NEAR NEIGHBOURS
SMALL GRANTS
CRITERIA AND
GUIDANCE 2020

Funded by:

Administered by:

Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government

CHURCH URBAN FUND
CHANGING LIVES AND COMMUNITIES TOGETHER
Near Neighbours brings people together from communities that are religiously and ethnically diverse, so that they can get to know each other better, build relationships of trust and collaborate on initiatives that improve the local community they live in.

The grants programme which is part of Near Neighbours is being administered by our partner organisation, Church Urban Fund. Near Neighbours is funded by the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government. We work with those of any faith or none.

Church Urban Fund is a Christian charity, with a vision to see people and communities all over England flourish and enjoy life in all its fullness. Church Urban Fund relies on regular contributions from different parts of the Church and donations from thousands of generous individuals.

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Small Grants Criteria and Guidance, 2020 Version

This version of the Small Grants Criteria and Guidance will supersede all previous guidance issued by Near Neighbours. It has been developed as a resource and will be reviewed and re-issued annually or at any other time as required. The latest version of the Small Grants Criteria and Guidance will always be available for download from the Near Neighbours website. For additional information, please contact us using the details below.

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NEAR NEIGHBOURS

Near Neighbours brings people together from communities that are religiously and ethnically diverse, so that they can get to know each other better, build relationships of trust and collaborate together on initiatives that improve the local community they live in.

We have two key objectives:

- **Social interaction** - to develop positive relationships in multi-faith and multi-ethnic areas i.e. to help people from different faiths and ethnicities get to know and understand each other better.
- **Social action** - to encourage people of different faiths and of no faith and of different ethnicities to come together for initiatives that improve their local neighbourhood.

Grants between £250 and £3,000 are available for local groups and organisations who are working to bring together neighbours, to develop relationships across diverse faiths and ethnicities in order to improve their local communities.

These must be local initiatives, planned by and involving local diverse people, which have a specific local impact. We will look especially favourably on applications from diverse neighbourhoods and those with particular issues of deprivation and other challenges, as well as where there is the intention and likelihood of deep and lasting relationships of trust between people, in order to transform communities.

We consider projects to fall into three broad categories. A project need not fit itself to just one, and we recognise that activities may naturally cover two or all three of the following:

- **First Encounters** that develop new relationships between people of different faith and ethnic communities and encourage the development of mutual understanding – initiatives which begin the process of developing friendship and neighbourliness.
- **Everyday Interactions** that support regular interactions, repeatedly bringing people together and encouraging families and individuals to come together to share life – building flourishing and sustainable friendships and relationships.
- **Civil Engagement** which brings together people from different faith or ethnic communities to work together to change their neighbourhoods for the better – enabling diverse communities to transform their neighbourhoods.

We aim to make a decision on all grant applications within 14 days of receiving all the necessary information, and applications are accepted on a rolling basis. The final deadline for applications is Friday 11 December 2020; however, we reserve the right to close earlier, when all funds have been dispersed.

We encourage applicants to speak to their local Near Neighbours Coordinators before filling out the application form. Our local Coordinators are there to support you in developing your project idea and help you through the application process. They can also suggest potential partners and assist you in identifying what activities you could run as part of your project.

We won’t accept any applications that have not been discussed with them first.
Covid-19

The circumstances we find ourselves in mean that we cannot fund any activities that are not currently allowed in England. The guidance on what is allowed in terms of gatherings inside of more than 6 people can be found here (published 14th September 2020).

You should make yourself familiar with the guidelines on how to meet safely which the government has provided:

The kind of activities which are permitted are set out in the government guidance. There are exceptions where groups can be larger than 6 people. These include:

- for work, or the provision of voluntary or charitable services
- registered childcare, education, or training
- supervised activities provided for children, including wraparound care, youth groups and activities, and children’s playgroups
- providing support to a vulnerable person
- providing emergency assistance, and to avoid injury or illness or to escape risk of harm
- for arrangements where children do not live in the same household as both their parents
- fulfilling a legal obligation such as attending court or jury service
- weddings and civil partnership ceremonies and receptions – up to 30 people, in a public place
- funerals – up to 30 people. This does not include wakes, other than for religious ceremonial purposes.
- other religious and belief-based life cycle ceremonies – up to 30 people, in a public place. This only covers the ceremonies and does not include celebrations of these events.
- organised sport or exercises classes or licensed outdoor physical activity. This does not include informal sport or fitness activity with family or friends – this must be limited to a group of 6.
- elite sporting competition and training
- support groups – formally organised groups to provide mutual aid, therapy or any other form of support. This includes support to victims of crime, recovering addicts, new parents, people with long-term illnesses, those facing issues relating to their sexuality or gender, and those who have suffered bereavement.
- protests – if organised in compliance with COVID-19 Secure guidance

Where a group includes someone covered by one of these exemptions, they are not counted as part of the gatherings limit. This means, for example, that a tradesperson can go into a household of six without breaching the limit if they are there for work.

Therefore some examples of the activities that we might consider funding (NB: with assurance that all Covid-safe measures will be followed and these are well managed – you will need to talk to your local Coordinator about how you will run your project in a Covid-safe way) are: youth activities; children’s activities; support groups for people with mental health issues; sports clubs; cancer mutual-help groups; services for the vulnerable such as food banks and advice clinics; bereavement support groups; English language classes for migrants and refugees; and training on computer skills. These are examples only. Talk to your local
Coordinator if you are not sure whether your proposed activities are allowed within government guidelines or legislation.

**ELIGIBLE AREAS**

The programme works in several key locations across England. We have Hubs in West Yorkshire, Greater Manchester, the Black Country, Leicester, Nottingham, Birmingham, Peterborough, Luton, West London, and East London.

However, we are also only working within specific areas of these places. Please refer to our website to see maps showing eligible areas: [www.near-neighbours.org.uk/local-hubs](http://www.near-neighbours.org.uk/local-hubs)

**CRITERIA**

Below is an exact list of our grants criteria. A project should:

- **Bring together peoples of two or more different faiths and/or ethnicities**, to build friendships and develop relationships of trust.
- **Work locally**: We want to see people who are living very locally (i.e. in the same street, estate or neighbourhood) come together.
- **Work sustainably**: We want to see long term and natural relationships grow, that will last beyond the period of funding.
- **Work to improve the community**: We want to see people working to make their communities a better place to live.
- **Involve a diverse group of people in planning and implementation**: People from more than one faith group and/or ethnicity are involved in running the project.

In addition, a grant must be for:

- **New or developed work**: We won’t support repeat or ongoing activities.
- **Specific activities**: Funding is given for a specific project or activity.
- **Immediate activities**: Grants should be claimed within three months of approval, and projects should aim to finish within six months or before the end of March 2021, whichever occurs sooner. If your area is put into lockdown, however, *activities can be suspended until lockdown is lifted. We can also discuss adapting activities.*
- **Small initiatives**: We like to fund small projects, so the total cost of the project needs to be £15,000 or less.
- **Grassroots organisations**: We particularly seek to fund emerging local groups as well as charities, religious organisations and other not-for-profit organisations whose focus is on local work. We will look especially favourably on small organisations with a low annual turnover.

We welcome applications from faith groups, places of worship, partnerships of different faith groups, and informal local groups comprising people of different faith groups and backgrounds. We also encourage applications from secular organisations that are working with faith communities.

Funding cannot be granted to individuals but may be given to small groups without a constitution or bank account where there is a reputable local community or faith organisation willing to act as the accountable body for the funds.

We will consider applications from Community Interest Companies and other social enterprises if their membership is from the neighbourhood they are seeking funding for, and if the activity
they seek to deliver has involvement from local people of more than one faith and ethnicity in planning and running it.

**PRIORITIES**

In addition to our criteria, we also assess applications by a few priorities. Applications showing the following qualities will be prioritised for funding:

- Where the purpose is first and foremost to bring neighbours of different faiths and ethnicities together to build trusting relationships through an activity or project.
- Projects that help local people develop leadership and organising skills.
- Projects that focus on –
  - Improving community resilience and cohesion in helping solve divisions and tensions between ethnicities and communities: *especially in areas where Covid has increased these tensions;*
  - Or
  - Projects which combat loneliness and promote connectedness, for groups and individuals, *especially those in need of support following lockdown and isolation;*
  - Or
  - Projects which support vulnerable women, *and we welcome applications which support those who have suffered during lockdown, such as from domestic abuse and mental health issues;*
  - Or
  - Supporting vulnerable young people, especially those at risk of grooming into gangs, extremism or crime, *and those who have been adversely affected in lockdown.*
- New and innovative projects with a high local impact at the neighbourhood level.
- Projects that take place in neighbourhoods with deprivation or disadvantage.
- Proposals from minority faith communities.
- Proposals from small faith or community organisations or groups.
- Where a project shows sustainability; with relationships, sustainable change and/or further work together likely to continue naturally beyond the period of funding.
- Where it is clear what difference the activity will make to the local community.
- Proposals that are run by volunteers or have a strong volunteer base.
- Organisations which have not been given Near Neighbours funding before.
- Projects that source goods and services from businesses in the local community or use ethically sourced goods and services, such as Fairtrade refreshments.
- Proposals that pay staff the Living Wage, as set by the Living Wage Foundation.
- Where a proposal shows value for money.

**WHAT WE WILL NOT FUND**

There are also several things that Near Neighbours does not fund. These are:

- Projects that will not run in one of our eligible areas (see pg.3 ‘Eligible Areas’).
- Repeated activities (such as an annual summer camp or regular training sessions that have happened previously).
- Activities open only to one faith/ethnic group.
- Activity promoting a specific faith.
▪ Projects that are the normal curriculum work of schools and colleges, would fall under statutory health care provision, or are steered by local authorities.
▪ Faith leaders' salaries.
▪ Individuals.
▪ Organisations with a high annual turnover (more than £150,000), with significant free reserves, or with a weak financial position.
▪ National organisations that are working locally.
▪ Existing salary costs, except where there is a significant increase in hours in order to begin new work or expand an existing project to new people.
▪ Organisational costs not associated with the funded project.
▪ Major capital costs (though small items of equipment will be considered i.e. the cost of a kettle but not the cost of a kitchen).
▪ Unspecified or excessive volunteer expenses or high staff costs/expenses.
▪ Work that has already been completed or started (retrospective funding).
▪ Deficits or loans.
▪ Campaigning and fundraising activity.
▪ Revenue and capital funding for national voluntary/community organisations and public and private sector organisations.
▪ General repairs and refurbishment of buildings, or internal re-ordering of places of worship, maintenance or DDA (Disability Discrimination Act) compliance.
▪ General appeals.

SAFEGUARDING
Near Neighbours takes the safety and wellbeing of people of all ages seriously and expects grant applicants to do likewise. For this reason, we expect any projects working with children and young people or vulnerable adults to have the appropriate safeguarding policies in place, and we will often ask to see them during the application process.

The NSPCC provides guidance on setting up and following safeguarding policies and procedures for working with children and young people. To access them, please visit: https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/

RESOURCES AND TOOLKITS
For some smaller groups and organisations, we recognise that this might be the first time that you have applied for external funding or developed a project. To guide you through this process, we have various resources and toolkits on our website to help you with planning your project, working with volunteers, and promoting your activities to local people.

You can find the resources and toolkits here. Our local Near Neighbours Coordinators are also there to provide you with advice throughout the application process and support you in developing your project.

SMALL GRANT APPLICATION PROCEDURE
If you wish to apply for our funding, please follow the following procedure:

Read through our criteria and guidance in detail and ensure you are based in an eligible area. You can check geographic eligibility here: www.near-neighbours.org.uk/local-hubs
Speak to your local Near Neighbours Coordinator, as they are there to help you through the process. You can find their contact details at the end of this document.

Start completing the application form, available on our website here. We have two applications this year – a simpler form for applications up to £1,000 pounds, 'micro grants', and another for applications between £1,000 – £3,000.

Your local Near Neighbours Coordinator may put you in touch with your local Church of England vicar, who can act in an advisory role in support of your application.

Send your completed application form, along with the additional required documents and optional Equal Opportunities Form, to your local Near Neighbours Coordinator. They will review it and offer you feedback and recommendations.

Once you have finalised your application form and additional required documents, send it to your local Near Neighbours Coordinator, who will forward it to Church Urban Fund, which is acting for Near Neighbours in assessing grant applications).

The Church Urban Fund Grants Officer will assess your application. If necessary, they will contact you for additional information. Once they have all the necessary information, they will work with CUF staff to make a decision on your application within 14 days.

**SMALL GRANT TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

If you are awarded a grant, we will outline several conditions that you must agree to in order to receive payment, which is a legally binding agreement. This will include using your grant only for the purposes laid out in your application. Additionally, we include details about transferring funds, our grant evaluation process and publicity. Please be aware that additional conditions may be attached as required. These will always be stated at the time a funding offer is made.

**CONTACT DETAILS**

Your key contact for the Near Neighbours programme is your local Coordinator:

**West Yorkshire (Leeds, Bradford, Dewsbury)**
Kaneez Khan, Wellsprings Together, Trinity Centre, John Escritt Road, Bingley, BD16 2ST / kaneez.khan@wellspringstogether.org.uk / 07958 470 590

**Greater Manchester (Manchester, Bury, Rochdale, Oldham)**
Samra Kanwal, Greater Together Manchester, Church House, 90 Deansgate, Manchester M3 2GH / samra@greatertogethermanchester.org / 07927 550 744

**Black Country (Wolverhampton, Walsall, Sandwell, Dudley)**
Shaz Akhtar, Transforming Communities Together, The Small Street Centre, 1A Small Street, Walsall WS1 3PR / shaz.akhtar@tctogether.org.uk / 07530 741 923

**Leicester**
Beth Henwood, St Philip’s Centre, 2A Stoughton Drive North, Leicester LE5 5UB / nn2@stphilipscentre.co.uk / 07708 733 338

**Nottingham**
Lindsay Cressey, Transforming Notts Together, Unity House, 35 Church Street, Lenton, Nottinghamshire, NG7 2FF / lindsay@transformingnottstogether.org.uk / 07522 381533

**Birmingham**
Rabiyah K Latif, Thrive Together Birmingham, Balsall Heath Centre, 100 Mary Street, Balsall Heath, Birmingham B12 9JU / rabiyah@nearneighbours.com / 07503 711 333
Peterborough
Femi Olasoko, Peterborough Cathedral, Cathedral Office, Deanery Mews, 11 Minster Precincts, Peterborough PE1 1XS / nearneighbours@peterborough-cathedral.org.uk / 07715 091 249

Luton
Kim Greig, Grassroots Programme, 47 High Town Road, Luton, Beds, LU2 0BW / near.neighbours_luton@btconnect.com / 07930 601 640

West London
Elizabeth Fewkes, King's Centre, St John's Church, Church Avenue, Southall, Middlesex, UB2 4DH / efewkes@kingscentresouthall.org.uk / 07913 291 110

East London
Marzena Cichon-Balcerowicz, The Centre for Theology & Community, St George-in-the-East, 14 Cannon Street Road, London E1 0BH / marzenacb@theology-centre.org / 07437 985 793