

NHS Essex Community Health Partnership Fund – Small Grant Application Guidelines

The NHS Essex Community Health Partnership Fund has been established by NHS Essex Integrated Care Board (ICB) in partnership with Essex Community Foundation (ECF). The programme is testing new community-led approaches to improving preventative health outcomes and increasing vaccination uptake among communities where coverage remains lower than desired.

The Fund recognises that trusted community organisations are often best placed to engage with local people, that statutory services can find difficult to reach. Funding is therefore available for projects that can encourage, enable and support greater vaccine confidence and uptake.

This guidance is intended to help applicants prepare strong Expressions of Interest (EOIs) and understand how applications will be assessed.

Fund Priorities

The NHS have highlighted Priority Groups and Geographic areas where there is a particularly low uptake of vaccines.

Projects will need to work with one of the below priority groups. Projects may support more than one priority beneficiary group where there is a clear rationale and delivery plan.

Priority Groups
• Pregnant Women – Pertussis, RSV, Flu • Teenage Girls & Boys – HPV • Children – MMR Dose 1 & 2

The fund will consider applications from across Essex (excluding Southend and Thurrock) but priority will be given to the below areas.

Geographic Priority Areas
• Basildon • Harlow • Tendring

What Can Be Funded?

The focus of this fund is to support organisations who are already working, and can demonstrate strong relationships, with the priority groups. The fund is open to supporting projects that can be easily integrated in work that is already being delivered.

Grants of **up to £10,000** are available and can support work over a period **up to 24 months**.

The Fund is looking for community-led approaches that:

- Increase awareness and understanding of vaccinations
- Build trust and confidence within communities
- Address barriers to accessing vaccination services
- Support informed decision-making
- Engage communities that are underserved or less likely to engage with mainstream services
- Create sustainable and collaborative approaches that can inform future delivery models

Examples might include:

- Community outreach and engagement activities
- Peer support and community champion programmes
- Awareness campaigns tailored to specific communities
- Workshops, events or information sessions
- Community-led research and insight gathering
- Partnership projects that strengthen local engagement

What Cannot Be Funded?

The Fund cannot support:

- Direct vaccination delivery
- Employment of vaccinators
- Purchase of vaccines
- Purchase of clinical equipment
- Activities that fall outside ECF's standard funding criteria

Eligibility

Applications are welcome from:

- Registered charities
- Community and voluntary organisations

- Community Interest Companies (CICs) limited by guarantee
- Other not-for-profit organisations meeting ECF eligibility requirements

Organisations must:

- Be based in or work primarily within Essex (excluding Southend and Thurrock)
- Have an appropriate governing document
- Have at least three unrelated trustees or directors
- Have no single person with significant control
- Have a bank account in the organisation's name with at least two unrelated signatories

Application Process

There will be two stages to the application process. The first stage will require you to complete an Expression of Interest (EOI).

The deadline to submit an EOI is Wednesday 25 November 2026, 5pm.

EOI's will be reviewed by the panel and those demonstrating the strongest fit to the fund priority areas will be invited through to the second stage.

If successful at the EOI stage, you will be asked to provide further detail on your project. The panel may have specific questions, and these will be shared with you upon invitation to the second stage.

You will be notified of an outcome on your EOI by **Wednesday 16 December** and if successful will have until **Friday 22 January** to complete the stage 2 application.

What Makes a Strong Application?

The Advisory Panel is looking for organisations that combine strong community connections, collaboration, and innovation to help increase vaccination uptake across Essex's priority communities.

Successful applications are likely to:

- Demonstrate strong community relationships and trust
- Clearly explain how activities will improve vaccination uptake
- Show a strong understanding of barriers faced by priority groups
- Present realistic, deliverable plans
- Demonstrate sound governance and financial management
- Include clear outcomes and methods for measuring success
- Include meaningful partnerships and collaboration
- Show a willingness to share learning and support the wider programme

In your application please:

- Avoid jargon and technical language where possible
- Be specific and provide examples
- Use evidence and data where available
- Explain why your approach will work for your target community
- Focus on impact rather than simply describing activities
- Demonstrate how your organisation's strengths make it uniquely placed to deliver the work

Successful Applications

Resources and information will be provided to support the development of your work with beneficiaries.

As a proof-of-concept initiative designed to test collaborative, community-led approaches to improving preventative health outcomes, we would be asking successful applicants to share learning, participate in evaluation activities, and provide feedback on the funding model throughout the programme. To make this easy and worthwhile rather than an extra burden, you'll be supported throughout by an external evaluation consultant, who will help you think through what success looks like for your organisation, find simple ways to hear from the people you support, and support you with reflection and reporting along the way.