

Guidance for applicants

What is Sussex Community Foundation?

Sussex Community Foundation raises funds for and make grants to local charities and community groups across East and West Sussex and Brighton & Hove. We've raised a total of £21 million to support Sussex communities since 2006, and given almost 3,000 grants to more than 1,700 charities and community groups.

Where does the money come from?

We manage funds on behalf of a wide range of donors, both local and national, connecting them to the groups and communities they want to support. Each fund has its own criteria, sometimes addressing a particular theme or area of need, and sometimes a particular part of Sussex.

What can I apply for?

Our grants programme is made up of a range of funds which help to address disadvantage and deprivation and build resilience in Sussex communities.

The types of work we support includes:

- Youth club activities
- Lunch clubs for older people
- Health and well-being initiatives
- Community transport
- Community gardens
- Projects addressing homelessness
- Community advice and support
- Food banks
- Projects addressing drug and alcohol misuse.

Your grant can cover costs such as:

- Equipment and materials
- Staffing
- Training and skills development
- Rent or hire
- Marketing
- Organisational development, eg. help with business planning or fundraising strategies
- Volunteer expenses.

You can see more of the sort of work and projects we fund on our website.

How much can I apply for?

Most of our funds offer grants of up to £5,000. However, most grants awarded are for less than this. Some funds are able to offer larger grants. These opportunities will be publicised on our website, and in our Grants E-Bulletin.

When can I apply?

General applications can be made at any time throughout the year, using our standard application form. Our Grants Committee usually meets three times a year to make decisions. Deadlines for these Committees will be advertised

on our website. Applications received after each closing date will be carried forward to the next grant round. Some funds have particular deadlines, application forms and requirements – please see our website for more information about these.

Am I eligible to apply?

Most of our grants are awarded to not-for-profit volunteer led organisations whose annual income does not exceed £1 million. We define 'not for profit' organisations as those:

- Whose governing body (board or management committee) is entirely voluntary, although out of pocket expenses may be paid, and has a minimum of three un-related people (if some are related there must be at least three who are not)
- Whose members do not receive any financial benefit
- Whose income and assets are used for exclusively charitable purposes (and any remaining assets are transferred to a charitable organisation)
- That do not pay any dividend or distribute any surplus to shareholders or members

Your organisation does not have to be a charity but it does need to have:

- its own bank account, with at least two cheque signatories (who are not related to each other)
- a constitution or set of governing rules, with a minimum of three trustees/committee members, as above
- accounts or records of expenditure
- relevant policies (such as child protection, vulnerable adults, health and safety etc).

We can accept applications from social enterprises, CICs and Companies Limited by Guarantee carrying out activities which are charitable. However, these organisations must have:

- Demonstrable public benefit and clear protection against private benefit
- A minimum of three unrelated directors, the majority of whom are not paid either as directors or for delivering the activities of the organization (if some are related there must be at least three who are not)
- A majority of non-executive directors approving the salaries and benefits of any paid directors, which should be reasonable and proportionate to the work they do and the financial position of the organisation
- An asset lock body (in the case of CICs) with objectives which are charitable and similar to the CIC

We do not normally accept applications from individuals or from organisations that are part of central, local or regional government. However, some specific funds are able to support these applications, including the Paul Rooney Foundation, the Westdene Fund and the Shoreham Air Show Fund. Further details are available on our website, but if you are in doubt please contact the Grants team at SCF to check your eligibility.

How do I apply?

We have an online application process which you can access at www.sussexgiving.org.uk/apply-for-grants/how-it-works/. The website will also tell you more about the documents you will need to submit with your application. In most cases you do not need to specify which of our funds you want to apply for. We will match your application to the donor we think is most likely to fund you.

If you are unable to access the online form please contact the office (either by e-mail to grants@sussexgiving.org.uk or by phone 01273 409440) and we will provide you with a copy of the application form.

Occasionally a fund will have a separate application form. Details of these and the application forms will be available on our website.

How often can I apply?

It is unlikely that a group will receive more than one grant at a time, or more than one grant in a year. You can re-apply at any time if you are unsuccessful. Occasionally, some funds are available as additional funding, ie. in addition to an award through our general round. Details of these will be available on our website. Please contact the Grants team if you would like to discuss applying for an additional grant.

What happens once you receive my application?

Once we receive your application, we will check that you are eligible and have supplied the information we need. The application will then be assessed, matched to our funds, and presented to relevant donors and fund panels for consideration. SCF's Grants Committee then meets to consider all the applications and to allocate any further funds. This process takes about eight to ten weeks and we will let you know the outcome of your application very shortly afterwards.

If you are offered a grant, you will receive payment up front, once you have agreed to our terms and conditions. You have to return a monitoring form to us once you have spent your grant/completed your project.

What can't you fund?

Sussex Community Foundation does not support requests from or for:

- Organisations or activities which don't benefit communities in Sussex
- Organisations that discriminate on the basis of race, religion, national origin, disability, age, or sexual orientation
- Organisations where the service provided is used as a vehicle or means to promote religious beliefs
- Political activities
- Small contributions to major capital appeals or campaigns
- Grants which will be used to make awards to a third party
- Projects which only benefit animals
- Organisations who have not returned monitoring from previous SCF awards
- Retrospective funding for activities or projects that have already taken place

Where can I get more help?

If you have any questions about this guidance or our application process, please contact us at grants@sussexgiving.org.uk or by calling 01273 409440. We will be happy to help.