

England

Reaching Communities

Guidance



Our vision:

People in the Lead

We believe that the best way to improve communities is through harnessing and supporting the ideas, skills and energy of the people who live in them.

Our 'People in the Lead' approach focusses on ensuring people are able to drive change in their community right from the start, and remain in the driving seat from design through to delivery.

By doing this, our funding can help ensure that people and places are better prepared to make the most of their potential, and overcome the range of challenges they may face in the future.

For further details please visit our website:

www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/about-big/strategic-framework

Our funding priorities for England

Our funding enables people across England to improve their communities by using their local knowledge, strengths and assets to test and implement the ideas that matter most to them, as well as sharing learning about what went well, and what didn't.

The most important thing is that you tell us what your ideas are for making positive change in your communities. We particularly want to hear about ideas that support:

- Lasting and sustainable changes to places and spaces
- Communities to develop happier and stronger relationships with each other
- Taking action to focus on the root causes of social problems to tackle them at the earliest possible stage

Maybe you've been doing work in a particular area or on a particular theme for a long time which is trusted and valued by local people and you need support to continue the great work. Or perhaps you have an idea for something new. We want to know how we can support you.

Involving people in your work

We seek to fund activity where the people who will benefit will have influenced and/or be involved in its development, planning and delivery. Evidence shows that early and ongoing engagement with beneficiaries can greatly increase the chances of a project succeeding.

There are lots of ways of involving people in the planning and running of your activity. Good examples include;

- Convening user forums to represent views of the community and get actively involved in proposed changes, developments and new activities
- Encouraging people with lived experiences to become active through volunteering; giving them the chance to put something back whilst also offering peer to peer support
- Ensuring members of your community are involved in decision making through meaningful engagement, for example representation on your management committee or board.

We also want you to tell us how your idea adds value to existing services within your community, as well as your relationships with other organisations locally and how you plan to engage with people who are looking to solve similar issues.

Applying for funding from Reaching Communities

Who can apply?

If you are a voluntary or community group such as a charity, co-operative, social enterprise or community interest company, a not for profit company limited by guarantee or a statutory organisation such as a local authority or school then you can apply for this funding. When setting up your management committee please make sure it has at least three unrelated members.

Partnerships are also welcome to apply as long as they are led by a voluntary, community or social enterprise (VCSE) organisation. However, we are unable to fund individuals or sole traders, profit making groups or those not established in the UK.

The two stage application process

Stage One involves you submitting to us an overview of your activity and the difference it will make. A decision making panel of funding managers will assess the information you provide and draw on our local intelligence in your region to decide which proposals to progress to stage two.

It is important to note that demand for our funding is always far higher than the funding available. As a result, competition for funding can be strong and we have to choose between many good proposals.

We will let you know of a decision within eight weeks of receiving your Stage One application.

If you are successful, we will provide feedback and ask you to complete a Stage Two application, including more detailed information.

We ask that you send us your completed Stage Two form within four months. A decision making panel of senior managers of the Big Lottery Fund meets regularly to consider the most recent Reaching Communities applications.

How will your application be assessed?

We will assess your application against the following four criteria;

1. Have people with an interest in your project been significantly involved in its planning, have they influenced its design, and will they continue to help shape its delivery?
2. Will your proposal enable people to address a clearly defined need that matters to them and does it seek to fill a gap or complement other services and activities?
3. Will the activity make a positive difference in your community?
4. Is your organisation best placed to deliver and achieve the proposed outcomes, and does it have the appropriate links within your community?

Plus, as mentioned above, we are looking for ideas that will support:

- Lasting and sustainable changes to places and spaces
- Communities to develop happier and stronger relationships with each other
- Taking action to focus on the root causes of social problems to tackle them at the earliest possible stage

Changes to your project

Once we have invited your project to Stage Two, if you wish to make significant changes such as variations to the target beneficiary group, the area you'll be targeting or significant changes to your budget, you should contact us to discuss this.

What can I spend the money on?

Through Reaching Communities funding you can apply for between £10,000 and £500,000.

We can fund some or all of the costs associated with delivering your project, including staff salaries, training, volunteer expenses, management costs, equipment, premises costs, monitoring and evaluation and overheads. We can also fund up to £100,000 for small scale capital work, such as refurbishment, the purchase of vehicles, land or buildings.

There are some things that our funding cannot pay for, for example, costs incurred before you receiving a funding decision, activities that take place outside of the UK, and fundraising activities.

I'm interested. How do I get started?

Make sure you read these guidance notes carefully before completing an application form. You will also find further useful information on our website.

We encourage you to contact us before you apply as we can give you additional advice and support before you submit your application and we will tell you more about the information we need from you.

Call us on 0345 4 10 20 30

An application form can be accessed through our website;
www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/global-content/programmes/england/reaching-communities-england