

**Please note** that this document was updated in May 2026. Please take the time to read and understand the following information before applying. Please call or email us if you have any questions about this grant programme. Our contact details are in section 12 of this document.

## 1. About the Express Grant Programme

This grant programme aims to support local grassroots groups and small to medium-sized organisations (see section 2) working with communities\* experiencing inequalities and disadvantage. **We will fund activities, projects and services that :**

- Help people affected by economic disadvantage, such as poverty, unemployment, low income; and/or
- Improve access to appropriate and affordable services and support for people currently excluded or underserved.

\*This can be geographic communities and/or communities of people brought together by race or ethnicity, age, disability, gender, or sexual orientation.

### **We will prioritise applications where we're confident:**

- You have researched and demonstrated the local need for the project or activity that you are asking us to fund.
- The plans for the project or activity have involved, or been informed by, people who have direct experience of the issues or challenges being addressed.
- The project or activity complements, or makes links to, existing work by other local groups or organisations that serve or support the same people/communities.

We understand that it can be difficult to involve people in research and planning for a project or activity. Appendix 1 provides further information on different approaches.

## 2. Who can apply?

Applicants **must be based and working** in Bristol, Bath & North-East Somerset, North Somerset or South Gloucestershire. You can apply for a grant if you are a:

- constituted voluntary or community group, where there are at least three unrelated members on the board or management committee
- registered charity
- not-for-profit company, including Community Interest Companies.

**Registered charities and companies** must have at least three registered trustees or directors, with the majority being unrelated and not living at the same address.

***If you are a Community Interest Company (CIC) please note the following:***

- You must not be limited by shares, and most directors must not receive payment from the company.
- 'Persons with significant control': CICs should either have no directors with significant control or have at least three who share equal rights.
- We expect CICs to generate some of their income through trading (e.g. selling goods or services), and we will prioritise applicants who can demonstrate this. CICs must also have a clear charitable purpose.

Please find information about our eligibility criteria on our website at

<https://quartetcf.org.uk/apply-for-funding/am-i-eligible-for-grant-support/>

### ***The size of your organisation***

**Our Express grants are aimed at small, local charities and community organisations.** This means we will prioritise those with an income under £1 million, particularly those with an income under £0.5 million. However, we will also look at:

- the level of reserves your organisation holds
- other sources of funding available to you
- the communities your application aims to support
- existing provision in those communities.

### **3. What you can apply for**

You can apply for a grant towards a new activity or continue something you are already doing. You should plan to start spending the grant within six months of it being awarded.

A grant can be towards any reasonable costs for your organisation or project, including:

- core or running costs
- project and activity costs
- capital costs (e.g. equipment, refurbishment/building costs).

Whatever the type of costs you seek a grant towards, we will consider several factors when assessing your application, such as the size of your organisation, the cost and scale of your project/activity, other sources of funding.

**See Appendix 2** for examples of work that has been funded through the Express programme.

#### **4. How much do we award?**

Grants are available up to £5,000.

Occasionally, we may not be able to award the full amount you request due to limited funds. We therefore encourage applicants to carefully consider the full costs of their project or activity and request funding that genuinely reflects what is needed to deliver it.

#### **5. Repeat applications**

You can only receive one grant from the Express programme in any 12-month period, regardless of the size of the grant. Please contact us if you need to check the dates of a previous Express grant.

#### ***If you have had funding from the Express programme for the last three years***

We will not support applicants who have received an Express grant for the last three years in a row. After receiving a grant for three consecutive years, we request a one-year break.

#### ***If you've recently had funding from other programmes at Quartet***

You are eligible to apply for a grant from the Express programme if you have recently received a grant from one of our other programmes. However, if you are currently in receipt of several grants then we may consider this when assessing your application. This is because of our limited funds and wanting to ensure a fair distribution of our grants.

If you've recently had your first Quartet grant from another programme and haven't reported back yet, please contact us before applying to Express.

#### ***If you have had a recent application to Express declined***

If you have recently applied to the Express programme and were unsuccessful, please contact us before applying again.

#### **6. What we don't fund**

- Costs that are incurred before a grant can be awarded.
- Individuals.
- Activities or services that the government and other public bodies currently have a statutory responsibility to provide.
- Groups/organisations or activities that are giving support to a political party.
- Activities that are intended to influence people's religious choices.
- Activities that are primarily supporting animal welfare.
- Arts projects that don't meet the priorities of this programme, as outlined in section one of this document.

- Sports projects that don't meet the priorities of this programme, as outlined in section one of this document.
- Activities in schools: We will not fund activities taking place during teaching time and that are part of the core curriculum. We will not fund training for school staff and improvements to school buildings, outdoor areas or equipment. For work taking place in schools, we will assess the local need for the project/activity, how it has been identified, the broader community benefit, and the involvement of local people in developing the activities.
- We are unlikely to award a £5,000 grant for a one-off event or celebration. We may offer partial funding when it is clear there is a wider community benefit.
- Medical research, equipment or treatment. However, we will consider applications for community-based health initiatives or wellbeing projects if they meet the priorities of this programme, as outlined in section one of this document.
- Activities that raise funds for other organisations.

**The decision panel will also consider** the number of participants or users that an activity will reach when prioritising activities for support.

## 7. How to apply

There are no closing dates for this grant programme, and we accept applications at any time. You will need to complete an application form. You can apply online at [www.quartetcf.org.uk](http://www.quartetcf.org.uk). As well as the completed application form, you will need to provide the following\*:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A constitution/governing document/set of rules.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The contact details of at least 3 members of your management committee/board of trustees/board of directors.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A copy of your most recent annual accounts or financial records that show your organisation's balance of funds, income and expenditure. If you do not have financial records that cover a full year, then you will need to provide the records you currently have.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A safeguarding policy that is up-to-date and relevant to your work. Please read more about how we assess a safeguarding policy under our safeguarding FAQs section <a href="https://quartetcf.org.uk/apply-for-funding/faqs/">https://quartetcf.org.uk/apply-for-funding/faqs/</a>.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The contact details of a referee. The referee should know the work of the applicant organisation in a professional capacity but not be directly involved in this work.</li> </ul>

\* Please **do not** provide the above documents if you have sent them to Quartet within the past six months unless they have been amended during that time. Please contact us if you have difficulty supplying any of the above supporting documents.

**If you do not currently have a bank account:**

In the application form, you will need to provide the details of your organisation's bank account. If your organisation does not have its own bank account, you can provide the bank details of another charitable organisation if they meet our eligibility criteria and there is an agreement in place.

**If you cannot provide many of the above documents :**

Another charitable organisation can apply on your organisation's behalf, provided it can:

- Supply the above documents.
- Have their name as the main contact and be responsible for submitting the application.
- Be responsible for receiving, overseeing and reporting back on the use of any grant awarded.

This will not affect the applicant organisation's eligibility to apply for the maximum annual grant available for its own purposes.

Please contact us if you have any queries about supplying the above supporting documents. Our contact details are in section 12 of this document.

**8. What will happen next?**

Once we have received your application (including all supporting documents) it will be checked to make sure your request fits the funding criteria. We will contact you by email or phone if we have any questions. Your application will then be reviewed by a decision panel. **We will email you the panel's decision within 8 weeks.**

**9. Reporting on the use of your grant**

We will send you an End of Grant report form based on when you indicate you will have finished spending the grant. This form asks for details of how the grant was spent, what was achieved and any lessons learnt. Further information is on our website at <https://quartetcf.org.uk/apply-for-funding/faqs/#questions-grant>

## 10. Considerations before applying

We encourage you to consider the following before applying to us:

### ***Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)***

Quartet is committed to equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) and encourages inclusive practices both within our organisation and across the work we fund. Further information is available on our website at [www.quartetcf.org.uk/about-us/edi/edi-considerations/](http://www.quartetcf.org.uk/about-us/edi/edi-considerations/)

### ***The Environment***

We encourage all applicants to consider the environmental impact of the work they plan to do. We have advice and guidance on environmental considerations on our website at [www.quartetcf.org.uk/apply-for-funding/environmental-advice-for-charitable-organisations/](http://www.quartetcf.org.uk/apply-for-funding/environmental-advice-for-charitable-organisations/)

### ***Safeguarding***

We fund organisations that help people, some of whom may be vulnerable. All applicants need to have a safeguarding policy and procedures to ensure they operate safely, prevent harm, and can recognise and respond to abuse or neglect, protecting beneficiaries, staff and volunteers. More information about what we look for in safeguarding policies can be found on our website at <https://quartetcf.org.uk/apply-for-funding/faqs/>

### ***Other support available***

There are organisations in the West of England that can offer advice and guidance to charitable organisations that are seeking funding support. Further information is on our website at <https://quartetcf.org.uk/apply-for-funding/other-support/>

## 11. Further guidance and support

In addition to reading this document, please visit the Frequently Asked Questions page of our website at <https://quartetcf.org.uk/apply-for-funding/faqs/>

## 12. Contact details

If you need more information or wish to discuss your application before you apply, please contact the Philanthropy Team at Quartet Community Foundation:

Telephone: 0117 989 7700      Email: [applications@quartetcf.org.uk](mailto:applications@quartetcf.org.uk)

Address: Royal Oak House, Royal Oak Avenue, Bristol BS1 4GB.

### **How we collect and hold your data**

The personal information collected via the application form is collected to process applications for grants from Quartet. All information is collected in accordance with the *Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA)*, and the *General Data Protection Regulations 2018 (GDPR)*. For further information see our Privacy Policy at <http://quartetcf.org.uk/privacy-policy/>

## Appendix 1: Involving communities in your plans and decision-making

We understand your approach to involving people with direct experience of the challenges you want to address ('lived experience') may vary and can depend on certain factors. Below is an overview of five different approaches to involvement, taken from 'Make it Count: Why impact matters in user involvement' (New Philanthropy Capital, 2018)

- **Research:** People with lived experience provide their views or information to help answer a broad set of research questions. Information tends to flow one-way. Many use this approach (often in the form of surveys) to ensure they make informed decisions about how to meet need.
- **Consultation and feedback:** People with lived experience are invited to submit their views or feedback on a particular question or to test an idea or service. Many use this approach when they conduct user testing or when gathering feedback on a service. They then make changes based on their findings.
- **Collaboration and co-design:** People with lived experience provide more open input than in a consultation and have sway over what gets decided. As with all approaches, the extent of their influence on decision-making should be agreed and transparent.
- **Co-production:** This can mean going one step further than collaboration and co-design, when decision-making power is shared between the parties working side-by-side, such as the staff and trustees of an organisation and people with lived experience. This is where people with lived experience have as much of a say on what gets decided on specific aspects of an organisation's work as those in the organisation.
- **User-led:** People with lived experience lead decision-making and are supported to achieve their goals by others. For example, this can include having members on the board with lived experience, or staff within an organisation.

## Appendix 2: Examples of Express grants previously awarded

- Activities that increase awareness and accessibility of free mental health support for young people living in disadvantaged areas of Bath and North-East Somerset.
- Football and basketball sessions for Somali girls and workshops and one-to-one sessions for boys and girls to help reduce involvement in crime in Bristol.
- Towards the annual cost of peer support group sessions for women affected by post-natal depression.
- Towards the upkeep and promotion of a local helpline supporting LGBTQ+ young people.
- To support the cost of delivering a specialist welfare benefits service for older people in South Gloucestershire.
- To provide training sessions to parents of disabled children, and those with additional needs, focusing on 'Sensory Play' and how to extend it into the home.
- Towards the cost of continuing a scheme that provides heat surveys for households and energy efficiency advice for the benefit of low-income households.
- For a targeted programme of activity to increase access to Circus City for a wider audience, specifically Neurodiverse, D/deaf and Disabled audiences.