

## CORONAVIRUS 2020 – RECOVERY PHASE PROPOSAL

Throughout the coronavirus crisis hyper-local charities, community and voluntary organisations and social enterprises (the VCSE sector) in the West of England have shown their vital role in leadership, entrepreneurialism, flexibility and community connections. The sector has been working in overdrive to innovate in the use of technology, collaborate to meet emerging needs and to support the incredible community spirit of mutual aid groups. But the crisis is stretching the VCSE sector to breaking point and organisations need funding now as they strive to support people in our changed world.

Philanthropy has a vital role to play in supporting a new future for the West of England that is fairer, more inclusive and more sustainable than what came before. Quartet Community Foundation (Quartet) is using its unique position in inspiring local philanthropy to raise funding, engage public and private sectors and work alongside others to implement this proposal for the benefit of our communities.

We cannot deliver this recovery plan alone. We want to work together with many other organisations to attract the resources needed to sustain our dynamic community sector long into the future. Together we can improve fairness, wellbeing, the environment, digital inclusion, social cohesion and the empowerment of the people in our communities.



### Impact of the Coronavirus crisis on our VCSE sector

- Around 80% of charities in the West of England have kept working throughout the crisis, offering new, existing or modified services to support those most in need
- Charities want to respond to increased demand for their support but they are finding:
  - drastically reduced income from fundraising events, public donations and trading
  - increased competition for grants and donations as funders re-direct their money to Covid-19 response
  - lower investment income
  - stretched core funding, as they re-plan, revisit strategies, reforecast, work with new partners and manage new ways of working
  - worries around staff morale, mental health and wellbeing issues
- Charity best practice is to keep only a few months' reserves but even those organisations that have reserves will see it run out in the months ahead.



**The result is that 22% of local charities might be forced to close services if they don't get the help they need.**

## Recovery Phase Strategy

We are proposing four components to support the recovery of local VCSE organisations.

### £10m stabilisation fund

Rapid response grant funding now and for 12 months, giving local organisations grants for their core costs so they can recast how their organisations are going to deliver valuable support for vulnerable local people.

### £10m sector support fund

Community hubs in areas of disadvantage have been essential in being able to reach and support communities effectively. These hubs and other key organisations are under significant financial pressures and have suffered serious loss of income during the pandemic. They now need to re-think many of their services, delivered with and for communities. Evidence suggests they most need a source of longer-term core costs support to help them adapt, financially and organisationally. Such support will help to build an effective framework of community-led organisations across the West of England.

This will need detailed discussions with organisations to reflect local circumstances and it will need long-term and substantial investments of time and funding. Working with others we would like to offer 3-5 year grants of up to £100k. We would also like to offer repayable grant funding of up to £50k to cover gaps or delays in other sources of funding for groups with identified future income streams.

### £6m for addressing inequalities

We want to co-design, with sector leaders, a range of specific funding programmes to address long-standing inequalities. Working with others, we would like to provide multi-year funding for core and service delivery costs over 3-5 years of up to £50k per year. Support will be focused on the following sectors most impacted by the crisis, as well as prioritising groups that support people facing multiple disadvantages:

- Black, Asian & minority ethnic communities
- Young people
- Disabled people
- People in poverty or on low incomes
- Women & girls
- Health and wellbeing
- Older people

### £4m to support local action and social cohesion

During the crisis, local action has been a lifesaver for thousands of people with self-help groups, who know the people on their streets, harnessing volunteers and providing personal and bespoke support to people in need.

Now hyper-local organisations and places are keen to build on the community-level action that the crisis has engendered. We will support their ambitions over the next 12 months with an easy access grants programme, in collaboration with other partners, that prioritises support for people living in our most disadvantaged geographical communities or areas which currently lack community-based organisations. We aim to pilot participatory decision-making approaches by involving local communities, shifting the power directly to communities.

## How can you help?

### Donors and philanthropists

It has been so heartening throughout the crisis to see how many people have given so generously to local and national charitable causes. You can:

- support the Recovery Plan by donating to Quartet or any local charity
- set up a fund with Quartet to provide support for communities and local charitable organisations for ever
- be confident that a gift in your Will to Quartet Community Foundation gives support forever to people here when they really need it.



### Charitable trusts and foundations

For trusts and foundations that want to support place-based projects and community development, the Recovery Plan gives you great opportunities to align your funding, giving you proven leverage and local action.

You can fund Quartet or other West of England organisations to maximise your support for local communities at the same time as gaining from our deep local knowledge and connections.

### Public sector

We know your situation is extremely challenging. We'd like to work with you to get more out of the limited funds you have:

- Where you want to support improved social inclusion and your goals match those in this proposal, collaborate with us, talk to us about aligning your funding with ours or achieve economies of scale by funding through us.
- Where you are commissioning services we know it can be difficult for small VCSE organisations to fulfil commissions, particularly those that are paid in arrears when their cashflow is so challenged. New Philanthropy Capital reports that 59% of charities with public sector contracts have to subsidise these contracts with income from other areas such as public fundraising; post COVID-19 charities' ability to subsidise the public sector in this way will be severely limited by their lack of income from fundraising or trading. As a Commissioner you can provide funds to Quartet to enable us to give repayable grants to bridge the commissioned organisation until they get paid by you, enabling smaller organisations to tender when otherwise this would be impossible for them.

### Businesses

Commit to supporting a small local charity, voluntary or community group for multiple years. Provide them with unrestricted, multi-year funding to use however they need to; listen to their needs and provide pro bono or volunteer help for what they need, without requiring them to help you achieve your business goals.

We welcome all comments on this proposal as well as offers of support. Contact:  
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