



**Neurodivergent
Community Projects**

VCSE Small Grants Fund

Guidance Document:

VCSE Small Grants for Neurodivergent Community Projects in York

This guidance document is a companion piece to the VCSE Small Grants for Neurodivergent Community Projects in York Application form.

- [Application form \(WORD\)](#).
- [Application form \(ONLINE\)](#).

For York's Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE).

If you require documents in an alternative format, email, grants@yorkcvs.org.uk or phone 01904 621133 (extension 1006) – leave a message and we will get back to you!

Fund aims

We are seeking projects that support neurodivergent people in York to feel included, supported, and able to participate fully in community life.

We want to fund creative, community-led projects that:

- Deliver accessible activities that support the wellbeing of neurodivergent people in York
- Make York more inclusive and welcoming for neurodivergent people and communities
- Bring new ideas to life, test creative approaches, and support learning

Is your project eligible?

Do you meet the following eligibility criteria?

If your project does not meet the eligibility criteria, then please talk to us. We have other support within [York CVS](#) that can help develop your projects and provide support.

Applicants must:

- Be a Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) organisation *

** If you do not meet this criteria and have a great idea but have never applied for funding before... Great! We're always keen to help people get started – please get in touch.*

- Deliver support to people living within the City of York Council area
- Be ready to apply, with appropriate governance, policies and procedures in place **

*** If you have questions or do not have these in place – please get in touch. More details below in the section - ‘Documents to submit with your application’.*

- Supporting Adults aged 18+ ***

**** Primarily supporting adults aged 18 and over. However, projects that also support younger adults aged 16 and over - particularly those in transition to adulthood - will also be considered.*

- Have a bank account in the organisation’s name ****

***** You must have a bank account that funds can be paid into with two unrelated signatories or apply with a sponsor/lead organisation that have confirmed their agreement to issue the funds on your behalf. (If you do not have a bank account in your organisation’s name it is recommended that you contact us to discuss possible approaches grants@yorkcvs.org.uk).*

- Applicants may apply for one funding option only (up to £500 or up to £1,000)

Who can apply?

We welcome applications from neurodivergent-led organisations and groups, as well as partners working with neurodivergent communities.

“We’ve got a great project idea but have never applied for funding before...”

We’re always keen to help people get started! If you’ve got a great project idea but have never applied for funding before, get in touch with us as soon as possible so we can support you through the process.

Please talk to us and leave enough time if you do want to apply or have any questions.

What size grants are available?

Grant size: Up to £500 or up to £1,000

Total funding available: £5,000

Level 1 - Up to £500 Level 2 - Up to £1,000

- You may apply for one grant only, choosing the level that best fits your idea *
- Funding must be used by March 2027
- Funding can cover equipment or staff costs; choose whatever you need most to make your project happen. Full details can be found below.

If a fund is over- or undersubscribed, applications may be considered for an alternative funding level.

Documents to submit with your application

As part of your submission, you are required to send the following documents with your application:

- Governing document
- Safeguarding policy and procedure**

**If these areas are covered in other policies/procedures, please advise when submitting your application and include those documents as well.

Details of how these documents will be used is outlined below:

Governing document/registration checks:

- Is the legal status of the organisation appropriate?
- Is the organisation registered with the appropriate body and up to date with legal returns e.g. to Charity Commission / Companies House (if applicable)?

Safeguarding policy and procedure:

Do they include:

- Definitions of abuse and signs of abuse included
- Details of local safeguarding board / who to contact within the organisation
- Details of when DSB checks should be carried out
- What safeguarding training is in place

These documents will be used as part of the eligibility and due diligence assessment.

Application process – what to expect and when

Key dates:

- Applications open: 28 May 2026
- Deadline: Friday 3 July 2026 (9am)
- Decisions: by end of July 2026
- Payments: August 2026

If my application is successful, what happens next?

- We will ask for evidence to verify your bank account and confirm that signatories are not related.
- We will send you forms to complete, including a grant agreement and finance form.
- Once returned, we will process these and arrange payment.

Accessible Application Process

Questions in Sections 3, 4 and 5 can be answered in a way that works best for you. You can choose to submit your answers in writing, or as a video or audio recording.

If you want to submit a video or audio recording, please email your files separately to grants@yorkcvs.org.uk.

If you have any questions, need support, or would like to talk through your application, please get in touch. We're happy to help, including explaining how to submit your answers.

You may also find this guidance useful – [Top tips for creating a video or recording audio on your mobile phone](#)

Assessment Process

We will assess your application in two stages:

1. Whether you meet the eligibility criteria

We will assess your application based on the information in the relevant section of the application.

2. How well your application meets the aims of the fund

We will assess your application based on how well it meets the aims of the fund. We are looking for clear, realistic ideas that will make a positive difference for neurodivergent people and communities in York.

Overall, we are also looking for:

- Inclusion and accessibility for neurodivergent people and communities
- Ideas shaped by community need or lived experience
- Creativity and opportunities to try new approaches
- Learning and understanding what works
- Clear and appropriate use of funding
- Whether your project is realistic and deliverable
- Potential to make a positive difference

We do not expect perfect applications — we are most interested in clear ideas that show how your project will support neurodivergent people and communities in York.

If you have any more questions about the assessment process, please get in touch.

If the fund is oversubscribed, then a short-listing process will be used.

Frequently asked Questions

Q: I have received funding from City of York Council or York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority in the last three years – can I apply for this funding?

A: As part of your application, we will ask you to confirm whether your organisation has received funding from City of York Council or the York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority within the last three financial years.

This information helps us meet responsibilities under the UK Subsidy Control Regime. We may contact you for further details if needed. If you have any questions or would like more information, please get in touch.

Q: Must applying organisations have an annual income within a certain range?

A: No. There is no upper or lower limit, but we may ask for further financial information to support your application if necessary.

Q: What are the reporting requirements?

A: There will be no written reporting requirements, but instead an event to showcase the work and celebrate impact. Further details will be shared with successful applicants.

Q: Can we apply as a collaborative?

A: Yes. We encourage partnership working and collaborative proposals, though you must appoint a lead organisation on the application form and provide additional details on roles and responsibilities in a separate document.

Q: What costs can be included as part of our budget?

A: You can apply for core costs and / or project costs.

Here are some examples of what your costs might include. It is not an exclusive list:

- Staffing costs
- Training for volunteers/staff
- Equipment / materials
- Refreshments
- Venue hire
- Printing/leaflets/publicity
- Transport for participants
- DBS checks (if necessary)

Q: Do you accept applications from statutory services (schools, prisons, hospitals etc)?

A: No. We cannot accept applications from statutory services.

We can consider joint applications that are a partnership between a VCSE organisation and a statutory organisation. The VCSE organisation must be the lead partner.

Still have questions?

If you have any question about applying and completing the application form, or about the guidance please get in touch, there is no such thing as a 'stupid' question – we are here to help!

- Read our webpage
- Read the application form
- Join an [‘Online Support Drop-in Sessions’](#) or an [‘In person Support Drop-in Session’](#)
- Talk to us...

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Contact Us

Email: grants@yorkcvs.org.uk

Phone: 01904 621133 (extension 1006) – leave a message and we will get back to you

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