

Grant opportunity: Funding differently – Neighbourhood Health Grants Inclusive, unrestricted and light touch (Closing date: Monday 24th June 2024)

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Welcome

In 2023/24, £105,000 was distributed to VCS groups in Southwark in a grants pilot that aimed to break down barriers that groups face with funding as highlighted in Community Southwark's [state of the sector research](#). You can read the learning and impact report [here](#). This year, Partnership Southwark have committed £200,000 to the grants pot – this will be distributed as follows:

£5,000 will be awarded to 20 VCS groups (for organisations with an annual income of less than £50,000)

£10,000 will be awarded to 10 VCS groups (or organisations with an annual income of between £40,000 and £100,000)

Groups can apply to one grant amount only - £5,000 or £10,000.

The grants process was developed with VCS groups in two pilot rounds in 2023/24. Groups also made decisions about how funds are distributed. It was a learning opportunity for all involved, and following both rounds of funding, we have adopted a process for this year, based on feedback and learning from 2023-24.

Eligibility criteria

In refining the criteria, we have focused on the most deprived areas of Southwark and those most likely to be further impacted by the cost-of-living crisis. The intention is to direct funding to where it is most needed. The criteria also recognise that funding challenges disproportionately affect smaller groups that don't have sufficient capacity or existing relationships with funders.

- A not-for-profit organisation (including unincorporated groups, CICs, CIOs and more) operating in Southwark.
- Supporting people in at least 1 of the following wards: Camberwell Green, Faraday, Old Kent Road, Nunhead and Queen's Road, Peckham, plus the Kingswood Estate (SE21) and Downtown Estate (SE16). You can find ward names and areas on the Community Southwark [website](#).
- An annual income of £50,000 or less for £5,000 grants and between £40,000 and £100,000 for the £10,000 grants.
- A group that supports people with disabilities and/or mental health needs. This can be preventative work and doesn't have to be the main focus of an organisation's work.
- Your organisation will need to confirm that it has the following: a safeguarding policy, a governing document such as a constitution, and a bank account in its name.
- Groups who received funding in 2023/24 **CAN** apply for funding in 2024/25.

Important

Please note that VCS groups in Southwark will decide how grants are distributed via two decision-making stages. If you are short-listed for the 2nd stage, you will be required to review 10 applications and submit your scores and feedback electronically. You will need to do this between the 29th of July and the 8th of September, and the organisation you represent will receive a goodwill gesture of £100 in recognition of your time. You will not be eligible for a grant if you do not complete scoring for others. For more information on this, please refer to page 7 and 8 of this document.

Other information

- Funds granted will be unrestricted to fund whatever the organisation needs, including core/overhead costs. Grant applicants do not need to detail how they intend to use the funds when they apply.
- There is no timescale for using the funds, but we'd like to start reporting on their impact by December 2024. This does not mean grantees should spend all the funds by then, but it would be helpful if grantees had an idea of how they might use the funds and/or what impact they think they might have.
- Groups that successfully receive funding do not have to complete a monitoring report.
- Groups can only submit one application to the fund.
- If your group does not have the required documentation (A safeguarding policy, constitution, bank account), Community Southwark can help you prepare these documents for future funding rounds. Please contact Gosia Kaczmarczyk – gosia@communitysouthwark.org.

Timeline:

Spring 2024	£5,000 to 20 groups, £10,000 to 10 groups
Applications open – 6 weeks to apply	Monday 13 th May 2024
Applications close	Monday 24 th June 2024
Decision-making – 1 st stage - VCS panel	11-18 July 2024
Decision-making -2 nd stage – shortlisted score each other	29 th July – 8 th September 2024
Groups notified of decisions	16 th September 2024
Funding distributed	October 2024

Applying for a grant

The link for applying for the grant will be open from Monday 13th May 2024.

The online form will ask you to confirm your eligibility. Once you have confirmed you are eligible, you will need to answer the following questions:

- 1) How does your work make a difference to health inequalities in the community?
- 2) Please add details about the following:
 - the needs of your beneficiaries
 - how many people do you support and how often?
 - How many sessions/activities do you run per week/ month or throughout the year?

This will help those making decisions get a better understanding of what you do and help visualise your organisation. Demonstrating high numbers or high levels of activities will not necessarily mean your organisation has more chance of being awarded a grant than others and it is recognised that the most helpful and targeted support often means fewer people are supported for example. Those making decisions will be advised to focus on the effectiveness and impact of support – this section has been added so that organisations apply detail what they do, when and with whom.

- 3) How would the money help your organisation?

Guidance on answering the questions

- If you need help with your application, please get in touch with gosaia@communitysouthwark.org. See [page 6](#) of this document for further information on support available.
- You can submit your response via a written document or a video recording. **Please choose one format only.**
- Those reviewing your submission will score your response based on the following:

Questions 1 and 2:

1) How does your work make a difference to health inequalities in the community?

2) Please add details about the following:

- the needs of your beneficiaries
- how many people do you support and how often.
- How many sessions/activities do you run per week/ month or throughout the year?

Scoring	
1-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No clear information on the organisation's purpose (the reason for doing what it does). • No clear evidence of need and impact (and not demonstrated via evidence including possible use of case study and/or data and/or client/organisation development.) • Activities unclear including frequency and how many people are supported. • Target groups or groups unclear, not clear on how it is addressing health inequalities
3-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some information of what is required for a higher score but 3 or 4 points or incomplete.
5-6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some elements of what is required for a 9-10 scoring but 2 or 3 points or incomplete.
7-8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some elements of what is required for a 9-10 scoring but 1 or 2 points missing or incomplete.
9-10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear information on the organisations purpose (the reason for doing what it does). • Clear evidence of need and impact (demonstrated via evidence including possible use of case study and/or data and/or client/organisation development). • Activities clear including frequency and how many people are supported. • Clear target groups or groups, supports people or preventative work with highest health inequalities in Southwark.

Question 3:

3) How would the money help your organisation?

Scoring	
1-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No information on how funds would be used, why they are needed and what difference they will make.
3-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some clarity on how funds would be used, why they are needed and what difference they would make but more information required. Need for funding is not compelling due to lack of information.
5-6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some elements of what is required for a 9-10 scoring but 2 or 3 points missing or incomplete.
7-8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some elements of what is required for a 9-10 scoring but 1 or 2 points missing or incomplete.
9-10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear information on what the funds will be used for and reasons why e.g. sustaining and/or developing current activity/funding of core and/or running costs/equipment and/or resources/supporting sustainability of the organisation – this list is not exhaustive. Clear information on how the funds will make a difference. Evidence of financial sustainability or plans for this for the organisation. A compelling case for funding.

- It is important that you answer all questions as each question has equal weighting when scored.
- Use the scoring indications above to make sure your answer covers all the points. For example, for questions 1 and 2, consider adding a case study (an example of your work or of someone who has benefitted from your work), be clear on what you do and why and be specific when you explain how your activities e.g. how many people do you support/how often do your activities run? /What is their impact?
- You do not need to use the funding for a specific project, and it can support core costs or running costs. Please give us an idea of what you will use the money for, but you do not need to provide a specific budget. The intention is for this funding to be flexible and meet your organisation's needs as you see fit.
- **Examples for question 3:** How would the money help your organisation?

These are examples from applications that received high scores in 2023/24

- We would use the funding for core costs and to hold workshops and events in the community providing residents with a safe place to express themselves, free from judgement. The money would be used for venue hire, booking headliners, DJs, hosts and facilitators.

This funding would make a huge difference to our organisation as we have been struggling to keep our regular events and workshops running in London due to costs. With funding, we would be able to cover all costs and deliver our services free of charge for participants (workshop attendees and open mic performers) and have lower-priced audience tickets.

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- We would use the money to employ an additional member of staff as well as help us with all costs that project funding does not cover such as public liability insurance, DBS checks, website fees, outreach, marketing, accounts, fundraising and so on.

We believe in our mission and the success of our new project demonstrates the need for us to grow; but realistically, we will not be able to do so without additional funding. After a 12-year run including 2 as an incorporated community interest company, we have reached a critical point where we are likely to dissolve unless we find extra support to sustain our activity.

Over the years, some of our founding members migrated back to their native countries and as of today, there's only 2 ladies left to run the show in the UK. We are single mothers passionate about bringing art and wellbeing to deprived communities and do everything ourselves from the administration (funding applications, accountancy, publicity, reports etc..) to the delivery (project setting, volunteer supervision, teaching, food shopping and cooking etc..). Sadly, we still need to find paid work outside to survive. As demand for our services has grown, we are now getting overwhelmed by the amount of work needed on all sides and the lack of human resources. Most of our funding application include a 10% administration fee but that leaves just about enough to cover the cost of publicity and miscellaneous running expenses. We need at least one more person to help us running the company and the projects as well as cover the cost of our activities as more and more people are taking part.

This funding would save the company and contribute to its activities developing and benefitting more people. It would enable us to take a member of our community on board and offer them training and a paid opportunity to support and sustain our creative community programme.

- Because we are a small group of volunteers we don't have any regular income - even though we are the only organisation for the older Latino Adults in the area. We need funding to run our activities, such as the English lessons which make such a life changing difference. We need funds for the Zumba instructor, to hire a room or hall to meet in, food and refreshments, materials for arts and crafts, and travel and other trip costs. £5,000 would make a huge difference to us – keeping us going and growing for another year.

We know that we already made a difference to the mental health of older Latin Americans in the borough. This funding will really support us to build on all we have learned, and to do so much more to help a very isolated and often hidden community of older people.

Guidance for the written document

- There is a 350-word limit for each question, but you can write less than this. The important thing is not the word count but that you answer the question clearly and concisely.

Guidance for video

- Your video submission does not have to be professionally made. It can be a video recorded on a smartphone. There is no time limit, but we suggest the video should be 2-3 minutes long.

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- If you are having trouble uploading your video to the grant portal, you can add a link to an upload, e.g., YouTube, Vimeo, or OneDrive.
- Here are video creation resources: [Hubspot](#), [Superhighways](#), and [Canva](#).

Decision-making

VCS groups that helped design the grant pilot clearly stated that VCS groups should be involved with decision-making and wanted the decision-making process and criteria available at grant application stage to be clear and transparent.

Stage 1 – if required

- If more than 20 groups apply, Community Southwark will create and facilitate a decision-making panel consisting of 5 VCS representatives from Southwark-based organisations independent of those who have applied.
- Community Southwark will do an open call-out to organisations that are Community Southwark members. Our members are all not-for-profits operating in Southwark.
- Panel selection will be selected randomly from those who express an interest and meet the above criteria, so everyone has an equal chance of participating. 1-2 members of each panel will be from groups that sat on panels in 2023-24. The panel will select the top 30 (for the £5,000 grants) or the top 20 (for the £10,000 grants) applications according to the following criteria and grade each application from 1-10 based on the scoring matrix above.
- Scores will be added up for each group, and the top 20 will go forward to the next round.

Stage 2

Decision – making – top 20/30

- The top 20 or 30 groups will receive the final applications via email and be asked to review 10 applications. Groups will be informed which 10 they need to score so that it is shared between all groups and so that every group receives scorings from 10 groups.
- Each organisation will grade each other's submissions according to the same criteria as the panel (stage 1) and the scoring matrix above.

Feedback

- Feedback will be collected and shared with groups at both stages so that groups who have applied can also learn about what makes a good application and how to improve (if needed) in the future.
- We will aim to let groups know whether they have been successful or not at both stages within 1 week. Depending on the number of groups who apply, providing further feedback may take a little longer but we will endeavour to share this as early as possible.

Payment for VCS engagement

We recognise that VCS time is valuable, and the skills and experience of VCS representatives should not be undervalued. Therefore, we will pay for VCS engagement in the grants process, as we have also done when planning this pilot project.

- A payment of £400 will be made to VCS representatives (to their organisation) involved in the first stage of decision-making.

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- A payment of £100 will be made to VCS organisations involved in the second round of decision-making.

Support from Community Southwark

We will support groups if they want advice on their safeguarding policy, constitution or bank account.

We will also advise about the grant application process if groups have questions. We can also advise you on how to answer the questions. Although we cannot write your response for you, we are happy to review your application before submission. Please get in touch with us at least 3 weeks before the deadline if you have any questions or would like advice.

Please contact gosia@communitysouthwark.org for more information.

Monitoring and measuring impact.

- VCS groups who successfully receive funding will not be required to submit a monitoring report.
- Community Southwark, United St Saviour's Charity, and Partnership Southwark will collect information on the grant's impact and the process itself through in-person visits and phone calls.
- We will seek to understand how the funding has helped, collect case studies where appropriate, and get feedback on groups' experiences with the funding —what worked well and what could be better.
- Information collected will be collated into a learning report to show the impact of this type of grant funding.