

CIF Micro Grant Fund 2025/26 Guidance Notes

Micro grants of up to the value of £1000 are available to fully-fund or part-fund activities that help to create resilient and vibrant communities, bring people together and support Essex residents to lead happy and healthy lives.

This programme can support one-off projects and events and ongoing activities. All projects and activities should be inclusive and open to all members of the community.

This fund is designed to support small and developing grassroots activities and organisations. As such grants are available to support the below types of organisations, groups and clubs with a maximum annual income of £100,000.

- Constituted Clubs or Membership Organisations.
- Community Groups and Voluntary Organisations, Residents Associations, Constituted Neighbourhood Committees and Management Committees.
- Registered Charities.
- Social Enterprises.
- Community Interest Companies [CIC's].
- Community Benefit Societies.
- Faith-based groups, where the funding is for inclusive activity that is open to all

Parish and Town Councils may also apply, but please do note that those with significant unrestricted reserves and large precepts are unlikely to be successful with this fund.

Funding is not available to:

- Individuals
- sole traders
- profit making companies
- political organisations

Fund Priorities

Projects should seek to address at least one of the following criteria:

- Reducing Social Isolation/bringing people together
- Supporting Improved Mental and Physical Health and Wellbeing
- Strengthening family resilience
- Supporting skills development

- Enable and empower local climate action
- Building community resilience and encouraging communities to support each other

Eligible Costs

Funding is available for both revenue and small capital costs. This might include:

- Room or venue hire
- Transport hire
- Refreshments
- Insurance costs
- Marketing
- Equipment
- Events costs
- Training for staff and volunteers

Funding cannot be used for:

- General operating costs such as rent, utilities or administrative costs
- As a contribution to works or major building works
- General charitable appeals
- To pay back debt or cover past expenditure.

The following are examples of what might be supported:

- **One-off projects or events** to bring communities together in community spaces
- **Starting new, or expanding existing activity** such as community gardening projects, arts and crafts workshops, knit and natter groups or digital skills training programmes
- **Supporting your organisation's development** through training for your staff or volunteers; support with evaluation; or access to improved IT equipment where it can be shown how this better helps you to provide community benefit

These are just some examples. You will know best what is needed to support and empower your communities, and we welcome applications for a wide range of activities.

Application Process

Upon the fund opening, applications can be submitted to the fund administrator via the email address provided in the '**Fund Administration**' section of this document.

This is a rolling grants programme, with grants typically awarded twice a month until funds are fully spent.

Only one grant will be awarded to an organisation within a 12-month period.

Applicants must provide evidence of their bank account details.

Fund Administration

Administration is undertaken by the Essex Association of Local Councils (EALC) on behalf of Essex County Council.

Should you require any further information about this fund, please contact the EALC using the below contact details.

Email: funding@ealc.gov.uk

Telephone: 01371 879 722

Web: www.ealc.gov.uk

Additional Support for your Organisation

Should your organisation have additional support needs beyond your grant funding application, we encourage you to visit [Your Essex Community](#), a platform designed to help charities, community groups, and social enterprises with their development needs, providing access to a variety of information, resources and learning opportunities.