

SCVO Vision 2030 Climate Change Grants: Guidance Notes

1. Introduction

Vision 2030 sets out the ambitions towards making Sandwell (in 2030) a thriving, optimistic and resilient community. Central to this vision is the message of closer partnership working between all sectors and communities across the borough.

The aspiration is for Sandwell (now and in the future) to be where we call home and where we're proud to belong – where we choose to bring up our families, where we feel safe and cared for, enjoying good health, rewarding work, feeling connected and valued in our neighbourhoods and communities, confident in the future, and benefiting fully from a revitalised West Midlands.

SCVO, is a local charity working across the borough of Sandwell with a mission to help local residents and communities access support, which enables them to take greater control of their lives, overcome challenges and make the most of opportunities available to them.

SCVO is delivering this grant programme, on behalf of and in partnership with Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council, to enable voluntary and community groups to deliver activities in Sandwell, and to Sandwell residents, to support the following priority:

(i) Purpose of the Fund – Addressing Climate Change in Sandwell Communities

In 2018, the UN released a report outlining that global emissions need to be reduced by 45% by 2030. This is in order to have a reasonable chance of meeting the global goal of limiting global warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.

Based on this evidence, Sandwell Council has joined 280 other councils in England that have declared a Climate Emergency and are aiming to meet science-based targets for reducing emissions of greenhouse gases.

Carbon neutrality and net zero carbon emissions mean that any greenhouse gases still emitted in the area in future will be offset by capturing carbon from the atmosphere, e.g. through tree planting.

Sandwell has adopted the following overarching targets:

- i. **to reach carbon neutrality across all Council functions by 2030.**
- ii. **to reach carbon neutrality borough-wide by 2041.**

This programme of funding seeks to support voluntary, community and not-for-profit/charitable organisations that fit within the definition of the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) as detailed in [Appendix 1](#), and that meet all the following criteria:

- Are well placed within their community
- Are motivated to tackle the issues presented by climate change
- Can educate communities on the issues presented by climate change
- Can support residents and communities to reduce their carbon footprint

- Are prepared to work in partnership with Public Health and SMBC’s climate change team
- **Have attended the relevant training** - A series of training events will be held and **only** those organisations who attend the training will be able to access the grants. This will ensure the grant spending is well-informed and supported; having an action-learning approach that will support organisations as they develop their interactions.
- Are keen to disseminate the learning from their interventions
- Have expertise to offer to the wider sector, providing mutual benefit

and will:

- Support the community response to climate change in Sandwell (the focus could be on measures:
 - to reduce carbon emissions [mitigation] **or**
 - make communities more resilient to changes in the climate [adaptation])
- Deliver activities such as:
 - green infrastructure (e.g. tree planting, gardening, urban greening, growing fruit and vegetables);
 - active travel (e.g. increased cycling for local travel);
 - increased resilience (e.g. around heatwaves – information, water bottles, flooding – grab bags); **and**
- Develop the existing workforce or volunteer base (e.g. supporting the development of climate change community groups)

Projects that are successfully awarded funding for this theme will be expected to be able to deliver **now** i.e. starting within (approx.) 1-2 months of receiving approval, and will become part of an action learning cohort in order to maximise shared learning and experiences.

(ii) Grant Amounts

Funding is available as follows:

- **Direct delivery costs:** Min £500 – Max £2,500

(Larger, partnership bids – up to a maximum of £5,000 – **may** be considered where it is clearly demonstrated that collaboration brings significant added value).

PLEASE NOTE – you may only have **ONE** funded proposal in delivery at any time from this themed programme.

(iii) Grant Eligibility

Eligibility for funding is limited to voluntary, community and not-for-profit/charitable organisations that fit within the definition of the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) as detailed in [Appendix 1](#).

In addition, your organisation must have had at least one representative attend the ‘Climate Champions’ workshops being delivered by the Public Health Team (or be booked to attend) **BEFORE** your application can be considered.

If you are in any doubt as to your eligibility, please telephone/email (see below) to seek clarification.

2. Notes on Completing the Application Forms

(i). General Advice on Completing the Application Form

- Please read through the relevant application form and these guidance notes **BEFORE** you begin so that you answer the questions as fully as possible.
- **Please note the word count guide** on the questions, as we would like applications to be as focused as possible. 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 or Sandwell Council in the past.
- Please complete **ALL** questions and sections within the application form.
- **Financial Information Required:** please provide a copy of the most recent financial information for your organisation (and **not** simply a bank statement) – this should include items such as your income and expenditure for a 12-month period (as a minimum), but may also include a balance sheet (showing the assets of the group/organisation).

(ii). For all grants

Q1. Describe your project

- Please give us detailed information about your project, including such things as:
 - What you want to do
 - Where and when the project will take place
 - How local people have been actively involved in designing and delivering the project
- **Remember** – this doesn't necessarily have to be a directly 'green/environmental' project – it may, for example, be something you do that changes your delivery approach – e.g. replacing fluorescent tubes with LED bulbs, wanting to recycle business waste e.g. cardboard/plastic etc.

Q2. Please explain ...

- **How you know this project is needed** – tell us what evidence you have that shows the need for this project. For example, who have you spoken with, what did they tell you?
- **What difference it will make / what the climate legacy will be** – what changes do you expect to see in those taking part or internally within your own organisation in relation to climate change? For example, might they gain a new skill or knowledge, be better connected with other people, be better able to undertake climate-positive tasks etc. What might now be present (in a community) that wasn't there before the project took place?
- **How you will evidence the changes** – tell us how project participants have experienced a positive change. For example, what sort of questions might you ask of participants and how will you record their responses to show that your project has made a difference? What methods of recording might you use? For example, face-to-face, questionnaires, etc.
- **How many people you expect to be involved** – please give us a TOTAL number and then detail any split between those under the age of 18 and over the age of 19 (for 'family'-type projects).

Q3. Why do you think this project will work?

- We're looking for you to tell us the sort of things (whether similar or not) that you've done in the past that have worked and how that makes you confident of 'success' for this proposal"
- Tell us how you will go about promoting your activity – for example, who will you speak to, how will you advertise it (e.g. leaflets/flyers, word of mouth, social media etc.)?
- The method(s) of promotion should be relevant to the types of participants being sought / activities being delivered.

Q4. How does your proposed delivery link to / complement [Sandwell's Climate Change Strategy](#)?

- Sandwell's Climate Change Strategy has **six** key themes:
 1. Council estate and operations
 2. The built environment
 3. Transport
 4. Waste
 5. Adaptation
 6. Natural Capital
- Please tell us how your proposed delivery links to any, or all, of themes 2-6 above

Q5. Please tell us what you plan to spend the money on and provide a breakdown of costs.

- Whilst Vision 2030 Community Grants are not primarily to fund capital expenditure e.g. land/buildings, property refurbishment, significant spending on technology etc. such expenditure WILL be considered within the overall context of the application and where it is proportionate to overall project value.
- We would **NOT** expect Vision 2030 grants to be funding the employment of new staff, but consideration will be given to increases in the hours of existing part-time staff and/or the use of sessional workers where appropriate.
- A finely detailed budget is not required – we are simply seeking detail of the broad headings and proposed spend e.g. room hire, office overheads, publicity, volunteer expenses etc.

Q6. What additional support from SCVO and/or local support agencies do you feel you might need to make sure that your project is a success?

- Please tell us if you have already identified areas of delivery that you feel would benefit from support – for example, how to work with/recruit more volunteers, help with funding applications, ideas around promoting the work of your group etc.
- Remember that you will be part of the action learning cohort.

(iv). Monitoring and Evaluation (for all grants)

When you finish your activity/project delivery we will ask you to provide us with a short report that contains details of what happened during the engagement activity, including:

- i. the difference (change) that your activity has made to those taking part and how you've been able to evidence this – the **outcomes** and **impact**;
- ii. what went well;
- iii. what people thought (feedback from those taking part – which can include photographs, but please get the permission of those being pictured as photos may be used in wider circulation);
- iv. anything that you might do differently if you were to run a similar activity/project in the future.
- v. number of people benefitting from/involved in your activity/project;

3. Grant Timeline and Process

- **ALL** prospective applicants **MUST** have an initial conversation with the Community Partnerships Coach at SCVO prior to applications being submitted. Where **NO** prior contact has been received applications will not be considered.
- Your organisation must have had at least one representative attend the 'Climate Champions' workshops being delivered by the Public Health Team (or be booked to attend) **BEFORE** your application can be considered.
- Applicants may only have **ONE** grant in delivery at any point under the Climate Change theme.
- Applicants may apply for consecutive grants (where the programme continues), but priority will be given to those applicants who have not previously received awards from the programme (of any amount). Project delivery needs to be complete, and monitoring/evaluation report received by SCVO, before subsequent applications will be considered.
- Application deadlines and assessment dates will be posted on SCVO's website - www.scvo.info - on a rolling basis until all funding is allocated.
- All funded activity needs to have commenced within 2 months of approval and monitoring/evaluation reports returned to SCVO within 2 months of delivery being completed.

(i). Process

- Initial contact and conversation with SCVO's Community Partnerships Coach
- Applications submitted to SCVO (within timeframe outlined above);
- Applications assessed by Grant Panel;
- Applicants advised of outcome – feedback and support are offered to unsuccessful applicants;
- Successful applicants will be asked to sign and return a copy of the Grant Terms and Conditions, together with relevant bank details, so that grant payment can be made;
- SCVO will provide 'monitoring/evaluation form' so that applicant organisation can report accordingly.

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 – Definition of the Voluntary and Community Sector

To be eligible to apply to the SCVO Vision 2030 Community Grants programme, you will need to be one of the following types of organisation:

- **A voluntary organisation/group** (a formal organisation run 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 or community served)
- **Most sports organisations**

... **and** 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 (CIC)** limited by guarantee
- **Community Interest Company (CIC)** 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** with charitable status
- **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).

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