Prospectus – Emergency Fund

18/09/2025

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# Introduction

Tower Hamlets Council has a vision to support and invest in the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) to help it improve the lives of residents.

To support this vision the Council provides funding, via the Emergency Fund, to local VCS organisations who are facing an emergency. The purpose of the Emergency Fund is to support VCS organisations that have been, or are funded, by the Council which are facing an emergency, that would likely result in closure of the organisation. Organisations can apply for a one-off grant of up to £10,000 through the Fund, which will enable them to survive, continue to deliver vital services for residents and take steps to become more sustainable in the future.

This prospectus provides information on the criteria for the Emergency Fund and how to apply.

Eligibility Criteria

To be considered for funding you must meet the eligibility criteria below:

1. be a VCS organisation
2. have a Constitution, Memorandum and Articles of Association or other recognised governance documents
3. have a registered office in Tower Hamlets[[1]](#footnote-2), a base within Tower Hamlets or be able to demonstrate a track record of successful service delivery within the borough, for at least one year
4. have been in receipt of Tower Hamlets Council funding in the past two years
5. have a bank account in your organisation’s name
6. have a live and up to date safeguarding policy in operation if your organisation works with children and/or adults at risk of abuse
7. have current insurance cover in operation
8. be able to show long-term financial viability, in the event of any Emergency Fund grant being awarded to your organisation
9. be in danger of closing or unable to continue to provide funded services
10. have already taken measures to address the emergency
11. not have a debt with the Council of £1,000 or over.

How much money is available?

The total budget for the Emergency Fund is £100,000 per year. Organisations can apply for a one-off grant of up to £10,000 per year.

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# What will we fund?

The Emergency Fund can fund:

1. building repairs for essential emergency work or health and safety requirements

2. legal costs

3. redundancy costs

4. staff salaries/wages (to cover unforeseen medium/long term absences)

5. recovery from damage or accidents to an organisation’s building or other assets.

Please note: this is not an exhaustive list. If you are unsure whether the issue you are seeking funding for is an emergency, please contact the Voluntary and Community Sector team at [vcs@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:vcs@towerhamlets.gov.uk).

# What will we not fund?

The Emergency Fund will not fund costs which are not related to the emergency or for which the organisation has the funds to cover. We will not fund:

1. consultancy costs not directly related to addressing the emergency
2. delivery costs for terminated projects that were previously funded by the Council or another funding body
3. delivery of new projects or enhancing of existing projects
4. project match funding
5. insurance or accreditation fees
6. staff or volunteer training, volunteer expenses or team-building away days.

**Please note**: as above, this is not an exhaustive list. If you are unsure whether the issue you are seeking funding for is an emergency, please contact the Council’s Voluntary and Community Sector team at [vcs@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:vcs@towerhamlets.gov.uk).

# Application process

To apply for the Emergency Fund, you need to submit an application form. Please e-mail your completed application form to: [vcs@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:vcs@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

There is no deadline for submitting bids. Applications will be considered when they are received.

Applicants will be expected to submit an application form, which consists of two sections:

* an **“Organisation Section”**
* an **“Emergency Grant Proposal Section”**

The assessment of your application will be based on examination of the information that you provide in the application form and the accompanying documents that we have asked you to provide. Please provide the most up to date versions of the documents. The method for submitting these documents to the Council will be confirmed with you by a Council officer.

## Organisation Section

The assessment of the organisation section is to see whether your organisation meets the standards of governance, management and financial competence that the Council expects of organisations it supports with public funds.

The organisations section questions will be scored as a pass or fail, so if your organisation fails on any of these criteria, you will not be eligible for funding

| **Criteria** | **Standard Required** | **Evidence** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Governance | You must have a Constitution, Memorandum and Articles of Association, or other recognised governance document. | Copy of your constitution or other governance document. |
| Borough connection | Have a registered office in Tower Hamlets[[2]](#footnote-3), a base within Tower Hamlets or be able to demonstrate a track record of successful service delivery within the borough, for at least one year | Confirmation of registered address (e.g. bank statement or utility bill within last 12 months)  Or  Copy of your rental agreement for the premises in Tower Hamlets where you deliver activities (this should cover a period of at least one year)  Or  Other evidence that you have successfully delivered services in Tower Hamlets for at least one year.  . |
| Managing money | A bank account in your organisation’s name. | Details of your organisations bank account including (please provide a copy of your recent bank statement which contains following information):   * name of bank account * sort code * account number. |
| Geographical area served | Confirmation of which part of Tower Hamlets your organisation serves. | Provide information on organisation assessment form of which Council wards your organisation covers. |
| Safeguarding policy | Live and up to date safeguarding policy in operation if your organisation works with children and/or adults at risk of abuse. | Copy of your organisation’s safeguarding policy. |
| Insurance | Current insurance cover. | Copies of relevant insurance certificates. |

## Emergency Fund Proposal Section

The assessment of the proposal section is to determine whether your reported emergency is in line with the Council’s criteria for the Emergency Fund and that your proposal to address it is realistic or not. It includes questions relating to your organisation’s current financial position and future financial viability.

| **Criteria and Requirements** | **Application Question** | **Maximum Score** | **Maximum Number of Words** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| About your organisation | Please describe:   * the purpose of your organisation * how your activities benefit Tower Hamlets residents * how these activities link to Council priorities as outlined in our [Strategic Plan 2022-2026](https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgnl/community_and_living/community_plan/strategic_plan.aspx). | 15 | 500 words |
| About your emergency | Please describe:   * the emergency your organisation is facing. * the impact the emergency will have on your service users * the impact the emergency will have on your organisation? | 20 | 500 words |
| How you have addressed the emergency previously | What steps has your organisation taken to deal with the emergency so far?  What has been the impact of these steps? | 25 | 500 words |
| What you want funding for | Please describe:   * What you will use the funding for? * How will the funding help your organisation have long-term financial viability? * Budget | 20 | 500 words |
| Reserves and Financial Management | Please explain how much reserves you have available and why these cannot be used to tackle the emergency.  Apart from reserves does your organisation have any alternative sources of funding to address the emergency?  Please attach your recent year-end accounts. | 20 | 500 words |

Each scoring criteria for the proposal section assessment will be allocated a weighted score between 0-5. Applicants will not be eligible for funding if they score a 2 out of 5 on any of the questions.

## Monitoring and Evaluation

All successful organisations will be required to complete a monitoring and evaluation form at an agreed date. This will ensure that the grant has been spent correctly and that its impact has been measured. It will also enable the Council to continue to improve the Fund.

1. As confirmed by formal proof of organisation’s address – e.g. bank statement. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. As confirmed by formal proof of organisation’s address – e.g. bank statement. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)