. We recognise that some organisations will be more familiar with the language of co-design and co-production than others.

## Partnerships and consortia

We strongly encourage all applicants to work in partnership with other voluntary organisations and statutory services in the borough.

Your organisations can apply for funding individually or as part of a partnership or consortium. There is no set requirement for partnerships within any of the themes. However, we would welcome a partnership for the **Tackling the Cost-of-Living Crisis’** theme.

Consortia bids can be made for linked local services which provide a borough wide provision.

A partnership or consortium organisations who are applying together will need to demonstrate that partnership arrangements are in place.

Formal consortia will need a written memorandum of agreement with a lead accountable body that makes the application on behalf of the consortium.

## Equality

Your organisations must have an equality and diversity policy and be able to demonstrate:

* how you will be able to support our duties under the [Public Sector Equality Duty](https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgnl/community_and_living/Equalities_in_Tower_Hamlets/Equality-Act/Equality-Act.aspx)
* awareness of the diverse needs of the community/area targeted by your project
* what actions have/will be taken to ensure that equality and diversity issues are addressed in the planning and delivery of project activities/services
* how you will support our work to be an [anti-racist borough](https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgnl/community_and_living/Inequality-Commission/Tower-Hamlets-Anti-Racist-Pledge.aspx)
* a profile of the anticipated beneficiaries of the project, with an explanation if any specific groups are targeted.

Organisations can find more information about some of our equalities priorities in our [Borough Equality Assessment outcomes framework 2019/20](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.towerhamlets.gov.uk%2FDocuments%2FBorough_statistics%2FResearch-briefings%2FBEA-outcomes-2019-20.docx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK). Please note this is subject to update over the next year as we obtain more data from Census 2021.

## Premises

A proportionate part of premises costs can be included in the budget for your project. This may include rent and utilities that are not included in the service charges. We expect organisations to apply for the appropriate relief on business rates. For charities this will be mandatory rate relief and discretionary rate relief. Community Investment Companies and other non-charities may be eligible for other rate relief such as small business relief. Details can be found on the following link [Business rates reductions](https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgnl/business/business_rates/Business_rate_reductions.aspx)

## Training and support

A training and support package will be provided for organisations bidding to the MCGP by our partner Tower Hamlets Council for Voluntary Services (THCVS). This will include:

* training sessions on:
  + preparing for organisational assessment
  + preparing for project assessment
  + finalising application
* 1-1 advice and guidance
* 20 drop-in sessions

Details of dates, times and booking are available on the [Tower Hamlets Council for Voluntary Services (THCVS)](https://thcvs.org.uk/news/mcgp/) website.

## Timeline

The bidding period for MCGP will be for **six weeks**

**Applications will be open from 24 April 2023 and the deadline for submitting bids is 12 noon on 5 June 2023.** Applications will not be accepted after the deadline.

Timetable for MCGP is outlined in the following table:

| **Timeframe** | **Milestone** |
| --- | --- |
| 24 April 2023 | Applications for MCGP open |
| April 2023-May 2023 | Training workshops on MCGP application process, including workshops on how to use on-line application portal |
| 5 June 2023 | Closing date for applications for MCGP |
| June-July 2023 | Assessment of MCGP applications |
| August 2023 | Tower Hamlets Chief Executive decision on MCGP awards |
| September 2023 | Applicants receive notification of application outcomes |
| September 2023 | Negotiation of grant funding agreements with successful applicants |
| November 2023 | New MCGP projects commence |

## Bidding process

All documentation relating to MCGP bidding is on the council’s website at [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/mcgp](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/mcgp)

All bids must be submitted using online forms via the council’s online portal, Blackbaud Grant Making (BBGM). The council cannot accept submissions by email, by post or by hand.

**The council will be running workshops during April-May 2023 for organisations who are not familiar with the above portal.**

To apply, you will be required to complete two forms:

* the Organisation Information Form
* the Project Form.

Organisations will only be required to submit **one ‘Organisation Information Form’.**

You will need to submit a **separate ‘Project Form’ for each project you are applying for.** For example, if you’re applying for two projects, you will submit two Project Forms.

We expect that most organisations will submit Project Forms to individual funding schemes to meet some or all the priorities set out in the scheme. The form will ask which scheme and priority or priorities the bid relates to.

Some projects may be relevant to more than one scheme. The application form will ask you to select the principal scheme you are applying to and then gives you the opportunity to write which other schemes you think it may be relevant to.

# 

# Assessment

This section sets out the evidence you need to include in your bid (or bids), how it will be assessed and the scores for each section.

## Funding criteria

The funding criteria are split into two sections:

* organisational criteria which relate to your organisation, its governance and management
* project criteria which relate to the activities you are seeking funding for.

The tables below set out the criteria and summarises the information we expect you to provide to meet the criteria.

## Organisation assessment

The organisational assessment is to see whether your organisation meets the standards of governance, management and financial competence the council expects of organisations it supports with public funds. The council has a standard organisation assessment for all its funding and other support to VCS organisations.

The organisation assessment is based on an examination of the documents we ask you to provide and questions we ask on the application form. Please provide the most up to date versions of the documents.

You are asked on the application form to upload these documents in an electronic format (preferably PDF). If any required documents are not available, please use the text box provided to let us know why and whether you are able to send them to us later.

The assessment is proportionate to the size of your organisation. For some of the criteria the Council expects larger organisations to meet higher standards than small ones. We define your organisation’s size by annual income (by which we normally mean as set out in your last approved accounts), as follows:

* small VCS organisations as ones with gross annual income up to £150,000
* medium size VCS organisations as ones with a gross annual income of between £150,001 to £250,000
* large VCS organisations have income over £250,000.

The council may use your mean income for the past three financial years if income varies a lot from year to year. Details of the criteria we use to assess your organisation, the standards expected, the evidence we look for and how the council will score the assessment are set out in the following table.

**If your organisation does not pass the three essential pass/fail criteria (Governance, Managing Money and Borough Connection), none of your projects will go forward to the next stage of assessment.** Other criteria are assessed as pass/partial pass/fail. This is set out for each one in the first column of the table.

| **Criteria** | **Standard required** | **Evidence** | **Scoring guidance** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Governance**  ***This is pass/fail****.*  *If you do not meet the required standard, your projects will not be assessed.* | You must have a Constitution, Memorandum and Articles of Association or other recognised governance document that includes:   * membership details, * committee structure * not for profit clause * dissolution clause. | You should submit a copy of your constitution or other governance document. | Membership must be open or, if not, restriction must be justified and not based on ability to pay fees.  Large organisations should have a committee structure to facilitate good governance.  Not-for-profit clause must ensure surpluses and/or profits are not distributed to members but are reinvested in the organisation.  Dissolution clause must prevent assets from being distributed to members if the organisation ceases to operate and dissolves. |
| You will also need to be able to show that:   * you have a governing board or committee which meets regularly * your last annual general meeting (AGM) took place within the last 18 months, and * (If you are a larger organisation) you have sub committees to deal with areas such as finance or personnel. | Provide on the application form:   * a list of the board/committee dates for the past 12 months * a list of board/management committee members * date of the last AGM * for large organisations, a list of sub-committees, meeting dates and their membership. | Management committee meetings should be as set out in the governing document or more frequent.  List of management committee/board members may also be included in annual report and/or accounts.  AGM date should be within 18 months prior to application unless there’s reasonable cause for a longer period is explained in the application form.  Sub Committees (large organisations only) should conform to governance document requirements. |
| **Borough Connection**  ***This is pass/fail****.*  *If you do not meet the required standard, your projects will not be assessed.* | Your organisation must be registered in Tower Hamlets, have a base in Tower Hamlets or be able to demonstrate a track record of successful service delivery within the borough | Please provide your registered address, provide a copy of your rental agreement where you deliver activities (this should cover a period of at least two years) or provide other evidence that you have successfully delivered services in Tower Hamlets for at least two years. | If your organisation is based in the borough you can share your address  If you are not based in the borough you will need to show a rental agreement for where you deliver your activities that covers a duration of at least 2 years.  Evidence that you have worked with a partner organisation or have had other arrangements to provide services in Tower Hamlets for two years. |
| **Quality assurance**  *If you only score a partial pass or fail, your projects may still be assessed.*  *If a grant is then awarded, funding will not be paid until we have agreed an action plan with you to achieve the required standards over a period of time.*  *If you do not achieve the required standards within the agreed timescale, the Council may withdraw its support.* | You must show that you have achieved a relevant quality assurance (QA) standard or some other evidence which shows that your organisation actively tries to improve both the quality of your management and the services your organisation provides.  Examples of standards include:   * Trusted Charity Mark (formally known as PQASSO) * EFQM Excellence Model * ISO 9000/1 * Matrix Standard * accredited sports related accreditations which have a strong element of assessing governance * London Youth Quality Mark (bronze will be accepted but with a clear plan in place on how silver/gold can be achieved).   Other QA standards appropriate to your services may be accepted. | You should submit QA certificate/accreditation if you have it.  If you do not have this, you should submit evidence that shows your organisation actively tries to improve quality.  This may include,   * confirmation from a QA accreditation body that your organisation is seeking accreditation * a letter from THCVS or similar body that your organisation is engaged on a QA programme * evidence of a self-assessment such as [Social Value Self Assessment Tool - Social Value Calculator for measurement (socialvalueuk.org)](https://socialvalueuk.org/social-value-self-asessment-tool/). * evidence of the processes your organisation has in place to ensure the delivery of quality services. | **Pass**  Relevant QA accreditation must be in place with evidence of action to maintain standards.  **Partial Pass**  If no QA accreditation is in place, you must show evidence of working towards QA and/or evidence that a quality standard framework or appropriate processes are in place.  **Fail**  No QA or other quality measures in place or proposed. |
| **Business planning**  *If you only score a partial pass or fail, your projects may still be assessed.*  *If a grant is then awarded, funding will not be paid until we have agreed an action plan with you to achieve the required standards over a period of up to twelve months.*  *If you do not achieve the required standards within the agreed timescale, the Council may withdraw its support.* | Your organisation should have a business plan or strategic plan. If you are a small/medium organisation, it does not need to be very sophisticated, but enough to show you have thought about and planned how you will provide your services.  Large organisations  You should have a full three-to-five-year plan which includes:   * organisational purpose, aims & objectives * client need * strategic context, i.e. policy environment, issues affecting clients, how needs may change over time (could be PEST - (political, economic social and technological analysis) * assessment of organisational capacity (ie. SWOT – strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats analysis) * plans for next 3-5 years (year 1 in detail) * resources required to fulfil plans * risk assessment and contingency planning.   Medium or small organisation  A document which demonstrates the organisation has considered the seven key issues in detail. Level of detail will be proportionate to the size of the organisation. | You should submit a copy of your business plan | **Pass**  A business or strategic plan that includes all seven key issues listed on the left.  Consideration will be given to the level of detail, coherence and overall quality of the plan proportionate to the standard required for the size of the organisation.  **Partial Pass**  Large organisation  Business plan which covers:   1. some but not all the key issues, or 2. all the issues but not in detail   Medium and small organisations  A document which demonstrates the organisation has considered:   1. some but not all the key issues, or 2. all the issues but not in detail.   Consideration will be given to the level of detail, coherence and overall quality of the plan proportionate to the standard required for the size of the organisation.  **Fail**  Large Organisations – no business plan or business plan which does not cover any or only one of the key issues listed above.  Medium and small organisations – no indication that the organisation has considered any or only one of the key issues. |
| **Managing people**  *If you only score a partial pass or fail, your projects may still be assessed.*  *If a grant is then awarded, funding will not be paid until we have agreed an action plan with you to achieve the required standards over a period of up to twelve months.*  *If you do not achieve the required standards within the agreed timescale, the Council may withdraw its support.* | If you employ staff, your management must include:   * an effective and fair way of recruiting staff, using a job description and person specification * written contracts of employment, which meet legal requirements * clear written discipline and grievance procedures in line with ACAS codes of practice; and * adequate training for the duties they have to perform. * equal opportunities procedures which relate and apply to recruitment and management of staff.   If you work with volunteers, your management should include:   * a recruitment process to ensure volunteers are appropriately placed * a clear description of volunteers’ roles, and * adequate training for the duties they have to perform * clear procedures for reimbursing volunteer expenses * equal opportunities procedures which relate and apply to recruitment and management of volunteers. | Submit policy and procedures document if available.  If this not available, submit:   * sample JD and person specification * sample contract of employment * written discipline and grievance procedures * details of recent training provided.   And for volunteers, your volunteer policy and procedure document if available, or:   * sample volunteer description * sample volunteer agreement * written volunteer policy and procedures * details of recent training provided to volunteers. | **Pass**  Comprehensive policies and procedures in place, or adequate alternative documentation  **Partial Pass**  Policy and procedures and/or other documents do not meet ACAS standards and remedial action planned.  **Fail**  No policy and procedures or other documentation. |
| **Managing money**  ***This is pass/fail****.*  *If you do not meet the required standards, your projects will not be assessed.* | * You must keep to all financial and accounting requirements of charity and company law, where appropriate * You must be able to provide accounts appropriate to the size of your organisation. * You must follow good practice in relation to your organisations financial controls. This includes: * Annual accounts * Balanced budget * Sustainable funding * Reserves policy * Bank accounts in the organisation’s name * (for large organisations) written financial procedures document. | Submit:   * latest annual accounts * budget for the current year (this should be part of your business plan) * confirmation of your bank details * for large and medium size organisations, written finance procedures. | **Pass**   * accounts meet charity commission or other regulator’s standards * balanced income and expenditure budget for the organisation * latest annual accounts show that the organisation does not have creditors/debts which appear unserviceable over the coming year(s) given their average income of unrestricted or designated funds * the organisation can demonstrate income from a diversity of funding sources. * the organisation has a clear reserves policy which is appropriate for its size.   **NB**  New organisations will not have accounts. Assessment should therefore exclude reference to accounts but include all other points. |
| **Equality and Diversity**  *If you only score a partial pass or fail, your projects may still be assessed.*  *If a grant is then awarded, funding will not be paid until we have agreed an action plan with you to achieve the required standards over a period of up to twelve months.*  *If you do not achieve the required standards within the agreed timescale, the Council may withdraw its support.* | You must have an equal opportunities or equality and diversity policy and be able to show that you actively use it in these key areas:   * in recruitment (to board and staffing) * in planning and provision of services * in the management of your organisation. | Submit Equality and Diversity Policy | **Pass**  An equal opportunities or equality and diversity statement or policy in place which addresses all three of the key areas.  **Partial pass**  At least two of the three key areas are addressed.  **Fail**  Only one or none of the key areas are addressed. |
| **Safeguarding children and adults at risk of abuse**  *If you only score a partial pass or fail, your projects may still be assessed.*  *If a grant is then awarded, funding will not be paid until you achieve the required standards.* | If your organisation works with children and adults at risk of abuse, you must have an appropriate policy. Guidance on safeguarding policies and procedures specifically for VCS organisations can be found here [Policies and procedures - NCVO](https://www.ncvo.org.uk/help-and-guidance/safeguarding/steps-safer-organisation/policies-and-procedures/#/safeguarding-policy).  You can also find information about adults and children safeguarding on our website. Use the search function for relevant section.  You also need to demonstrate that staff and volunteers are appropriately trained. | Submit safeguarding policy.  Training plan for board, staff, and volunteers. | All organisations must have safeguarding policies and procedures in place appropriate to their activities.  **Pass**  A policy and procedures document that addresses the five key areas set out in the NCVO guidance,   * safeguarding policy * reporting procedure * code of conduct * a risk policy and register * trustees’ annual report.   And a training plan in place.  **Partial pass**  Some, but not all the key areas are addressed.  **Fail**  None of the key areas are addressed. |
| **Insurance**  *If you only score a partial pass or fail, your projects may still be assessed.*  *If a grant is then awarded, funding will not be paid until you achieve the required standards.*  *.* | Your organisation must have enough insurance cover for your activities, events, staff, premises, equipment, and vehicles, including:   * + public liability (£5m)   + employer’s liability cover if you employ staff (£10m)   + property and equipment insurance against fire, theft, loss and damage   + vehicle and driver insurance if vehicles are owned or driven and   + professional indemnity if you give advice or training to members of the public (£2m). | Submit copies of insurance certificates | Documents should be current and for appropriate amounts.  Not all insurance will be required for all activities.  New organisations will not have insurance in place but must demonstrate that they have adequate cover before the agreement with the Council is signed.  **Pass**  Appropriate policies in place.  **Partial**  Policies in place, but cover is not adequate.  **Fail**  Appropriate policies are not in place |

## Project Assessment

This section sets out the criteria we will use to assess your project proposals. We will assess your project proposals proportionate to the size of your organisation. If you are a small organisation, you will not have to provide as much evidence as larger organisations, but you must be able to show that you understand and are working towards meeting each of the criteria.

**The council will not consider funding any project which scores less than half the available score in any section.**

The total number of scores available for each question are as follows:

| **Criteria** | **Max Score** |
| --- | --- |
| Service delivery | 20 |
| Track record | 10 |
| Demonstrates local connections | 15 |
| Service co-design | 5 |
| Quality assurance | 10 |
| Community cohesion and Equality and Diversity | 15 |
| Value for money | 10 |
| Outcomes | 15 |
| **TOTAL** | **100** |

Some funding schemes have specific requirements - for example:

* quality mark standards
* registration with a regulatory body
* food hygiene standards.

Evidence of these **must** be submitted with project forms. The council will not fund activities which require these if organisations do not provide required evidence.

| **Criteria** | **Evidence** | **Assessed** | **Scoring Guidance** | **Max Score** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Service delivery | Your bid must show that the arrangements you are proposing can deliver the service effectively. You will need to provide:   * A description of the project, including:   + What the activities/ services are   + Plans for delivery – where, how, how frequently, numbers of beneficiaries (these may be used to set your key performance indicators (KPIs) if your bid is successful)   + Project governance and measurement arrangements   + How you will reach your target beneficiaries   + Any specific protected characteristic group(s) that your project would support   + Geographic area targeted. * Details of any partnership arrangements. These may be informal links to other services or more formal consortium arrangements * Details of why you think your project is needed, such as local research and user feedback * Details of how your proposal will achieve the priority set out in the prospectus * Evidence that appropriate standards, checks and training will be in place (e.g., food hygiene, DBS checks). | Question | Project description (10 points max)   * Clear description of your project’s activities, including when, where and how they will be delivered * Geographical area and rationale, * Target residents and rationale, including any protected characteristic group(s) that your project would specifically support.   Partnership arrangements (5 points max)   * If there is a formal partnership or consortium, a clear outline of who will deliver the project (including details of partnership working if appropriate), information on each partner and their role in the project * Evidence of informal partnership links * Added value of partnership arrangements articulated.   Demonstration of need (5 points max)   * Local research/user feedback * Local published data (Census, Joint Strategic Needs Assessment etc) * National data * Link to MCGP priority, with   clear link between activity and priority. | 20 |
| Track record | You must be able to show that your organisation has a track record of effective delivery of the type of service you want us to fund. If your organisation is new, you must be able to show that the individuals involved in it have a successful track record in other organisations and your organisation has clear ability to demonstrate capacity and skills to deliver services successfully | Question | Experience (with examples as evidence) should include:   * Delivering projects similar to the proposal:   + activity   + complexity   + size   + value   + funder of previous projects. * Staff have the necessary knowledge and skills to deliver the project effectively * The organisation has the skills and capacity to deliver the project successfully * Meeting monitoring and reporting requirements * Achievement of outcomes and outputs, in relation to agreed service targets, or evidence of impact of previous work * Managing project budgets similar to that of the proposed service. | 10 |
| Demonstrates local connections | How will your proposal demonstrate local connections? You will need to demonstrate your ability to reach residents and communities in Tower Hamlets and that you have:   * good knowledge of the neighbourhoods, needs, services and demographics where you work (or are planning to work) * experience of delivering services to Tower Hamlets residents * have a local base or location from where you will deliver the proposed project * working links and connections with other organisations in Tower Hamlets or potential partnership arrangements (from all sectors). | Question | Evidence of local connections through:   * local presence * track record of local delivery * impact locally (outcomes of previous work) * beneficiary feedback * research of local needs * partnerships with local organisations (VCS or public) * engagement with local structures such as appropriate forum or network membership. | 15 |
| Service co-design | How will your proposal include co-design with residents? We expect organisations to work with residents and other stakeholders towards improving the service over the period of funding. This may include revising the outcomes to be achieved and changing the way the service is delivered.  You will need to describe how you will engage with residents and other stakeholders to co-design improvements to your service. | Question | Plan should include a process for meaningful engagement of residents and other stakeholders in service improvement through:   * user involvement including feedback, focus groups etc * working with non-beneficiaries and partners * needs and trends analysis   They should refer to basic principles of co-design:   * inclusion * respect * participation. * outcomes focused. | 5 |
| Quality assurance | You must show that you have the appropriate quality standards in place, including appropriate certification to deliver your proposed service/project. You will need to provide evidence of how you will assess the quality of the project to ensure it is achieving its outcomes. | Question | Appropriate Quality Assurance standards that are specific and appropriate to the project you wish to deliver.  Evidence of the quality assurance framework/processes that will be in place for your organisation to assess the quality of the specific project being delivered. | 10 |
| Community Cohesion and Equality and Diversity | You will need to be able to show how your service promotes community cohesion and addresses inequalities impacting those with protected characteristics. This will be in relation to both recruitment of beneficiaries and delivery of effective services to beneficiaries.  The borough has a commitment to be an anti-racist place, and you can find more info [here](https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgnl/community_and_living/Inequality-Commission/Tower-Hamlets-Anti-Racist-Pledge.aspx). How will your project address race inequality in the borough? If your project is specifically targeting people with one or more protected equalities characteristics, you should explain why there is a particular need to do this.  How will your project contribute towards community cohesion? | Question | Evidence of consultation with people with protected characteristics.  Proposals to minimise barriers to potential users of services, including recruitment and referral methods.  Proposals to monitor equalities impact, including in relation to beneficiary outcomes and project contribution to making Tower Hamlets an anti-racist borough.  If appropriate, sufficient information to justify or explain why the project will be targeting specific groups/sections of the local community.  Clear evidence that your proposal will strengthen community cohesion and help reduce poverty and support residents during the cost-of-living crisis. | 15 |
| Value for money | How do you know that the service you are proposing offers good value for money? Have you compared it with similar services? Does your service bring something extra which other services would not be able to provide? | Question | * Realistic costs:   + adequate funding for proposed activity   + all project staff paid at least London Living Wage   + cost comparisons. * clear explanation of how costs have been assessed * leverage of other resources such as volunteers and in-kind support. | 10 |
| Outcomes | There must be evidence in your bid that you will be able to demonstrate change using outcomes and indicators which are SMART – specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-related. | Question | Outcomes must be:   * relevant to the specification * achievable from the proposed activities * have relevant indicators and measures | 15 |

## 

## Assessment Process

The organisational assessment and project assessment will be carried out by council officers.

This will involve the following process:

**Stage 1**

Council officers will assess an organisation’s submission against the organisational criteria outlined above. If a submission:

* secures a pass score then the organisation’s applications for projects will move on to Stage 2 where a project assessment will be carried out.
* if the organisation assessment receives a ‘fail’ in the three mandatory areas then this will be moderated by a senior manager in the Council. This is to ensure that the assessment is accurate and fair
* if the moderator agrees with the ‘fail’ score then the organisation will not move to the project assessment stage
* if the moderator changes the assessment to a ‘pass’ than the organisation application will progress to stage 2.

**Stage 2**

* Two Council officers will assess and score the project application
* the applications will be scored against the scoring criteria outlined above
* If there is a difference in the scores of the two Council officers of more than 10% then a senior manager will moderate the two scores to reach an agreed score.
* **Projects will need to score at least 50% against each of the eight criteria set out above to be considered for funding award (e.g. on service delivery score 10 out of 20 and track record score 5 out of 10 etc etc)**.

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| Theme 1 - Tackling Cost of Living Crisis |
| Scheme 1 – Advice, information, and crisis support |
| **Overview** |
| [Tower Hamlets Council Strategic Plan 2022-2026](https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/Documents/Strategy-and-performance/Tower-Hamlets-Council-Strategic-Plan-2022-2026.pdf) sets out our commitment to support our most vulnerable residents during challenging times and to work tirelessly to tackle inequality.  One of the priorities of the Plan is tackling the cost of living crisis.  In Tower Hamlets great wealth and unacceptable poverty sit side by side. The cost of living crisis has left many residents struggling to make ends meet. We have the highest rate of child and pensioner poverty in the country, alongside high number of residents who are not working and/or are reliant on benefits:   * the levels of child poverty in Tower Hamlets (32.5%) are almost double the poverty rate for London (19%). [[1]](#footnote-2) Tower Hamlets Poverty Review (2021) reported that the borough had the highest level of child poverty nationally. * the pensioner poverty rate is twice as high in Tower Hamlets (44%) in comparison to London (23%). This is the highest proportion in England. * as of March 2022, there were 14,100 people in the borough aged 16+ claiming Job Seekers Allowance or Universal Credit. Tower Hamlets Poverty Review (2021) reported that fewer adults are in work than the London average and that a growing number of working families are on a low income - more than 3 in 4 children in poverty are in a family where at least one person works. * 80.2% of males in the borough are economically active, compared to only 65% of females, and this gap is greater for women from Black, Asian and Multi-ethnic communities.   The Poverty Review also highlighted the links between inequality and poverty. Across London, some families have a much greater risk of being in poverty, including families with a disabled family member, families from Black, Asian & Multi-Ethnic communities, lone parents with children and larger families.  We are committed to tackling poverty and promoting good work through partnerships. This will include waging war on child poverty and pensioner poverty. We will act early to support residents to increase incomes, reduce costs and debt. |
| **The Service**  The Council recognises the role that VCS advice services play in mitigating and reducing levels of poverty by supporting vulnerable residents and low-income households to access their rights, understand their obligations and maximise their incomes.  In this theme we are keen to foster a mixed ecnomy of partnership working between local providers and also individual organisations with reach to our diverse communites.  We welcome a co-ordinated service provision and are encourgaing local advice providers to work togther to deliver the priorites in this work stream. The Council expects providers to deliver advice provision through our five Residents Hub sites, including the Town Hall in Whitechapel and in any other sites that we request. Further discussions will be held with successful providers to agree this. Where there is a consortium bid, all partners will be expected to deliver the service through the Residents Hub Sites. We also welcome bids from individual organsations where they feel they will be able to meet the needs of local residents and have the required quality standards to deliver services to our residents.  We also expect all providers to have appropriate quality accreditation for the level and type of service they intend to provide before any agreements are signed. Where partners in a consortium do not have appropriate quality accreditation, we will expect an accredited member of the consortium to act as the accountable body where any element of service is delivered through a non-accredited partner, where the accreditation permits this.  The accreditation we expect providers to have achieved are:   1. [Advice Quality Standard](https://asauk.org.uk/?sfw=pass1680714680) - most generalist agencies and some specialist ones should be accredited to this standard. 2. Specialist Quality Mark (SQM) (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/legal-aid-agency-quality-standards#specialist-quality-mark>.) Some specialist agencies may be accredited to this standard. 3. Lexcel practice management standard (<https://www.lawsociety.org.uk/support-services/accreditation/lexcel/>). Some specialist agencies may be accredited to this standard.   In addition, any provider engaged in immigration advice must be accredited at an appropriate level by the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC). There are three levels of accreditation:  Level 1, for initial advice  Level 2, for casework  Level 3, for advocacy and representation.  Organisations or consortia bidding to this priority will need to provide an outline service delivery plan of their partnership arrangements, how they plan to integrate their services and arrangements for peer review and tracking. |
| **Priorities**   * Information, advice and representation concerning individuals’ legal rights, particularly for vulnerable, marginalised and hard to reach groups, including disabled people * Immigration/asylum advice and casework * Debt advice and support with budgeting and financial stability, particularly for vulnerable, marginalised, and hard-to-reach groups * Support with welfare benefits * Housing/homelessness advice and casework * Employment advice * Income maximisation * Support for residents in crisis, especially those needing immediate support. |
| **Outcomes**   * Increased access for residents to social welfare advice and income from benefits * Residents reporting/ experiencing improved personal budgeting, financial stability, and a reduction in personal debt * Residents are helped to reduce the negative impacts of welfare reforms and housing re-possessions. * Residents in crisis are supported * Residents grow and develop new capabilities which stop them falling into poverty and help them escape it * Better health and enhanced wellbeing, including access to housing * Supporting residents to get access to nutritious food and drink * Preventing residents from going into a crisis * Better health and enhanced wellbeing, including access to housing * Supporting residents to get access to nutritious food and drink * Access to safe spaces where people build relationships and feel supported * Local residents gain Learning to Advise and other accredited advice qualifications * Local residents have improved opportunities for paid employment in the advice sector * Improved quality of advice service received by local residents * Increased access to high quality social welfare and law information for residents and advisors * Continuation and development of local advice forums. |
| **Examples of activities** |
| We can achieve these outcomes through a range of activities and services. These might include:   * Support on housing, work, and welfare to stop people falling into poverty * Specialist immigration/asylum advice and casework * Housing and homelessness advice and support * Targeted support for groups more likely to be in poverty, such as Somali and Bengali women * Activities to support the development of advice services * Effective signposting and referral routes from voluntary organisations to specialist providers * Services providing information, advice and representation concerning individuals' legal rights, particularly for vulnerable, marginalised and hard-to-reach groups * Debt advice and support with budgeting and financial stability, particularly for vulnerable, marginalised, and hard-to-reach groups * Provision of fuel and food vouchers and mobile phone top-ups to support access to welfare and employment support.   These examples provide a flavour of the types of activity we might support but it is not intended to be a full list. |
| **Geographic Spread** |
| Bids may be submitted for borough wide projects or for projects which are specific to a defined geographic area.  Consortia bids may be made for linked local services which provide a borough wide pattern of provision. |
| **Levels of Funding** |
| The budget allocated to this theme is £900,000 per annum.  There is a £40,000 limit on the amount you can apply for, unless you are applying as a consortium, in which case there is no limit.  Please note where advice provision is delivered through our 5 Residents Hubs there will be no rental or other premises costs for providers.  Also, please bear in mind the guidance about including full costs in your bid for the project that you are expecting to deliver. |

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| Theme 2. Accelerate Education |
| Scheme 2A Education Attainment and Development of Children and Young People |
| **Overview** |
| According to the [2021 Census](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.towerhamlets.gov.uk%2FDocuments%2FBorough_statistics%2FCensus-2021%2F2021-Census-key-finding.pptx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK) just under a quarter (24.5%) of all residents in the borough aged 5 and over were either school children or full time students: 71,270 residents.  We are committed to providing support to families and to meet the needs of the youngest children and teenagers. This will include:   * supporting educational achievement through learning interventions * supporting the development of community language provision. The [2021 Census](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.towerhamlets.gov.uk%2FDocuments%2FBorough_statistics%2FCensus-2021%2F2021-Census-key-finding.pptx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK) recorded that Bengali (with Sylheti and Chatgaya) is the main language for 32,772 residents in Tower Hamlets, which is11% of the population. It also found that English was not the main language spoken for an additional 16% of the borough’s population. * improving support for children and young people with Special Educational Needs (SEND). *Understanding the Impact of COVID-19 in Tower Hamlets* (2020) has reported that some opportunities for early identification of SEND and support with learning and development needs may have been missed during the pandemic. * increasing the opportunities for young people in the borough to progress in education and employment, including to top universities and employers, including by supporting their wider personal development.   + - * enabling community-based study support to help children and young people recover from schooling lost during the COVID lockdowns. *Understanding the Impact of COVID-19 in Tower Hamlets* (2020) reported that a long-term impact of the pandemic on the borough was the risk of educational attainments levels dropping, reinforced by COVID’s exacerbation of existing social inequalities.   The VCS has a unique role in helping to achieve that vision through innovative community focussed services co-designed with residents. This theme sets out the priority areas where VCS organisations are well placed to make a significant impact. |
| **Priorities**   * Access to community-based study support * Access to community language development * Developing community-based provision for children with Special Educational Needs * Wide access to extracurricular activities and after school provision. |
| **Outcomes**   * Improved educational attainment for children and young people * Improvements in children and young people’s well-being, including mental health   + Children and young people can speak in their first language to improve their overall learning outcomes   + Improvements in young people’s leadership skills, confidence, resilience and self-esteem, developing relationships and aspirations   + Improved access to youth services   + Young people are enabled to secure good jobs * Reduction in anti-social behaviour, radicalisation, crime, and substance abuse * Improvements in the development of young children. |
| **Examples of activities** |
| We can achieve these outcomes through a range of activities and services. These might include:   * Study and homework clubs provided in community settings * Targeted educational activities to groups who are more likely to end up not in employment, education and training * Youth work opportunities that provide young people with activities where they can have fun and learn new skills * Positive activities that improve children and young people’s well-being * Community based classes in residents’ first language * Outreach activities for children and young people * Provision for children and young people with Special Educational Needs * Cultural activities, such as music and art, where children and young people can take part in activities from diverse cultures * After school clubs where children and young people can get involved in multi-sports activities.   These examples provide a flavour of the types of activity we might support, but it is not intended to be a full list. |
| **Geographic Spread** |
| Bids may be submitted for borough wide projects, or for projects which are specific to a defined geographic area.  Consortia bids may be made for linked local services which provide a borough wide pattern of provision. |
| **Levels of Funding** |
| The budget allocated to this theme is £700,000 per annum.  There is a £40,000 limit on the amount you can apply for. Also, please bear in mind the guidance about including full costs in your bid and that the Council will only be making offers different from the amount bid for in exceptional cases. |

### Scheme 2B – Lifelong Learning

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| **Overview** |
| We are committed to lifelong learning, improving skills, boosting achievements and a sense of well-being for all. Lifelong learning can help people to learn a new language, get to grips with new technology and develop hobbies and interests. They can also lead to qualifications that can help people progress into employment. According to the [2021 Census](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.towerhamlets.gov.uk%2FDocuments%2FBorough_statistics%2FCensus-2021%2F2021-Census-key-finding.pptx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK) 16.2% of borough residents had no qualification (40,999 residents). High rates of socio-economic deprivation in the borough have resulted in higher literacy and numeracy needs for Tower Hamlets’ adults.  We would like to work with communities in the borough to promote English language skills. As outlined above, English is not the main language for 27% of the borough’s population. According to [2021 Census](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.towerhamlets.gov.uk%2FDocuments%2FBorough_statistics%2FCensus-2021%2F2021-Census-key-finding.pptx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK) 5.2% of residents in Tower Hamlets said that they could not speak English well and 1% said that they could not speak English at all. This overall total of 6.2% is the eight highest proportion of residents reporting that they could not speak English well or at all among 331 local authority areas nationally. This lack of English language skills is a barrier to affected residents’ ability to access employment and statutory sector services, such as health and social care and to network with the wider population in the borough.  We are committed to tackling digital exclusion, enabling all residents to benefit from digital opportunities. The importance of digital skills was witnessed during the COVID-19 pandemic. Many residents were able to access services on-line, including those provided by the VCS. Residents without digital skills, equipment and broadband connections were not able to access such support.  It is estimated that 2% to 5% of residents of the borough are digitally excluded and therefore may need support to get on-line. National and local data suggest digital exclusion is more prevalent for people from Black, Asian & Multi-Ethnic communities, disabled people, older people, children, and low-income families. This has consequently widened the gap between communities, leaving many groups excluded and in need of additional support.  On-line safety is a concern for residents, particularly in relation to children and vulnerable adults and for residents who are new to using digital resources and services. There are also concerns about on-line fraud, which increased during the pandemic.  The VCS has a unique role in helping to achieve that vision through innovative community focussed services co-designed with residents. This theme sets out the priority areas where VCS organisations are well placed to make a significant impact. |
| **Priorities** |
| * Skills for life and lifelong learning * English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) * Digital Inclusion. |
| **Outcomes** |
| * Reduce digital exclusion amongst residents from Black, Asian and Multi-Ethnic communities, older people, low-income families and those with a disability * Improve the confidence of residents, building resilience and self- esteem, developing relationships and aspirations * Residents are able to speak in their first language to improve their overall learning outcomes. |
| **Examples of activities** |
| * Opportunities for families to be with each other and learn and grow together * Lifelong learning projects for adults, including older people * Provision of English as a Second Language * Targeted activity to improve the digital skills of groups experiencing high levels of digital exclusion * Online safety guidance and support for young and older children and some specific groups of adults, such as women. |
| **Geographic Spread** |
| Bids may be submitted for borough wide projects or for projects which are specific to a defined geographic area.  Consortia bids may be made for linked local services which provide a borough wide pattern of provision. |
| **Levels of Funding** |
| The budget allocated to this theme is £700,000 per annum. There is a £40,000 limit on the amount you can apply for. Also, please bear in mind the guidance about including full costs in your bid and that the Council will only make offers different from the amount bid for in exceptional cases. |

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| Theme 3 - Culture, Business, Jobs, and Skills |
| Scheme 3A – Employment and Skills Opportunities for Socially Excluded Residents |
| **Overview** |
| The Council is committed to enabling the creation of jobs and training for local residents in a time of economic uncertainty. We want to redirect wealth back into the local economy, placing control and benefits in the hands of local people, using the strengths of local organisations and businesses.  The [2021 Census](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.towerhamlets.gov.uk%2FDocuments%2FBorough_statistics%2FCensus-2021%2F2021-Census-key-finding.pptx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK) recorded that 97,941 residents of the borough aged 16 and over were not in work at the time of the census, including 46,215 residents who had never worked before, the second highest proportion of workless people that had never worked in England and Wales. Unemployment is also higher amongst particular protected characteristic groups in Tower Hamlets – 19% amongst residents from Black, Asian & Multi-Ethnic communities and 10,159 residents being economically inactive due to being long term sick or disabled.  We need to work with borough residents, employers, businesses, employment and training organisations and the VCS to link local residents to employment and skills opportunities. We want to ensure that all sections of the community can benefit from economic development in the borough and the recovery from the pandemic.  This will include targeted support for population groups that have often been excluded from employment. We will work with the borough’s young people – particularly those who are not in education, employment, or training (NEETs) - to link them to local opportunities and address barriers to their progression in the employment market. This will include developing links with youth provision, where required. Job brokerage can link residents to employment opportunities, particularly focused brokerage support for those groups who have suffered exclusion from employment - Black, Asian & Multi-Ethnic communities, women, physically disabled people, people with sensory impairments, people with mental health support needs, residents aged 50+.  We recognise the contribution that the VCS can provide to the delivery of a clean and green borough and want to engage local organisations and residents in work towards this goal.  The VCS has a unique role in helping to achieve that vision through innovative community focussed services co-designed with residents. This theme sets out the priority areas where VCS organisations are well placed to make a significant impact. |
| **Priorities** |
| * Supporting people not in education, employment or training (NEET) * Targeted youth outreach * Access to youth provision * Promoting enterprise and innovation, particularly the greening of the borough * Job brokerage by supporting people into work. |
| **Outcomes** |
| * Getting people into employment * Increased employment and progression opportunities for groups with low employment levels - including Black, Asian & Multi-Ethnic communities, disabled people, women, and young people who are NEET - by addressing the barriers to employment that they face * Enhancing young people’s career prospects and employability skills * Improved employment prospects for disabled people * Enabling residents to benefit from cultural and sporting opportunities that improve their mental and physical well-being. |
| **Examples of activities** |
| We can achieve these outcomes through a range of activities and services. These might include:   * Information, advice, and guidance for people not in employment, education or training * Youth activities that target groups who are most at-risk of becoming NEET and supporting them to access employment, education and training * Training opportunities on a range of skills that will help residents access the labour market, such as job-seeking skills, interpersonal skills, and digital skills * Working with employers to understand the skills employers require and developing programmes to equip residents with these skills * Opportunities for young people to develop their skills and explore different career paths. * Work experience opportunities/schemes for adults who are not in employment, education and training * Training courses on green issues and environmental volunteering.   These examples provide a flavour of the types of activity we might support but it is not intended to be a full list. |
| **Geographic Spread** |
| Bids may be submitted for borough wide projects or for projects which are specific to a defined geographic area.  Consortia bids may be made for linked local services which provide a borough wide pattern of provision. |
| **Levels of Funding** |
| The budget allocated to this theme is £650,000per annum. There is a £40,000 limit on the amount you can apply for. Also, please bear in mind the guidance about including full costs in your bid and that the Council will only make offers different from the amount bid for in exceptional cases. |

Scheme 3B – Sports, Local Culture and Heritage

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| **Overview of what the theme aims to achieve** |
| We are committed to enabling residents to benefit from the sporting and cultural opportunities that exist in the borough. People from Black, Asian & Multi-Ethnic communities, women, and girls have not always been able to access sporting and cultural activities that address their specific needs. There is therefore a need to widen the range of opportunities to participate in these activities. More physical and sporting activities need to be targeted at women, girls, and Black, Asian & Multi-Ethnic communities - for example, women only swimming and gym sessions.  There is a need to widen the scope for participation in cultural activities, so that residents can participate in arts and cultural activities for the first time. This can include participation in culture in its broadest perspective - cooking, music, arts & crafts, drama, music, history and heritage, attending celebratory events.  As well as being enjoyable by themselves, participation in the above activities can increase participants’ physical and mental health, helping to develop their confidence and life-skills, thus assisting them in their progression in life, including in education and employment.  The VCS has a unique role in helping to achieve that vision through innovative community focussed services co-designed with residents. This theme sets out the priority areas where VCS organisations are well placed to make a significant impact. |
| **Priorities** |
| * Promoting local culture and heritage * Promoting sports activity. |
| **Outcomes** |
| * Increased engagement in physical activities and sport, particularly by young girls, women and people from Black, Asian & Multi-Ethnic communities * Enabling residents to take part in arts and culture activities for the first time * Improved health outcomes - both physical and mental - and confidence through participation in physical activities, sport and cultural activities. |
| **Examples of activities** |
| We can achieve these outcomes through a range of activities and services. These might include:   * Targeted sports and physical activities, including gym and swimming activities, for women and girls, particularly those from Black, Asian & Multi-Ethnic communities * Promotion of cycling with Black, Asian & Multi-Ethnic communities * Physical activities for elderly people, including keep-fit sessions * Sports activities for young people that address social exclusion * Celebratory events – focusing on different cultures, heritages, and community histories, including the contribution of older people to Tower Hamlets * Supporting residents, particularly children and young people, to engage in arts and well-being activities, including events in parks and open spaces * Conservation work and local history workshops * Film, arts and drama groups and exhibitions.   These examples provide a flavour of the types of activity we might support but it is not intended to be a full list. |
| **Geographic Spread** |
| Bids may be submitted for borough wide projects or for projects which are specific to a defined geographic area. |
| **Levels of Funding** |
| The budget allocated to this theme is £650,000 per annum. There is a £40,000 limit on the amount you can apply for. Also, please bear in mind the guidance about including full costs in your bid and that the Council will only make offers different from the amount bid for in exceptional cases. |

# Theme 4. Investing in Public Services

### Scheme 4A – Physical and Mental Health Wellbeing of Older People

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| **Overview of what the theme aims to achieve** |
| We are committed to providing care and support to older people in the borough and to enable them to lead a fulfilling life. Older people have contributed so much to the life of Tower Hamlets. It is important that they are given the opportunity to lead healthy lives in their later years and to develop links with the wider community.  The COVID-19 pandemic had a disproportionate impact on the borough’s elderly population. Lockdown prevented access to health and care services, leading to the deterioration of many older people’s health and well-being. There are also the mental health impacts of the pandemic on older people, who were more likely to be socially isolated, without access to digitally based services and to suffer from a bereavement.  Older people are more likely to be lonely and socially isolated. There is a need to link them to networks, both of other older residents and the wider community, breaking down inter-generational barriers. Participation in physical, social and cultural activities that are responsive to the needs of older people will enable them to maintain good physical and mental health.  Older people from communities – such as Black Asian & Multi-Ethnic communities, people with sensory impairments and LGBTQ+ people – may be particularly isolated. It is important that services are available to address their specific needs.  The VCS has a unique role in helping to achieve that vision through innovative community focused services co-designed with residents. This theme sets out the priority areas where VCS organisations are well placed to make a significant impact. |
| **Priority** |
| * Supporting older and vulnerable people, including luncheon clubs, meals delivery services and pensioner projects * Developing community activities aimed at tackling loneliness and inactive lifestyles. |
| **Outcomes** |
| * Improved physical and mental health outcomes for older people * Older residents are better positioned to manage health conditions and make healthy choices * Increased engagement in physical activities by older people * Older residents are supported by neighborhood initiatives to feel that they are part of the community and are less socially isolated. |
| **Examples of activities** |
| We can achieve these outcomes through a range of activities and services. These might include:   * Luncheon clubs and meals delivered to homes * Activities that bring older people together to spend time with one another and reduce loneliness and isolation * Physical activities that enable older people to maintain an active lifestyle * Support for older LGBT+ residents on mental and physical health.   These examples provide a flavour of the types of activity we might support, but it is not intended to be a full list. |
| **Geographic Spread** |
| Bids may be submitted for borough wide projects or for projects which are specific to a defined geographic area. |
| **Levels of Funding** |
| The budget allocated to this theme is £800,000 per annum. There is a £40,000 limit on the amount you can apply for. Also, please bear in mind the guidance about including full costs in your bid and that the Council will only make offers different from the amount bid for in exceptional cases. |

### Scheme 4B – Physical and Mental Health of Residents

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| **Overview of what the theme aims to achieve** |
| We are committed to improving the health, wellbeing, and quality of life of all the borough’s residents. This is particularly important in the context of the cost of living crisis, with rising poverty’s negative impact on residents’ health, particularly in relation to diet and access to affordable heating.  The health of the borough’s population has also been adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. *Understanding the Impact of COVID-19 in Tower Hamlets* (2020) reported that the pandemic’s disruption to health services would likely mean some people living in poorer health, with disabled people and people with a long-term health issue being particularly badly affected. There were also negative impacts on the mental health of the borough’s residents, resulting in higher levels of stress, anxiety, depression, loneliness, grief, and post-traumatic stress disorder.  Health inequalities exist in the borough, with different health outcomes for different communities. *Tower Hamlets BAME Inequalities Commission Report and Recommendations* (2021) reported that health outcomes of residents from Black, Asian & Multi-Ethnic communities are worse than those of white residents in many areas, with many of the former suffering from a higher burden of multimorbidity.  The Council is committed to working with the NHS and VCS organisations to promote life expectancy and the quality of life of the borough’s residents. This will involve working with communities to reduce social isolation and promote participation in healthy activities, such as physical exercise.  Residents and communities should be empowered to be more aware of their wider health needs and how they can maintain good health. They should be enabled to access a range of appropriate services and support that respond to their specific needs. There is a need for more awareness and acceptance of mental health support needs and to offer support for these needs through community networks.  The VCS has a unique role in helping to achieve that vision through innovative community focussed services co-designed with residents. This theme sets out the priority areas where VCS organisations are well placed to make a significant impact. |
| **Priority** |
| * Promoting health and well-being through tackling inequality. |
| **Outcomes** |
| * Improved physical and mental health outcomes for residents * Residents are better positioned to manage health conditions and make healthy choices * Socially excluded residents are supported by neighbourhood initiatives to feel part of the community and feel less socially isolated * Reduced health inequalities in Tower Hamlets’ communities. |
| **Examples of activities** |
| We can achieve these outcomes through a range of activities and services. These might include:   * Raising awareness of mental health and mental health support, including amongst Black, Asian & Multi-Ethnic communities * Support for residents with mental health issues that enable them to improve their mental health and wellbeing * Coffee mornings, community cafes, gardening clubs and inter-generational groups to bring people together to tackle loneliness and social isolation * Sports and/or play activities which encourage people from different groups to come together. * Peer support and health and wellbeing support activities, including training in resilience * Befriending services for isolated people.   These examples provide a flavour of the types of activity we might support, but it is not intended to be a full list. |
| **Geographic Spread** |
| Bids may be submitted for borough wide projects or for projects which are specific to a defined geographic area. |
| **Levels of Funding** |
| The budget allocated to this theme is £800,000 per annum. There is a £40,000 limit on the amount you can apply for. Also, please bear in mind the guidance about including full costs in your bid and that the Council will only make offers different from the amount bid for in exceptional cases. |

# Theme 5. Empower Communities and Fight Crime

### Scheme 5A – Inequalities Experienced by People and Communities Reflecting Different Equality Groups and Socio-economic Backgrounds

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| **Overview** |
| We recognise that the strength of Tower Hamlets lies in its diversity and different cultures and communities living side by side. We are committed to bringing communities together to build understanding and to support and empower women. There is a need to challenge racism and all forms of discrimination.  We are focused on upholding equality and diversity in all circumstances, whilst bringing people from different backgrounds together. This will include a commitment to services that address the needs of women from Black, Asian & Multi-Ethnic communities, and faith communities. There is a need to ensure that all residents of the borough are enabled to fulfil their potential and receive services that respond to their needs.  We want to break down barriers between residents in the borough to promote and improve community cohesion. Communities can be brought together through a variety of ways, including celebrating and sharing each other’s culture and participation in cross-cultural events.  There is a need to support activities that provide scope for different communities to find common ground and understanding. This can include supporting diverse communities to come together to identify similar areas of concern and working together, including with the Council and partners, to propose responses to address residents’ needs. Common understanding can also be supported by joint participation in social activities and settings, facilitating interaction between communities and across generations.  The VCS has a unique role in helping to achieve that vision through innovative community focussed services co-designed with local residents. This theme sets out the priority areas where VCS organisations are well placed to make a significant impact. |
| **Priorities** |
| * Addressing inequality for Black Asian & Multi-Ethnic communities and women * Creating opportunities for people from different backgrounds to come together. |
| **Outcomes** |
| * Reduce inequalities faced by groups with different protected characteristics * Protection of children and young people * Combating domestic violence * Reducing crime and anti-social behaviour * Improved opportunities for women and residents from Black, Asian & Multi-Ethnic communities * Reduction in structural racism * Improved community cohesion, including between different communities and age groups. |
| **Examples of activities** |
| * Activities that improve the confidence and skills of residents from Black, Asian and Multi-Ethnic communities and of women * Organising events between people from different backgrounds to celebrate the borough’s diversity * Opportunity for communities to come together to discuss and act on local issues * Organising activities and events that bring people from different backgrounds together to build friendships * Projects that empower residents who are facing inequality to improve their quality of life. |
| **Geographic Spread** |
| Bids may be submitted for borough wide projects or for projects which are specific to a defined geographic area.  Consortia bids may be made for linked local services which provide a borough wide pattern of provision. |
| **Levels of Funding** |
| The budget allocated to this theme is £450,000 per annum. There is a £40,000 limit on the amount you can apply for. Also, please bear in mind the guidance about including full costs in your bid and that the Council will only make offers different from the amount bid for in exceptional cases. |

### Scheme 5B – Community Safety

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| **Overview** |
| We want everyone in Tower Hamlets to feel safe living in the borough. Community safety has been a key priority for residents of the borough in Annual Residents Surveys. This will include supporting safe places, particularly for women - including those from Black, Asian & Multi-Ethnic communities - and young people. Hate crime against all communities must not be tolerated.  There is a need to prevent children and young people from becoming involved in crime, including gang intervention to prevent children and young people from criminal exploitation. Children and young people require education on community safety in order to protect themselves, whilst avoiding participation in crime.  We must work to support the victims of crime. Simultaneously, we need to provide support for ex-offenders to prevent them from re-offending, linking them to support on employment and housing issues.  We need to tackle hate crime and violence against women and girls (VAWG) and make men and boys more aware of this issue and the wider need to respect women. This will include empowering women who are victims of domestic violence in order that they can lead fulfilling lives. We want to work with different communities to provide services to respond to needs relating to VAWG and domestic violence.  The above goals will involve the Council, the VCS and partners, such as the Police, working together to promote safety and reduce crime in the borough. This will include developing better relationships between the Police and the community, particularly with children and young people.  The VCS has a unique role in helping to achieve that vision through innovative community focussed services co-designed with local residents. This theme sets out the priority areas where VCS organisations are well placed to make a significant impact. |
| **Priorities** |
| * Tackling drug and alcohol issues * Promoting safer communities * Supporting ex-offenders * Gang intervention and prevention * Victim support * Tackling and preventing violence against women and girls |
| **Outcomes** |
| * Residents feel safer in the community, including those communities that are most vulnerable to hate crime, such as LGBTQ+ community and disabled people * Creation of safe places for women, children, and young people * Reduction in crime, anti-social behaviour, and drug use * Improved relationships between children, young people and people in authority – e.g., the Police * Ex-offenders’ life opportunities and employment opportunities are enhanced * Men and boys are better educated on the need to respect women and are supported to become allies with women in the struggle against domestic violence * Improved confidence and trust in the Police, particularly amongst women and people from Black, Asian & Multi-Ethnic communities * Residents actively engage with statutory services to identify and implement solutions to local problems. |
| **Examples of activities** |
| * 1-1 and group work support for residents who are struggling with addiction to help them overcome their drug and alcohol issues * Community projects that address the causes of violence and hate crime against women, girls and vulnerable communities, including disabled people and people from LGBTQ+ communities * Targeted support for children and young people who are at-risk of criminal exploitation and anti-social behaviour * Self-defence classes for children, young people, and women * Peer support projects for women, including for survivors of domestic abuse and older women * Counselling support to address the mental health needs of victims of crime, including the victims of hate crime against specific communities, such as disabled people and people from LGBTQ+ communities * Engagement activities between the Police and the local community. * 1-1 and group work support for residents who have been the victims of crime * Training, mentoring and employment support for ex-offenders to help them not re-offend * Working with residents who are members of gangs and helping them to stop committing crime and anti-social behaviour * Providing culturally sensitive services to combat violence against women and girls * Education and awareness campaigns in schools and the community to combat violence against women and girls. |
| **Geographic Spread** |
| Bids may be submitted for borough wide projects or for projects which are specific to a defined geographic area.  Consortia bids may be made for linked local services which provide a borough wide pattern of provision. |
| **Levels of Funding** |
| The budget allocated to this theme is £450,000 per annum. There is a £40,000 limit on the amount you can apply for. Also, please bear in mind the guidance about including full costs in your bid and that the Council will only make offers different from the amount bid for in exceptional cases. |

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# Appendix one: Useful information

Below is a list of data sources and council strategies and plans that are relevant to the grant’s themes. Please note that this is not an exhaustive list, and you may be able to find other relevant sources of information from your research.

## Statistics

* + [Census 2021 data](https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/censusareachanges/E09000030/)
  + [Residents Survey](https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgnl/community_and_living/borough_statistics/Annual_Residents_Survey.aspx)
  + [Joint strategic needs analysis](https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgnl/health__social_care/joint_strategic_needs_assessme/joint_strategic_needs_assessme.aspx)
  + [Borough profile](https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgnl/community_and_living/borough_statistics/Borough_profile.aspx)
  + [Ward profile](https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgnl/community_and_living/borough_statistics/Area_profiles.aspx)
  + [Income, poverty and welfare](https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgnl/community_and_living/borough_statistics/Income_poverty_and_welfare.aspx)
  + [Education](https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgnl/community_and_living/borough_statistics/Education.aspx)
  + [Economy, business and labour market](https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgnl/community_and_living/borough_statistics/economy_business_and_labour_market.aspx)
  + [Health and social care](https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgnl/community_and_living/borough_statistics/health_and_social_care.aspx)
  + [Health and Wellbeing Board – Annual Report](http://democracy.towerhamlets.gov.uk/documents/g13339/Public%20reports%20pack%2020th-Mar-2023%2017.00%20Tower%20Hamlets%20Health%20and%20Wellbeing%20Board.pdf?T=10)

## Strategies

* + [Strategic Plan 2022-2026](https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgnl/community_and_living/community_plan/strategic_plan.aspx)
  + [Tower Hamlets Health and Wellbeing Strategy](https://democracy.towerhamlets.gov.uk/mgConvert2PDF.aspx?ID=191599)
  + [Tower Hamlets Adult Mental Health Strategy](https://democracy.towerhamlets.gov.uk/documents/s154992/5.2%20Appendix%201_Mental%20Health%20Strategy%20draft.pdf)
  + [Tower Hamlets Sport and Physical Activity Strategy](https://democracy.towerhamlets.gov.uk/documents/s162037/Physical%20Activity%20and%20Sport%20Strategy.pdf)
  + [Tower Hamlets Children and Young People’s Strategy](https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/Documents/Community_living/TH_Children_Families_Strategy_v11.pdf)
  + [Tower Hamlets SEND Strategy](https://democracy.towerhamlets.gov.uk/documents/s123818/5.11a%20Appendix%201%20-%20SEND%20Strategy%20final%20draft%20v1.2.pdf)
  + [Tower Hamlets Growth and Economic Development Plan](https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/Documents/Consultation/Growth_and_Economic_Development_Plan_2018_2023/GrowthEconomicPlan_2.pdf)
  + [Community Safety Partnership Plan](https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgnl/community_and_living/community_safety__crime_preve/anti-social_behaviour/community_safety_partnership/csp-plan.aspx)
  + [Tower Hamlets Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy](https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/Documents/Community-safety-and-emergencies/Domestic-violence/VAWGStrategy2019-24.docx#:~:text=Support%20and%20protection%20for%20victims&text=Victims%20of%20VAWG%20have%20safe,through%20a%20trauma%2Dinformed%20approach)
  + [Tower Hamlets Cohesion Plan](https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgnl/community_and_living/Community-cohesion/Cohesion-plan.aspx)

1. Borough Equality Assessment (2020) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)