

Essex Community Foundation Application Guidelines



These guidelines have been developed to assist you in completing your grant application to the Foundation. Please read them carefully and contact the Grants Team on 01245 356018 or Grants@essexcf.org.uk if you have any questions.

Essex Community Foundation is a registered charity, no. 1052061. As an independent local grantmaker, we support voluntary and community groups working for the benefit of people living in the administrative county of Essex, Southend and Thurrock. We award all our grants from the numerous Funds we manage on behalf of statutory agencies, private donors, companies and local families.

How much can I apply for?

Grants of £250 to £10,000 are available which must be spent within one year. Please note our average grant is £4,000. ECF manages some Funds that can award higher value grants over multiple years. We do promote these funds at particular times of the year but please call the Grants Team if you have any questions.

When can I apply?

Our general grants programme is open throughout the year; however we do have some Fund Panels outside of the general programme that meet at specific times of the year. For information about the Funds currently encouraging applications please visit the 'Funds inviting applications' page on our website - [click here](#).

We will match your application to the most appropriate Fund so do not worry if you do not know which Fund you are applying to. You do not need to submit more than one application form, if you are unsure, please call the Grants Team.

How do I apply?

ECF's standard online application forms (under £1,000 or over £1,000) are available on the 'How to Apply' page on our website - [click here](#).

Please contact the Grants Team if you need a paper version posted to you.

What does Essex Community Foundation support?

Essex Community Foundation awards grants to voluntary or community groups and other not for profit organisations, which are charitable in purpose and are working for the benefit of people in Essex, Southend or Thurrock. Our support generally falls under the broad heading of improving social welfare; successful applications can demonstrate the following:

- A strong case for support
- Clear aims and objectives
- That wherever possible the organisation or project is user led
- That the grant will make a real difference to people within their community

We support core costs/revenue costs, new or continuing projects, one-off initiatives and capital costs. We are particularly interested in small, grass roots organisations.

What will Essex Community Foundation not support?

- Projects that operate outside of Essex, or benefit non-Essex residents
- Political campaigning
- Religious activities which are not for the wider public benefit
- Statutory agencies including Parish Councils and Schools in the discharge of their statutory obligations
- Contributions towards general appeals
- Activities which solely support animal welfare
- Retrospective Funding i.e. grants for activities which have already taken place
- Organisations that mainly give funds to other organisations or individuals

When completing your application form you should consider how you will demonstrate the following:

Evidence of Need

- How do you know that this activity is necessary/desirable?
- Has the project been requested by users of your organisation or people in the community?
- What research have you done and what information do you have that supports this view?
- How urgent is the need for this activity?
- What are the consequences if you do not secure funding?
 - Evidence of lasting benefit
 - Improve resources/capacity
 - Identifiable outcomes
 - Potential to impact on quality of life.

Evidence of Community Use or Involvement

- Are you working with any other organisations?
- Is the organisation open to the wider community?
- How will you publicise this service/ project to the community?

Value for Money

- Please provide a full breakdown of costs being requested (including salary rates, if applicable)
- Provide at least two quotations for equipment or construction/building works (if applicable).
- Include a Project budget/Business Plan as appropriate

Management and Governance

- You must have a recognised governing document e.g. Constitution, Memorandum & Articles, outlining charitable objectives and containing a charitable dissolution clause
- If you are working with children and/or vulnerable people you must have a Safeguarding Policy – *see page 3*
- You must demonstrate the capacity and knowledge to deliver your project

You must have a bank account in the organisation's name with at least two out of three **unrelated signatories**

If you are a Social Enterprise (including CIC), you will need to demonstrate:

- CICs to provide your CIC 36/37 Public Benefit Statement
- that you have social and/or environmental objectives and evidence that these are being achieved
- that you are independent
- that you earn 50% or more of income from trading
- evidence that more than 50% of profit is being put back into the social/environmental purposes
- a track record or sound business model through the provision of a business plan

We actively encourage membership/support from appropriate infrastructure/umbrella bodies e.g. local Council for Voluntary Service - the fee for joining could be added to your funding request. If you are newly established as an organisation, we encourage that you are receiving appropriate support. The Grants Team can provide you with contact details for the infrastructure body appropriate to your organisation.

Essential Documents Checklist

The requested supporting information is an important aspect of your application to the Foundation and we are unable to assess your request until we have received all the necessary paperwork. The following documents are required:

- ✓ Governing document
- ✓ Annual Accounts
- ✓ Bank Statement (no more than 3 months old)
- ✓ Safeguarding Policy
- ✓ Equal Opportunities Policy
- ✓ A budget for the current year

Please contact the Grants Team if your organisation does not have all of the necessary paperwork. We may request additional documents to assist with our assessment. For example quotes if your application is for equipment or building works.

Safeguarding and Equal Opportunities

ECF recognises that it has a duty, as has every organisation working with children or vulnerable adults, to put in place safeguards to protect these client groups according to legislation with regard to beneficiaries, trustees, staff and volunteers. The Foundation is also committed to ensuring that all grant recipients understand and are aware of this duty and must, where relevant, have in place a safeguarding policy that is in line with current legislation and best practice, and procedures for dealing with issues of concern or abuse towards the prevention of risk. Best practice includes obtaining DBS and other relevant checks for appropriate trustees, staff and volunteers. We would expect to see a statement to this effect within all safeguarding policy documents.

You must also be able to demonstrate how you address Equal Opportunities within your organisation.

[What happens once I have submitted my application form?](#)

Acknowledgement of Receipt

You will receive an automatic e-mail on submission of your application.

Assessment

All applications received at the Foundation are subject to a detailed assessment. A member of the Grants Team may contact you to request further documentation/information or to discuss your application. Please ensure the person named on the application is able to discuss it in further detail during office hours.

Grants Decisions

The assessment and approval process takes time but we endeavour to provide a decision within 12 weeks of receiving the **complete** application. Once the final decision has been made you will be advised by letter.

ECF's Board of Trustees is responsible for the Funds under their management and for making final decisions. Unfortunately we cannot fund every application that we receive and therefore decisions have to be made to establish who we can fund and the amount we can provide. Sometimes we may only be able to fund certain aspects of your application.

Terms & Conditions

Successful applicants may have additional Terms and Conditions relating to the use of the grant in addition to those on the form, which will be communicated within the offer letter and may need to be addressed prior to the funds being released.

Under no circumstances may a grant be used for any other purpose than that identified in the grant offer letter. Should you need to request a change of use for any grant, you **MUST** contact ECF before committing to any expenditure. Failure to do so may result in the grant being withdrawn and returned to ECF.

End of Grant Report

We monitor and evaluate all successful applicants to ensure that funding has been appropriately spent. An End of Grant Report Form will be sent out shortly after the offer letter, which must be submitted within 13 months of the grant award date or sooner if possible. The satisfactory completion of the end of grant form is a prerequisite for any future application to the Foundation.