

EPIC Grant Programme

Guidance Notes – under £10,000

1. Introduction

(i) Purpose of the Fund

This funding is part of an innovative 5-year partnership with the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation that focuses on activity that will build greater long-term resilience within Sandwell's communities at grassroots level. The purpose of the **EPIC (Enabling People In Communities) Grant Programme** is to enable local voluntary and community organisations to access grants, to support the following broad outcomes:

- Increased resilience within communities
- Increased self-reliance
- Improved and stronger relationships within the community
- Residents are involved in the design and delivery of activities that make a positive change in their communities
- Asset and strengths based – see [Appendix 3](#) for the ABCD methodology that the programme is working to.

(ii) Eligibility

To be eligible to apply, organisations are required to meet the criteria as set out in [Appendix 1](#).

(iii) Application Content

The current COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on voluntary and community groups and the communities they support, and will continue to have far-reaching consequences going forward. Many of the ways in which groups have tackled the issues of loneliness, social isolation, and healthy living within their communities have changed significantly – some have ceased/been suspended, others have been adapted to make greater use of technology – but tackling these challenges remains a high priority both now and in the future.

Given that the key focus of the overall programme is that of building '*greater long-term resilience within Sandwell's communities at grassroots level*', for this next round of EPIC funding we are particularly interested to receive applications that have a specific focus on the following themes **and that are shaped by the learnings and experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic**, for example, how have services needed to adapt in order to provide support? What might communities need to learn/be upskilled in to make them better able to respond to / cope with future challenges?

- **Health and Wellbeing:** Projects that have a positive impact on an individual's quality of life, physical and mental health.
- **Reducing Isolation and Loneliness:** across all age ranges.

Cont...

Isolation refers to separation from social or family contact, community involvement, or access to services.

Loneliness is an unwelcome feeling of lack, or loss, of companionship as defined by 'Strategy for Tackling Loneliness 2018'. Often major life events and changes can trigger loneliness e.g. losing your job, retirement, ill health, starting school/university.

(iv) Exclusions

- **Capital Expenditure:** Whilst this is **not** a programme to fund 'capital' expenditure, small items that are considered relevant and proportionate to the proposed delivery will be considered.
- **Direct Salary Costs:** Funds can be used to support extra capacity to deliver this project e.g. sessional workers, tutors or extra capacity for existing staff etc. but not to create new posts. Please keep in mind that this grant programme is about engaging and supporting communities to do more for themselves.

(v) Grant Size

Applicants can apply for any amount up to £10,000, for a project to be delivered over 12 months.

2. Grant Timeline and Process

(i) Timeline

- Details of the current application window will be published on our website: www.scvo.info

(ii) Process

- a) **Applications below £10,000** – Applications can be submitted by **either** completing the form or, if you prefer, by submitting a short video that clearly answers all the questions in the application form – see [Appendix 2](#) for further information.

3. Grant Conditions

- Organisations in receipt of funding will be required to participate in data capture to ensure we capture data/evaluation/learning. A short training session will be delivered for data collection.
- By participating in data capture and the evaluation, your organisation will ensure that it complies with data protection legislation.
- Grant funding must only be used for the proposed delivery applied for – if you want/need to change any part of the proposal, you must contact us and tell us:
 - What you want to change
 - Why you want to change it
 - Any difference to the proposed outcomes / impact
- Before making any changes you must wait for us to agree them in writing;
- You will have the right kind of insurance in place for your proposed activity;
- You will have appropriate policies and procedures in place for the work you do and are proposing e.g. safeguarding, data protection.
- You will let us talk about your Programme-funded activity in our publicity if we want to do this;

- You cannot use the grant money for any activity that takes place **BEFORE** your application is approved.
- If you are publicising your activity you should mention who has helped with your funding, we can provide the relevant logos;
- Your Programme-funded activity must be a legal activity;
- The grant will be paid into a bank account that is in the name of your organisation and that requires 2 signatories for payment authorisations (we will ask for this once your grant has been approved) – if that is not the case we will need to agree a suitable alternative (at our discretion) **BEFORE** your activity takes place;
- Whilst we may not directly ask for evidence of your grant spending, you will need to keep receipts for activity expenditure in order to show good money management practice.
- Once a funded project under EPIC has been completed, you can apply for another grant, which can be for a different project or an extension of the previous project as long as you can demonstrate how the learning has shaped and enhanced it.

4. Notes on Completing the Application Form

(i) General Advice on Completing the Application

- Please read through the application form, and these guidance notes, **before** you begin so that you answer the questions as fully as possible.
- **Do not exceed the word count** on the questions as the words that are beyond the limit will be discounted. There is no minimum word count, but the more relevant information you can provide to the panel the better they will understand your organisation and proposal.
- **Do not assume** that the Grant Panel knows your organisation, even if your organisation has received funding from SCVO in the past.
- Please complete **ALL** questions and sections within the application form.

Eligibility – please ensure you have read [Appendix 1](#) of the guidance notes and ticked to confirm that your organisation meets the requirements.

Q1. Please state how much money, you are applying for (maximum under this strand is £10,000)

When you consider how much to apply for, think about it from a strengths-based perspective. How can you encourage communities to look around to see what resources they already have (e.g. skills, experience, talents and underused buildings) and encourage a culture of people doing things for themselves?

Q2. What is the name of your project?

Please state the name of your project.

Q3. Describe your project:

Provide details of what it is you want to do, where it will take place, when it will happen...so that we can get a detailed picture of the proposal. We are interested in growing and developing the activities you already undertake but also exploring new creative ideas, **particularly those that have been informed by experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic**. How might what you are proposing to deliver help communities to be better placed to tackle future challenges?

Q4. How have you involved the community (residents/volunteers) in the design and development of this project?

Please read [Appendix 3](#) for the ABCD methodology relevant to this programme.

For this round, please tell us how the learnings from your experience of the COVID-19 pandemic have helped to shape this project proposal.

Please provide as much detail as possible, to evidence that you have gathered input from people who will benefit from the project and how they have influenced project design e.g. what conversations/consultations have taken place that show that this project is needed?

Q5. By the end of your project delivery, how will your project have;

- a) Built on the strengths, skills, knowledge of local residents – e.g. buildings, transport, underused resources, people etc. that already exist in the community.
- b) Improved relationships within the community? – e.g. different parts of the community getting to know each other that helps to increase understanding of those who are similar and/or different.
- c) Supported communities to tackle challenges and/or deliver activities – i.e. supporting people to help themselves. Participation of people in ways that strengthen community relationships, resources, and its capacity to cope ('bounce back') and move forward. **As a result of the experiences from the COVID-19 pandemic, how will communities be better-placed/prepared to tackle future challenges?**

How will you know that you have achieved the above and how will you evidence it?

Q6. Who does your project aim to benefit?

Tell us about the beneficiaries group(s) that your project will work with over its lifetime e.g. young people, older people, volunteers etc.

If you require any assistance with making your application, please contact SCVO as follows:

- **Community Partnerships Coach:** Liz Webster – email: liz@scvo.info / mobile: 07923 259821
- Or
- **Operations Manager / Deputy CEO:** Stuart Ashmore – email: stuart@scvo.info / mobile: 07703 823226

Appendix 1

Eligibility criteria for the EPIC Grant programme (Esmée Fairbairn Partnership).

To be eligible to apply to the EPIC grant programme, you will need to be one of the following types of organisation:

- **A voluntary organisation/group** (a formal organisation by a management body made up of volunteers who are engaged in that activity for environmental, economic or social good.)
- **A community organisation/group** (a less formally organised body run by a management body made up of volunteers who are engaged in that activity for environmental, economic or social good.)
- **A tenants and residents group**
- **A faith group**
- **Most co-operatives and social enterprises** (provided all profits are retained for the benefit of the members of community served)
- **Most sports organisations**

that have one or more of the following structures/forms:

- Unincorporated groups (that have a written constitution/set of rules (governing document) that sets out the purpose of the group and how it is managed)
- Registered charity (incl. CIO)
- Company limited by guarantee
- Community Interest Company limited by guarantee
- Community Interest Company limited by shares (with a 100% asset lock clause to ensure that funds or assets can only be transferred to a named organisation or cause with charitable objects aligned to the applicant)
- Community benefit society
- Co-operative

Additionally, organisations need to be able to demonstrate that they:

- operate on the basis of being wholly not-for-profit and/or do not distribute profits/assets for personal or private gain
- have a Board or Management Committee comprising of a minimum of 3 members (ideally unrelated) who give their time in a voluntary (unpaid) capacity. If this Committee is not locally based, the organisation should demonstrate its long-term commitment to Sandwell.
- Are actively delivering services in Sandwell or undertaking activities for the benefit of Sandwell Communities.

Principally reinvest any financial surpluses to further social, environmental or cultural objectives that bring a significant community benefit to Sandwell (at least 50% of any financial surpluses need to be reinvested in Sandwell for community benefit).

Appendix 2

1) Make a short film (maximum 3 minutes) that answers **ALL** of the questions detailed in the application form/guidance notes.

We recognise that it may not be appropriate to film beneficiaries but, where appropriate, you should gain the relevant consent; particular consideration should be applied if your beneficiaries are children or vulnerable people.

2) Upload your film to YouTube (open an account if you do not have one). Ensure that you enter the following information about your film...

Title: <name of your project> for The EPIC Grant Programme (under £10k)

e.g. SCVO Community Lunch Club for the EPIC Grant programme (under £10k)

Description: Location - <name of Sandwell Town / are in which your project is located>

e.g. Princes End, Tipton / Soho & Victoria, Smethwick etc.

Website - <full website address>

e.g. www.scvo.info or <https://www.facebook.com/SCVO.Sandwell>

Service - <10-20 word description of your proposed project>

e.g. Mobilising volunteers to provide well-being support to those people most at need in the community

Privacy Settings: Public

Category: Non-profits & Activism

3) Before the published deadline for submissions, please email the following information to Liz@scvo.info

- **The 'link'** to your YouTube film (click on the Share and it will provide you with a link)



button

- **Your full name, postal address, email** (even though it will be in the header) & contact telephone number (mobile is preferable).

The video link is for the purpose of the assessment panel and will not be shared without consent.

Appendix 3

Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) ...

“...is a methodology for the sustainable development of communities based on their strengths and potentials.

It involves assessing the resources, skills, and experience available in a community; organising the community around issues that move its members into action; and then determining and taking appropriate action.”

(John L. McKnight and John P. Kretzmann)

This methodology starts with the community's own assets and resources as the basis for development; it empowers the people of the community by encouraging them to utilise what they already possess. It starts with a **‘what’s strong’** approach, rather than a **‘what’s wrong’** one.

But, crucially, the model recognises that such communities don’t *‘have all the answers or resources’* to solve community problems (as might otherwise be implied by the definition) – indeed, it is most effective when community capacity is developed **alongside** interventions from external sources.

ABCD is built on 4 pillars or foundations...

- it focuses on community assets and strengths rather than problems and needs.
- it identifies and mobilises individual and community assets, skills and passions.
- it is community driven – “building communities from the inside out”.
- it is relationship driven.

The emphasis in ABCD is about:

LOCAL:

- Knowledge
- Culture
- Resources
- Skills
- Processes

By implication, these *‘local assets’* will be best known by people from the local community ... so community members become the drivers of change ... leading from the inside-out.

As such, they become active ‘citizens’ rather than ‘clients’ receiving a service; from *passive recipients* to **active citizens**.

We invite local people to ask of each other, *“what can we do best for ourselves and each other?”*.

By engaging with that question people are enabled to identify, connect and mobilise what they have, to make change happen. **That puts them in the driving seat of change.**

They take the lead by using what they have, to secure what they need. In this way, residents also assume a powerful lead in directing outside helpers in how best they can be helpful. Since, until residents know what they have which is local and within their control, they cannot know what they need from outside (what is not local and not within their control).