

COVID-19 Emergency Assistance Grant *(for community groups and organisations)*

Guidance notes

SUMMARY

The Local Authority Emergency Assistance Grant for Food and Essential Supplies is for local authorities in England to use to support people who are struggling to afford food and other essentials due to COVID-19. We hope these guidelines will help you with the application process and give your project the best possible chance of success, so please read them carefully and contact the Community Connectors Team at communityconnectors@southandvale.gov.uk if you have any questions.

GRANT TIMELINE

The scheme is now open and applications will be assessed on a rolling basis. The first deadline for applications is Midnight on Tuesday 15 September 2020. Further rounds will be assessed every two weeks thereafter, and the scheme will remain open until the funds are spent, so early applications are encouraged. We anticipate that funds will be spent by 31 October 2020.

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1. WHO WE CAN FUND

- Constituted Foodbanks and food projects including larders and community fridges supporting vulnerable residents affected by the Covid-19 pandemic
- Constituted and not for profit community and voluntary organisation offering advice, guidance and training to those affected by the pandemic, to build their capacity particularly around financial hardship (applying for benefits and budgeting advice)
- Town and Parish Councils who are collaborating with un-constituted third party groups e.g. COVID-19 community response groups, mutual aid groups
- Community interest companies offering support as detailed above to those struggling to buy food and essential provisions as a result of COVID-19
- Non-profit businesses who are offering support as detailed above to those struggling to buy food and essential provisions as a result of COVID-19

The council is committed to promoting equality and diversity and welcomes applications from organisations representing minority or vulnerable groups. We encourage all applicants to make their projects as inclusive and accessible to all as possible.

2. WHO WE CANNOT FUND

- Individuals
- Profit-based businesses (private businesses)
- Political and lobbying groups
- Constituted groups or organisations not directly supporting residents affected by COVID -19
- Un-constituted community groups or organisations

These lists are not exhaustive, and the council's decision is final.

3. WHAT WE CAN FUND

The maximum an applicant can request is up to £5,000 per application.

We are keen to fund the following type of projects:

- projects directly helping vulnerable people affected by the effects of COVID-19, such as providing access to food and other essentials e.g. toiletries;
- existing schemes supporting people struggling to afford food and other essentials, and where the need is greatest;
- projects advising and providing information to people to help them access longer term support they might need, such as benefits;
- projects that provide targeted support in areas of greatest need and deprivation, including rural areas;
- projects that demonstrate how significant numbers of residents most affected by COVID-19 will benefit.

We will fund capital and revenue expenses.

- Capital expenses may include buying or replacing essential equipment e.g:
 - a fridge to expand storage capacity at a food bank or larder;
 - PPE equipment;
 - mobile phones for volunteer support lines.
- Revenue expenses may include:
 - supporting food bank/larder running costs;
 - food supplies;
 - utility, rental and staffing costs;
 - non-food supplies: toiletries, sanitary products.

4. WHAT WE CANNOT FUND

- Projects outside the district boundaries
- Any activity that does not assist the community response to the Coronavirus pandemic
- Statutory activities/requirements that either the council or another public-sector organisation is responsible for delivering
- Alcoholic refreshments
- Projects that specifically benefit private businesses
- Political activities, lobbying or campaigning
- Retrospective requests for activities or projects that have already taken place

5. HOW TO APPLY

Online applications:

Applications can only be received online, via the council’s grants system, FlexiGrant.

You will be asked to:

- register an account on FlexiGrant - the email address and phone number that you register with will be used to contact you with the outcome of the award and for reporting purposes;
- complete a data consent declaration to allow the Community Enablement team to contact you regarding your application and in the future.

Please note:

- You will need to press ‘save progress’ as you complete each section of the form.
- Once you press the final ‘submit’ button, you cannot return to your application to make further changes.

The application form has five sections for you to complete:

1. Organisation and contact details

This section of the application will ask you to attach the following documents:

Your constitution or similar governance document – not applicable for Town and Parish councils	<p>We look for the following elements within the document:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that the name of the organisation matches that on the application and the bank account name; • that your objectives allow for the delivery of this project; • confirmation that all income will be used to deliver the objectives, • that you have the ability to raise funds; and • a dissolution clause that confirms where any remaining assets will go if your organisation is wound up (we look for it to go to another not-for profit organisation); • this document, must be relatively up-to-date or have proof that it has recently been reviewed and is still relevant.
Evidence of named officers (such as chairman, treasurer, secretary etc) for your organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • such as a list of officers registered with the charity, or minutes from an AGM when officers were elected

Evidence that you are authorised to make the application on their behalf	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • this could be a letter from at least one other person in the organisation, minutes from a meeting or similar; • organisations must also have the correct authority in place for their representatives to apply and enter into the Grant Agreement and legally bind the organisation; • parochial Church Councils and parish councils have own governing arrangements for this, which should be followed.
A copy of your latest statements for any bank/building society accounts in the name of the organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check that the name of the organisation matches that on the application and the bank account name.

2. Project overview

This section of the application will ask for:

- a project name;
- a brief project description (bear in mind the next section will ask for more detail);
- in which parish your project takes place or will take place - if your project is district wide, please tell us it is 'district wide';
- start and end date for the project;
- whether costs are capital or revenue;
- total cost of the project.

3. Community benefit

Once you have passed the eligibility criteria (section 1, 2 and 3) of the application, we will score this section of the application in the following way:

Application question for scoring	Criteria	Scoring: 5 = High, 3 = Medium, 1 = Low
Please give details of the help your organisation will provide with this funding to support residents who are accessing essential food and provisions as a result of COVID-19.	<p>Funding Criteria Your project must fulfil one of the following two criteria to be scored accordingly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • projects that provides direct support in terms of food and essential supplies to those affected by COVID-19 • project that provides advice to those affected by COVID-19, particularly around financial hardship (applying for benefits) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet the funding criteria fully – 5 points • Meet the funding criteria mostly – 3 points • Meet the funding criteria partially – 1 point

	and budgeting) to build or support their capacity during this period.	
How will you check the eligibility of people using this service to ensure that they meet the criteria for this fund?	<p>Community Need We realise there are many people in need in our communities, but this funding is specifically for people in our communities who cannot afford food and essentials due to COVID- 19. Projects with a system in place to identify those people affected by COVID-19 will score higher.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tried and tested system in place for being able to identify people most in need and affected by COVID-19 is in place – 5 points • A proposed plan in place to identify people most in need and affected by COVID-19 – 3 points • Responding to people who say they are in need and affected by COVID-19 without confirming their eligibility – 1 point
Please provide details of how the demand for your services has increased due to COVID-19 e.g. number of users or food parcels distributed before and during lockdown.	<p>Community Need It's important to see that the need for this project / service has increased due to COVID-19 to justify the funding support. Please be as specific as possible, e.g. we had 50 more people sign up at our foodbank in April 2020 compared to April 2019.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demands on service increased dramatically – 5 points • Demands on services increased slightly – 3 points • Minimal increase in demands – 1 point
How many people affected by COVID-19 does your organisation expect to help with this funding?	<p>Community Benefit Due to the limited funding available, we do want as many people as possible to benefit from projects.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up to 100 – 1 point • Up to 500 – 3 points • 1,000 plus – 5 points
Will your organisation be working in partnership with others to offer help and support?	<p>Partnership Work We encourage partnership work, working with other groups and organisations will make your project more effective and give you a wider more targeted outreach in the community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up to 1 organisation – 1 point • Up to 3 organisation – 3 points • 5 or more organisations – 5 points
Can you confirm that your organisation has policies in place that adhere to the Equalities	Equal opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One point for YES

Act, to ensure people are not disadvantaged or treated unfairly by your project?		
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4. Finances – project cost

Please ensure you only list eligible project costs – if you are unsure whether your costs are eligible, please contact communityconnectors@southandvale.gov.uk for confirmation

5. Declaration

6. WHAT HAPPENS AFTER I SUBMIT MY APPLICATION?

Successful and unsuccessful applicants will be notified within two weeks of our decision.

Successful applicants will have to formally accept our offer in writing using the grant acceptance form which will be sent by email to the main contact identified on the application form. Please ensure we have the correct details and you keep your FlexiGrant record up-to-date with any staff changes.

Your signed offer letter commits you to the following conditions:

- Organisations/groups must spend the grant on the general community initiatives indicated in their request for funding, by 31 March 2021 or the funding will need to be returned to the council.
- Organisations/groups must let the council know if they no longer require their grant and return it in those circumstances so that it can be redirected to support other COVID-19 initiatives.
- Organisations/groups are responsible for considering where their initiatives need to take account of safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults, and subsequently complying with the relevant legislation.
- Organisations/groups acknowledge that the council accepts no responsibility or liability for the services/activities the groups deliver with the funding, now or in the future.
- Organisations/groups will acknowledge the council's support in any press, publicity or promotion of the project.
- Organisations/groups must complete a monitoring form within 30 days of project completion.

7. HOW DECISIONS ARE MADE

When the Community Connectors team receives an application, we'll check the eligibility of an organisation and project against the criteria set out in these guidance notes, before scoring the application against the grant assessment scoring matrix.

Decisions are final and aren't subject to appeal, but we are able to offer feedback or suggestions of other potential sources of funding if required.

8. WHAT IF I'M NOT SUCCESSFUL?

We also work with Oxfordshire Community and Voluntary Action (OCVA), who support voluntary and community sector groups and organisations based in Oxfordshire and offer all kinds of advice, including sources of funding and getting fit to fund.

We recommend any organisation looking for funding talks to OCVA before applying to our schemes, you can contact them on 01865 251948 or at admin@ocva.org.uk to discuss potential funding options for your project or service. For more information, visit the [OCVA website](#).

You can also talk to the Community Enablement Team, who may be able to suggest other possible sources of funding.

9. CONTACT US

If you have any queries regarding the eligibility criteria or the application process, please contact communityconnectors@southandvale.gov.uk

GOOD LUCK!