

### **What is the Voluntary Sector Initiative Fund?**

At Brent Council, we know that harnessing the expertise of the voluntary and community sector in Brent is crucial for engaging local communities and achieving better outcomes for the Borough.

The Voluntary Sector Initiative Fund helps the voluntary and community sector in Brent to deliver work to support the [Council's Borough Plan](#) which aims to reduce poverty and inequality and ensure that local people live in a safe, sustainable and well maintained environment and are enabled to fulfil their potential and improve their quality of life.

### **What kind of project is the Council looking to fund?**

We are seeking to fund projects that will benefit the borough. There needs to be evidence to show that the project is needed by local residents and that the proposed project aligns with statutory provision.

Organisations can apply to deliver grant funded projects relating to any one of the following themes:

- Supporting children and families and enabling young people to thrive
- Regenerating the borough
- Protecting our environment and enhancing our cultural offer
- Enabling Health and Well Being
- Ensuring Community Safety

### **How much grant funding can I apply for?**

Organisations can apply for a one off grant of between £1000 and £10,000 grant funding to contribute to identified activities in a project or to support one off expenditure of a non-recurrent nature such as purchase of furniture or equipment.

### **Is my organisation eligible to apply for themed grant funding?**

This funding is available to organisations which:

- Are non-profit making or social enterprise
- Have been in operation for at least 12 months
- Run projects which benefit Brent residents and support the aims of the [Council's Borough Plan](#)
- Have a good organisational structure and an effective management committee (minimum 6 people)
- Have effective financial management system
- Comply with the Council's standard terms and conditions of grant aid

- Can evidence commitment to equality and diversity in staffing, management and project delivery
- Involve users in management and development of projects

### **What criteria will be used to assess applications?**

Applications for funding will need to meet the following criteria:

1. Project focuses on the whole borough or a priority neighbourhood within the borough.
2. Project goals support the [Council's Borough Plan](#) priorities and align with statutory service provision in the borough
3. Organisation has other sources of revenue funding and a good track record of delivery.
4. Organisation will provide a short report to evidence outcomes and any appropriate equality and diversity information
5. Where appropriate, the organisation has a Child Protection Policy, Safeguarding Adults Policy and Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS - formerly CRB) checks.
6. Organisations will cooperate with site visits from Council officers to meet staff, users and members of the management committee where required.
7. Funding will not support religious or political purposes or individuals.
8. Funding will not be given retrospectively for projects already completed.

Alongside meeting the criteria, the following factors will be used to assess which bids are successful:

- best alignment with Borough Plan priorities and associated statutory service provision
- the range of bids received
- partnership, networking and liaising with statutory and voluntary bodies within the Borough
- local, regional and national partnerships in which the organisation is involved
- other sources of funding that will contribute to the project
- priority given to proposals from organisations not previously in receipt of funding from the Council
- track record where the organisation has previously worked with the Council.

### **How will grant be paid?**

- All projects/activities must be completed by the end of the financial year for which the grant is given and all funds must be claimed by the end of the financial year. For the purpose of the Fund the financial year will be from the 1st April to 31st March the following year.
- Where the grant is for a particular item payment will be made in arrears i.e. organisations must first incur the expenditure and then submit relevant receipts before grant is paid. Reimbursement will be for the actual cost of the item up to the allocated amount.
- Payment for activities will be made according to details of grant agreement.
- Please note that if your application is successful, the grant must be used for the purpose for which it was approved. The Council reserves the right to withdraw or reclaim part or all of the grant awarded in event of the organisation failing to carry out the work for which the grant was awarded or failing to carry out the project within the financial year.