

SCVO Vision 2030 Community 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 Sandwell-based charity, working across the whole of the borough, 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 priorities:

(i) Purpose of the Fund

This round of funding seeks to support organisations in the following areas:

A) **Direct delivery costs - for projects that can be delivered now** i.e. that can be started within (approx.) 1-2 months of receiving approval, and that are informed by the experiences of local communities (including those of the pandemic years) e.g. developing or expanding the reach of services, delivering new services to new audiences, delivering services by alternative means and that support one of the following themes:

- **Building Social Connections** (tackling loneliness/social isolation across all age ranges)
- **Healthy Lives** (promoting/supporting healthy living – including physical activity and good mental health)

(ii) Grant Amounts

Funding is available as follows:

- **Building Social Connections:** a grant of up to £5,000 that can be spent over a 2-year delivery period (min £500);
- **Healthy Lives:** a grant of up to £5,000 that can be spent over a 2-year delivery period (min £500);
- **Healthy Lives:** a micro grant of £500 for a single activity/event (or small-scale programme)

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PLEASE NOTE – you may only apply for **ONE** grant in this round and only have **ONE** funded proposal (in each category) in delivery at any time.

(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](#).

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

- There are **TWO** different application forms – Micro Grants and Over £500 – please ensure you use the correct form for your application.
- 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 do not exceed the word count** 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** (for grants over £500): 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). £500 Micro Grants

Q1. Describe your proposed engagement activity

- Each engagement activity **must** have a connection with the (broad) promotion of **healthy lives**. You might, for example, be delivering an activity that is related to physical activity/sport e.g. a ‘taster session’ of something that people may have not previously experienced, but that doesn’t necessarily have to be the case in all instances. So, for example, you might be applying for funding to cover the cost of travel for a day trip somewhere, but within the overall day trip you need explain the connection to healthy lifestyles to be eligible for funding.
- Please also tell us how you have decided to deliver this particular event/activity. What conversations have you had (and with whom) that tells you this is what is wanted/needed?
- For details regarding support and information available to promote healthier lifestyles contact **Healthy Sandwell** – <https://www.healthysandwell.co.uk/>

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Q2. How many people do you think will be engaged in your proposed activity?

- Audience engagement/participation is not restricted to any particular group – but you need to detail the split between children/young people and adults if it is a mixed (or family-type) activity.
- We're also looking for a minimum of 25 people (in total) to be engaged per activity.

Q3. How will you promote your engagement activity to ensure its success?

- 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.

Q4. How confident are you of attracting the number of people in Q2 above?

- We're looking for you to tell us the sort of (similar) things that you've done in the past that have worked and how that makes you confident of 'success' for this proposal – you can give us some examples of what you've done and the outputs/outcomes that were achieved.

Q5. How will you know that your activity has been a success?

- We'd like you to tell us how you will gather feedback from event/activity participants so that you know the project has been a success;
- Think about what you're trying to achieve with your event and what questions you might ask (face-to-face, questionnaire etc.) to find out the difference that you've made to people.

Q6. What other contribution / resources might you offer as part of your proposed activity?

- Think about the other things you have available in your group, for example volunteers, premises etc. and how will you use these to contribute to delivery of the project?

(ii). For grants over £500

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

Q2. Please explain ...

- **How you know this project is needed** – tell us what evidence you have that shows the need for this project and how any experience of the COVID-19 pandemic has informed your proposal. For example, who have you spoken with, what did they tell you?
- **What difference it will make** – what changes do you expect to see in those taking part? For example, might they gain a new skill, be better connected with people, be better able to undertake everyday tasks etc.
- **How you will evidence the changes** – tell us how you will show us what's changed in project participants. 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).

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Q3. Why do you think this project will work?

- We're looking for you to tell us the sort of (similar) things that you've done in the past that have worked and how that makes you confident of 'success' for this proposal – you can give us some examples of what you've done and the outputs/outcomes that were achieved.
- 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.

Q4. How does your project link with 'Vision 2030 Sandwell'?

- Tell us which of the 10 Ambitions is/are supported by your project and how? (You can find out more information about Vision 2030 Sandwell by clicking [HERE](#) or visiting: www.sandwell.gov.uk/Vision2030).

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.
- It is permissible for an appropriate budget allocation to be made in respect of publicity/ signage etc. that acknowledges the source of Vision 2030 grant funding (as being Sandwell Council).

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.

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

When you finish your activity/project delivery we will ask you to tell us:

- Number of people benefitting from/involved in your activity/project;
- Short report with details of what happened during the engagement activity, including:
 - i. what went well;
 - ii. 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)
 - iii. the difference (change) that your activity has made to those taking part and how you've been able to evidence this
 - iv. anything that you might do differently if you were to run a similar activity/project in the future.

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.
- Applicants may only have **ONE** grant in delivery at any point.

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- Applicants may apply for consecutive grants, 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 **ALL** applicants;
- Successful applicants will be asked to sign and return a copy of the Grant Terms and Conditions, together with the provision of relevant Bank details, so that grant payment can be made;
- Successful applicants (for awards over £500 micro grants) will work with SCVO to have their funded activity listed on the Route2Wellbeing portal (www.route2wellbeing.info)
- SCVO will provide:
 - a 'monitoring/evaluation form', so that applicant organisation can report accordingly
 - any relevant logos for use on promotional materials, social media 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

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APPENDIX 1 – Definition of the Voluntary and Community Sector

Introduction

Sandwell's well-established VCS is a vibrant and diverse collection of over 1,000 charitable and not-for-profit businesses, social enterprises, advocacy organisations, faith, community, and neighbourhood groups. Together, the many different parts of the VCS make a huge impact on the lives of Sandwell residents. It engages large numbers of volunteers who give their time freely to support others and makes a significant economic impact as a route to bringing funds into the borough and as an employer of a significant workforce.

Sandwell Council and SCVO have developed a shared definition of the voluntary and community sector in order to be more consistent in our approach to partnership working and grant giving.

Our broad definition of the Voluntary and Community Sector

The Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) in Sandwell is made up of collections of individuals who come together to work for the public good. It includes a very diverse range of organisations:

- Voluntary organisations
- Community groups
- Tenants and Residents groups
- Faith organisations and groups
- Housing Associations
- Most co-operatives and social enterprises (provided all profits are retained for the benefit of the members or community served)
- Most sports clubs and organisations
- Grant making trusts

Grant eligibility

To be eligible for a grant or other financial support such as a rent subsidy you will need to be one of the following **types of organisation**:

- **Voluntary organisations or community groups** (an organisation run by a management body made up of volunteers who are engaged in that activity for environmental, economic, or social good.)
- **Tenants and Residents groups**
- **Faith groups and organisations**
- **Most co-operatives and social enterprises** (provided all profits are retained for the benefit of the members or community served)
- **Most sports organisations**

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Organisational structure:

Organisations that have one of the following structures/ forms are eligible for grant aid:

- Community Interest Companies limited by guarantee
- Community Interest Companies limited by share (schedule 2 including an asset lock of 100%)
- Not for profit trade associations
- Charitable trusts
- Companies limited by guarantee
- Constituted groups (groups with a governing document which are not incorporated as companies)
- Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)
- Community Benefit Society with charitable status

Some of above may also be registered as charities with the Charity Commission.

Values and principles:

To receive a grant, all voluntary and community sector organisations will need to be able to demonstrate that they are **all of the following**:

- are actively delivering services in Sandwell or undertaking activities for the benefit of Sandwell Communities
- have a voluntary governing body with at least 3 local people (ideally unrelated) on that body
- non-party political and non-governmental
- value driven, having objectives for the social good
- independent of funders
- principally reinvest any financial surpluses in activities or assets that bring a significant community benefit to Sandwell
- operate on the basis of being wholly not-for-profit. Any surpluses will be retained and reinvested for community benefit and not distributed for personal (individual) or private gain.

Eligibility for small grants (up to £5,000)

Larger VCS organisations with an annual turnover of £500,000 or more will not be eligible for small grants up to £5,000.

Discretionary rate relief

Please note that there are separate rules that govern eligibility for discretionary rate relief which can be found on the [council's website](#) .

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