



OPEN GRANTS PROGRAMME

Funding guidelines

INTRODUCTION

The Clothworkers' Foundation is a UK-wide funder providing capital grants to organisations improving the lives of people and communities, particularly those facing disadvantage, deprivation, and/or discrimination.

Our Open Grants Programme accepts applications for **capital projects** from **UK registered charities or not-for-profits** that meet our eligibility criteria. Please note that an organisation can only submit one application to The Clothworkers' Foundation at a time.

Organisations providing services to beneficiaries that fall within our nine programme areas can apply for support:

- Alcohol and substance misuse
- Disadvantaged minority communities
- Disadvantaged young people
- Domestic and sexual abuse
- Homelessness
- Older people
- People with disabilities
- Prisoners and Ex-offenders
- Visual Impairment

If you provide services across more than one of our programme areas you can still apply, provided that at least **50% of your beneficiaries fall under one or more of the programme areas**. If 50% of your beneficiaries do not fall within our programme areas but your **capital project** will **exclusively** benefit beneficiaries under one or more our programme areas, you are still eligible to apply.

We also have a number of other exclusions which may affect your organisation's eligibility. We will cover these later in this document, and you can also read them on our website.

OUR PROGRAMME AREAS

ALCOHOL AND SUBSTANCE MISUSE

Organisations supporting people and families affected by drugs and/or alcohol misuse can apply under this category.

We understand that organisations supporting people affected by alcohol and substance misuse may also fall under our other programme areas. If this is the case, please apply under the programme area which best aligns with the primary aims of your organisation.

DISADVANTAGED MINORITY COMMUNITIES

Organisations supporting minority communities facing both disadvantage and discrimination can apply under this programme area. We support organisations providing specialist services to disadvantaged minority communities that they would not otherwise be able to access, and organisations supporting access to mainstream services.

Some examples of eligible organisations include those supporting **BAME** communities and the **LGBTQ+** community.

DISADVANTAGED YOUNG PEOPLE

Organisations supporting disadvantaged children and young people can apply under this category. For example, organisations supporting **care experienced young people, young carers, young people not in education, employment or training, or youth clubs/activities in highly disadvantaged areas**. Organisations supporting **young people at risk of homelessness or of offending** can also apply under this programme area.

The focus of services must be on supporting disadvantaged young people; general educational organisations, wildlife and outdoor educational charities, sports organisations, and youth arts organisations are not eligible to apply under this category unless those benefiting from the capital project make up **at least 50%** of our programme area.

Please note, we do **not** accept applications from pupil referral units, schools or organisations delivering other mainstream educational provision under this programme area.

Organisations supporting young people with physical and learning disabilities, or mental health issues should apply under the People with Disabilities programme area.

DOMESTIC AND SEXUAL ABUSE

Organisations supporting those affected by domestic or sexual abuse can apply under this category. This includes victims, survivors and perpetrators of abuse. It includes services helping victims escape abusive relationships, or any part of the recovery cycle. Examples include refuges and women's organisations.

Organisations applying for a capital project linked to supporting perpetrators must have or be working towards Respect accreditation.

HOMELESSNESS

Organisations providing services to people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homelessness can apply under this programme area. This includes those providing homelessness accommodation, or services such as food banks and furniture recycling.

Organisations supporting young people at risk of homelessness (or that are homeless) should apply under our Disadvantaged Young People category.

OLDER PEOPLE

Organisations providing services to disadvantaged older people, in particular those living in areas of high deprivation can apply under this programme area. Organisations supporting older people affected by rural isolation can also apply under this category but the financial disadvantage of their beneficiaries must also be demonstrated.

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Organisations providing services to people with physical disabilities, learning disabilities and/or mental health issues/challenges can apply under this category. Those providing support to the families and carers of those with disabilities can also apply under this programme area.

Organisations supporting children and young people with disabilities should apply under this programme area, **not** the Disadvantaged Young People programme area. Please note that **special schools/colleges** are eligible to apply under this programme area.

If you are supporting blind or visually impaired people, please apply under our Visual Impairment programme area.

PRISONERS AND EX-OFFENDERS

Organisations supporting prisoners and ex-offenders, and their families, or those at risk of offending can apply under this category.

If you are supporting young people at risk of offending please apply under the Disadvantaged Young People programme area instead.

We understand that organisations supporting people under this programme area may also fall under our other programme areas. If this is the case, please apply under the programme area which best aligns with the primary aims of your organisation.

VISUAL IMPAIRMENT

We have a 300 year history of supporting organisations improving the lives of blind and visually impaired people and welcome applications from organisations with this mission.

ORGANISATIONS EXCLUDED FROM APPLYING

The Clothworkers' Foundation receives a large number of applications each year and we have a limited budget each year. We have therefore introduced funding exclusions so that we can prioritise our funding.

We **do not** fund:

- ① Organisations which have received a grant offer from us within the last five years (unless specifically invited by us to reapply)
- ① Organisations which have had an application declined in the last six months. In addition please note that we will not consider new applications for a capital project which has previously been declined.
- ① Organisations which promote religious activities or proselytise to service users. The Clothworkers' Foundation will consider on a case by case basis applications from organisations with a religious ethos, provided they do not promote religious activities or proselytise to service users. We will not normally support an organisation which provides services only to people of a particular religion, or where trustees/employees

are required to be of a particular faith unless it relates to our Disadvantaged Minority Communities programme area.

- ☐ Organisations with income of over £15million (please contact us if there are exceptional circumstances for income exceeding this amount, and your income will drop below this amount in subsequent years)
- ☐ Organisations with free reserves of over 12 months
- ☐ Hospices and NHS charities
- ☐ Organisations where grant making is a substantial part of their core services
- ☐ Schools, colleges or universities (unless their students are exclusively individuals with physical and learning disabilities e.g. special schools). Please note that we do not fund PRUS or alternative provision providers.
- ☐ Almshouses
- ☐ Village halls or community centre/hubs which are not operating in an area of high deprivation (as determined by the current Indices of Deprivation?).

CAPITAL FUNDING DEFINITIONS

We award grants towards capital projects such as:

- ☐ **Buildings:** the purchase, construction, renovation or refurbishment
- ☐ **Fittings, fixtures and equipment:** this includes but is not limited to office equipment/furniture, sports/gym equipment, digital/audio-visual equipment, and specialist therapeutic equipment. Please ensure you read our guidance on non-capital items.
- ☐ **Vehicles:** this includes minibuses, cars, caravans, people carriers, ands. We are unlikely to fund the total cost of a new vehicle or where an organisations owns a large number of vehicles already.

Our Open Grants Programme provides **capital grants only**. Items which we consider to be non-capital include:

- ☐ Salaries and overheads
- ☐ Volunteer expenses
- ☐ Training
- ☐ Rent
- ☐ Costs associated with the lease of property or equipment
- ☐ Websites, database, and software development
- ☐ Professional fees and project management costs
- ☐ Marketing, leaflets and other literature
- ☐ Equipment for one-off use, or which will be given to service users for personal use on a permanent basis
- ☐ Costs associated with one-off events
- ☐ Consumable items such as items with a short shelf life e.g. clothes, some sports equipment and kits, toys, and stationary

Other ineligible projects include:

- ☒ Medical research or equipment
- ☒ Consumables (as described above)
- ☒ Setting up/refurbishment of charity shops
- ☒ General appeals and emergency appeals
- ☒ Political projects
- ☒ Project where the primary purpose is that of heritage or culture
- ☒ Capital costs relating to arts and education projects unless they target and work exclusively with individuals from our programme areas

THE APPLICATION PROCESS

WHEN CAN YOU APPLY?

The Open Grants Programme is a rolling grants programme. We have no deadlines and assess applications as they are received.

HOW TO SUBMIT AN APPLICATION?

To apply, you must first successfully complete the online eligibility quiz which can be accessed on our [website](#). If you pass the quiz, you will be directed to our online application form. Please note that the eligibility quiz asks core questions about eligibility; you should still read our list of exclusions carefully before applying.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE RECEIVE YOUR APPLICATION?

You will receive an email confirming receipt of your application form. This email will come from mailuk@grantapplication.com (note: you should never send emails in reply to this address as it is not monitored). Please ensure you save this contact so emails do not enter your spam or junk inbox. Your application will be assigned to a batch and you will be informed once a grants officer has been assigned.

Your grants officer will contact you if they need any information during our assessments. We sometimes visit applicants (or ask for a zoom call) as part of the assessment process and if this applies to your application, we will contact you to discuss a visit. We usually make a decision on smaller grants (less than £10,000) within eight weeks, and on larger grants (more than £10,000) within six months.

WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU ARE SUCCESSFUL?

If your application is successful we will write to you by email with an offer letter outlining the terms and conditions of your grant and the next steps. The online portal account you set up for the application will be used throughout your reporting of the grant so please keep a record of your log in details.

WHAT HAPPENS IF YOUR APPLICATION IS UNSUCCESSFUL?

We do not currently provide feedback on unsuccessful applications. All decisions are final and you

cannot appeal a decision. An unsuccessful organisation cannot apply for another grant for six months, and may not apply to us for the same capital project again (unless we specify otherwise).

Our [Frequently Asked Questions](#) page provides answers to some common questions about our application process.

THE APPLICATION PROCESS

You can access a sample application form with help text on our website. In brief, there are six sections to the application form:

- ④ **Organisation and contact details:** Standard questions about you and your organisation as well as questions about how your work fits within our programme areas, and how you monitor your effectiveness
- ④ **Finances:** Questions about your financial position, any financial challenges you face, and copies of your latest annual accounts. If your charity is young and has not yet produced any accounts, we recommend that you postpone your application until they are produced, unless you have detailed management accounts and can demonstrate your organisation's sustainability
- ④ **Project details:** Questions about the capital project taking place, the need for the project, and we request a copy of your project budget. We also ask about project outputs and outcomes (please see later in this document for further guidance) and where the project will take place (e.g. your lease)
- ④ **Fundraising:** We need details about your fundraising strategy for the project, any funds raised, and any pending applications to funders
- ④ **Faith:** We ask questions relating to any faith ethos or religious activities of your organisation. We do not fund projects which promote or benefit religious activities.
- ④ **Type of capital project (buildings):** We ask some questions about the ownership of your building as well as any planning permission requirements for the project

Please note: we have tried to be generous with the word limit for most questions on the application form. This is because we understand how time consuming it can be to reduce answers to match word limits. We would however ask that, when completing the form, you keep your answers concise and that they only address the specific question/s being asked when possible.

OUTCOMES FOR CAPITAL PROJECTS

It can be difficult to identify outcomes for a capital project, particularly when it is the first stage of a longer journey to improve the lives of your beneficiaries. Because of this, we would like to know more about predicted outcomes **for your organisation** even if you are unable to predict outcomes **for your beneficiaries**.

We believe that all capital projects should be able to identify changes which lead to at least of these three longer term outcomes:

- ④ An improved **work environment**

- ☒ Maintained, improved, and/or increased **services**
- ☒ Improved **financial sustainability**

Please see the examples below to give you an idea of how you might answer this question. Our examples are brief and lack detail; we would expect more detail in an application but understand that outcomes are not always quantifiable.

Example project	Example outcomes
The purchase of IT equipment for staff at a charity working with disadvantaged minority communities	Staff will now have access to the IT equipment needed to deliver services. This means staff will be happier, there will be an improved work environment. The service to beneficiaries will be more effective and efficient with an extra 10 beneficiaries being supported per week because of time saved.
The purchase of specialist sensory equipment for pupils at a special school	Pupils will receive improved support as they have access to the benefits of a sensory room. The knock-on positive effects will also be felt by staff supporting pupils.
The construction of new accommodation units for an organisation supporting homeless people.	15 additional people per year will have access to safe and secure accommodation. The charity will own the new building, so increasing its financial sustainability and also help it to unlock further funding from elsewhere.
Purchase of AV equipment for a charity working with disadvantaged young people.	It will give staff the tools they require to deliver the services, improving our current workshops but also meaning we can deliver an additional four film craft and production skills training workshops per week.
The construction of a community centre in a highly deprived area.	The new community centre will ensure that more services and community spaces are available to beneficiaries from across The Clothworkers' Foundation's programme areas – particularly, older people, disadvantaged young people, and people with disabilities because... We will own our own building so it will improve our financial sustainability. Extra space means we can attract funding for new activities, and the

	modern facilities means staff are happier and more resilient.
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If you have any questions about our Open Grants Programme that are not answered in this document or on our website, please email foundation@clothworkers.co.uk.