

# Thriving Third Sector Fund Application Guidelines

**Thank you for your interest in the Thriving Third Sector Fund (TTSF). This is an exciting programme aimed at supporting a 'thriving third sector', throughout the administrative county of Essex.**

In 2009 a £2 million endowment fund was established with Essex Community Foundation (ECF), by Essex County Council. The Fund is managed by ECF, an independent grant making trust and registered charity number 1052061. All interest and enquiries about the Fund should be made directly to ECF.

An important principle of the TTSF is that the money is endowed in order that income from the fund can be distributed annually, in perpetuity, to ensure that funding can support charitable organisations active in Essex. The priority for the TTSF is to create an environment for a healthy and thriving third sector.

These application guidelines are to assist your organisation in making an initial proposal to the fund. Proposals will be reviewed by the TTSF Panel which includes experienced charity Chief Executives, an Essex County Council Cabinet Member and a Police representative.

The Panel is keen to understand the barriers and issues that potentially affect the development of your organisation and how the proposed work will not only support your development but also contribute to a thriving third sector.

These guidelines should provide enough information for you to make an initial proposal; examples of previous grants are available on our website. However, should you wish to discuss this further, please contact the Grants Team, details are below.

## **Aim of Fund**

The Panel recognises that the voluntary and community sector has an opportunity to develop its organisations in order to carry out activities or deliver services that strengthen community cohesion, increase environmental sustainability or tackle social and economic disadvantage. As such, the aim of the fund is to ensure the long-term, sustainable future of voluntary and community organisations in the administrative county of Essex (excluding Southend and Thurrock).

## What can be funded?

1. Applications that can help the third sector to thrive.

2. Support work that improves business skills within charities through increased engagement and involvement between third sector and the business sector.

Funding can be given to support the future development of your organisation but is not aimed at supporting your everyday activities.

The Panel are keen not to be too prescriptive about what can be funded; rather they invite you to tell them what barriers you face in developing your own organisation, and how your proposal will offer the appropriate solutions and contribute to a thriving third sector. Examples of likely proposals:

- Develop new partnerships/new ways of working with other organisations
- Increase opportunities to work with and learn from business leaders
- Secondments of CEO to work with, and learn from, other organisations
- Develop skills in influencing and negotiation
- Develop strategic thinking and vision
- Investigate new ways of generating income
- Investigate new ways of working
- Investigate collaborative working
- Mergers
- Participate in leadership development
- Develop new Information Communication Technology
- Development of skills in governance, business development or marketing
- Undertake research that will inform new areas of work

Each applicant must demonstrate how funding will help their organisation thrive, or how building relationships with the business sector improves and develops the skills within your organisation and contributes more widely to a thriving third sector.

This is an opportunity for your organisation to set your own agenda and address some of the issues and barriers that may impede your organisation's sustainability.

It is important to note that applications seeking funding to continue everyday activities without demonstrating future sustainability will not be considered.

## What can't be funded?

- Applications seeking funding to continue everyday activities without demonstrating the benefit to the wider third sector will not be considered
- Core running costs/general operating costs
- Projects operating outside of the administrative county of Essex
- Private or profit-making companies
- Individuals

### Who can apply?

- All voluntary and community organisations, registered and non-registered charities
- Other non-profit making organisations, that are charitable in purpose and work for the benefit of people living within the administrative county of Essex only (excludes Southend and Thurrock)

### How much can we apply for?

There is no upper limit. The Panel will select proposals that will have the greatest impact and can clearly demonstrate benefit to the wider sector. The Fund typically awards around £100,000 of grant funding each year across projects. The average grant awarded from this Fund is £40,000.

### How long is funding for?

The aim of this fund is to support the development of your organisation and the wider sector and we appreciate this may take time. Therefore, multi-year funding is possible, your application could be for a grant period of up to 5 years.

### How do I apply?

To ensure that we do not waste your valuable time we use a two-stage application process, which starts with an Expression of Interest (EOI).

### Expressions of Interest

[Click here](#) to start the form. **This is now a rolling programme, which means you can apply at any time.**

We encourage every potential applicant to call the ECF grants team in the first instance to discuss your proposal.

### TTSF Checklist Summary

- ✓ Our project will support the development of our organisation and the wider third sector and/or our project will improve business skills within our organisation through increased engagement and involvement between VCS and the business sector
- ✓ Our project will contribute towards the overall aim of the TTSF i.e. to ensure the long-term, sustainable future of voluntary and community organisations in Essex
- ✓ We are a voluntary and Community organisation and/or registered Charity and/or a not for profit organisation and our project is charitable in purpose
- ✓ We are not applying for our general running costs
- ✓ We have developed outcomes so that we can anticipate the difference this work will make

**If you have any questions then please contact the Grants Team on:**

01245 356018

[grants@essexcf.org.uk](mailto:grants@essexcf.org.uk)

[www.essexcommunityfoundation.org.uk](http://www.essexcommunityfoundation.org.uk)