



Foundation

## Frequently Asked Questions



**Supporting young people to positively transition  
away from the justice system**

## **Future Communities Fund - Round Two - Frequently asked questions**

We encourage you to read the guidance notes for the fund, which you can also access on [this resources page](#).

### **Miscellaneous**

**Q: Is partnership working possible? A smaller organisation leading with some support from larger org?**

*A: We actively encourage co-operation and collaboration and would expect organisations to be working in this way already. Whilst it is possible to work in partnership for the submission of an application, we would need to be assured that this was not for the purposes of getting around the £250k turnover limit. This would not be in the spirit of the fund, as we are very deliberately trying to work with smaller organisations who may have found funders difficult to access in the past. Any grant agreement (our legal contract) would be held with the lead organisation.*

**Q: Do you need to have a 5-year plan? Or could an application propose a shorter project?**

*A: We do not want to dictate to organisations what they need. We're open to applications for shorter periods, if that works best for your organisation. However, this is a rare opportunity to access longer term funding, so we'd encourage organisations to take it for the longest term if they can and not limit their expenditure to finite projects.*

**Q: Should the aim of the funding be to be transformative to the organisation e.g. to help deliver new activities etc or be focused on continuation and increased resilience?**

*A: The aim of the funding should be to deliver against the priorities set out in the criteria. As funding is unrestricted, organisations can spend the funding as they see fit, in furtherance of their mission, strategy or strategic objectives. As we go through the application process, there will be opportunities to discuss the use of the funding with organisations who make it through to the next stage.*

**Q: What do you mean by transparent governance?**

*A: Through our Future Communities Vision, young people told us that younger members of the community should be involved in decision making. In this context we mean being able to demonstrate that you are actively seeking opinions from and working with the young people you're working with, about whether the right decisions are being made for their future.*

Q: Could I ask if the cost per person is going to be a major consideration. We are working with a core group of young people on an intense programme so the cost per person is high.

A: *This is unrestricted funding, so value for money is not calculated as it would be for outcomes funding (i.e. a project where specific, measurable activities take place with a set of individuals)*

Q: Do you have a definition for leadership role i.e., would preparing young people for employment fit?

A: *By leadership, we mean sustainable roles that provide meaningful opportunities for young people to have power and influence over issues that affect them. This could be by participating in youth activism, decision making i.e., being part of a youth panel that makes decisions about things that are relevant to and affect the community that the young people are a part of.*

Q: Please can you provide specific examples of how young people are meaningfully involved?

A: *As a charity, for us this was our visioning exercise and setting up of a Future Communities Collective to bring young people into our governance and making decisions that affect how we run. It is important to us that young people are actively involved in how your organisation works – in a way that makes sense for your delivery.*

### **Organisation type**

Q: Do you need to be a charity to apply, or will it be open to co-operatives as well?

A: *We aren't being prescriptive about legal status, provided you have a charitable purpose.*

Q: Are very small Private Ltd companies automatically exempt?

A: *If you have a charitable purpose and are asset and mission locked, you should be eligible, but an examination of your Memorandum & Articles would give us a clearer picture. We recommend you look closely at the eligibility criteria and guidance initially.*

Q: We are a well-established charity with accounts but considering changing to a CIC but would essentially be the same organisation. Could we show our accounts for this year? As we would not have one as the CIC?

*A: As this is a recent change of legal status/business model we would be able to consider the previous accounts, as long as these are signed off by your board of trustees.*

*Q: You mention the phrase Voluntary Sector Organisation. Do you have a definition of this as we have both volunteers and paid staff?*

*A: Voluntary Sector Organisations are non-profit, non-governmental and operate with a social mission. They are not run for financial gain and are not part of the public sector. Paid staff and volunteers feature in most VS organisations, this is perfectly fine.*

*Q: Do you have demands on company structure/number of directors etc*

*A: We require a minimum of two unrelated directors/trustees*

### **Funding amounts/income vs criteria**

*Q: Does income include restricted funding for projects in annual turnover?*

*A: In your annual accounts we would expect to see restricted and unrestricted funding combined to give a total income figure. This is the figure we would work to for the £250k limit.*

*Q: In our last accounts we were over £250k, however this next year we are predicted to be below this - does this mean we are not eligible?*

*A: As a general rule we do need to work from your most recent filed income figures, but if there is a compelling argument that you can evidence - for example a one-off legacy which tipped your usual income level over the threshold, we could consider your application.*

*Q: Does capital funding we received during the financial year count as being income for the year*

*A: All income during a financial year counts towards your organisation's total turnover figure.*

*Q: Regarding the <£250k turnover, we are a new charity who had a first accounting period is longer than 12 months - which means that our turnover is higher than it will be for a 12-month accounting period. Is there flexibility for those of us in this position?*

*A: We may need to review your accounts to confirm, but there could be some flexibility through looking at what your pro-rata income would have been over a 12-month period. However, this will depend on when activity took place during the extended period (so for example, if a significant amount of income was received over a short period, you would not be eligible).*

**Q: Is Grants and contracts considered turnover?**

*A: Yes - in your annual accounts we would expect to see restricted and unrestricted funding combined to give a total income/turnover figure. This is the figure we would work to for the £250k threshold.*

**Q: We recently constituted and published our first set of accounts for our first 8 months - so not a year. Do you think we would still be eligible to apply?**

*A: Yes, your organisation would be eligible, however a short period of operation may mean you are comparatively less able to demonstrate how effective your organisation has been in respect of the priorities for this fund and thus, we would not encourage you to apply.*

**Q: Do you have a benchmark for what is proportionate to ask for please. For example, 10% of latest turnover?**

*A: We're not being prescriptive, but if you get through the first stage, we would chat to you about your funding request and ensure that this is a proportionate amount to offer your organisation.*

**Q: Is this £1.75M in total or each year?**

*A: £1.75m for this round of the Future Communities Fund across 5 years (i.e. £350k per year x 5 years maximum). We're looking to fund approximately ten organisations through this £1.75m programme round. Grants will be up to a total of £150,000 over five years and will be awarded on an unrestricted basis. As with the first round of our Future Communities Fund we hope to engage a learning partner to support us and our funded partners for the duration of the programme. We have included budget for this within the £1.75m.*

**Q: We had one year of filed accounts, but our organisation has recently converted from a CIC into a charity. Can we still apply or will this make us ineligible?**

*A: As this is a recent change of legal status/business model we would be able to consider the CIC accounts*

**Q: What happens if your turnover goes over £250k during the grant period?**

*A: The turnover limit only applies during the application process. We would hope that our funding helps your organisation to grow over the life of our funding.*

**Q: We constituted last December and don't have our accounts filed yet, is it likely that if we have them done by the accountants that we could use these to apply this year?**

*A: You need to have filed your accounts to apply. Also, as you are newly constituted, it would be comparatively more difficult to demonstrate your organisation's impact in respect of the priorities for this fund*

*Q: Could we apply for a mix of core and project costs? I know its unrestricted, just want to clarify this?*

*A. As we are looking to fund on an unrestricted basis, your organisation's mission or strategy should closely match all of the priorities we're looking to fund. This is important because we will be funding your whole organisation. Unrestricted funding enables your organisation to operate in much a more flexible and dynamic way than project funding.*

*Q: The funding is unrestricted. Does that mean we can decide what the funding will be used for and can be for both core and capital?*

*Q: Do you have to be currently working with young people or can it be a new project*

*A. As we are looking to fund on an unrestricted basis, your organisation's mission or strategy should closely match all the priorities we're looking to fund. This is important because we will be funding your whole organisation. Unrestricted funding enables your organisation to operate in much a more flexible and dynamic way than project funding.*

*Q: Is this funding for capital or core cost?*

*A: We are offering entirely unrestricted funding. If you were awarded unrestricted funding, you could choose to treat this as restricted for the purposes set out above. We could award funding with more restrictions only if there were specific reasons why unrestricted would not be beneficial to your organisation. We would need to know if you were contemplating a large capital outlay.*

*Q: Regarding unrestricted funding - will you require a full budget upon application and then a spend report at the end of each year to demonstrate how it has been funded? And do you require monitoring and evaluation for multi-year?*

*A: Our approach to learning and evaluation will be developed alongside a learning partner and successful funded partner in line with the programme's Theory of Development. Monitoring of the grant will be light touch with regular check in conversations and financial and progress reports linked to whatever the organisation would usually produce on an annual basis.*

## **Eligibility Criteria**

Q: As an organisation, we have no upper age limit as we feel the older team members do as good a job peer mentoring the younger ones, if not better, than we do, are we still eligible?

A: The majority of your work must be focused on supporting young people aged 10-25 years old to be eligible. By exception we may consider funding a higher age bracket if you can outline reasons for working with an older age range up to a maximum of 30 years old. This could mean, for example, that you continue to offer support to the 25-30 age range where young people may have a long history of working with your organisation. It could also mean that you have strong referral routes for that age range or that others in your local area are not working with this older age range.

### **Young People's collective/HUDL**

Q: Could you please confirm the background, location and abilities of the young people that took part in the development and research?

A: We deliberately selected young people to work with us who came from diverse backgrounds. More information on our Future Communities Collective can be found here [Future Communities Collective | Co-op Foundation](#). We also consulted with justice experienced young people from an organisation called Leaders Unlocked. More information can be found about the young people who participated in our visioning work here: [Future-Communities-Vision-report.pdf \(coopfoundation.org.uk\)](#).

Q: Is the Future Communities Collective application still open? Can we promote it to our contacts? Would this pose a problem for an application from us?

A: Thank you for your interest, however the applications to this collective are now closed - we have now recruited 16 young people to join us and they have been instrumental in decision making throughout the design process for this fund.

Q: Did you recruit any Roma young people for the Future Communities Collective?

A: We have a Roma community organisation currently receiving long-term funding as part of the first round of the Future Communities Fund but we haven't recruited any individuals from the Roma community as yet.

### **Working overseas**

Q. In our Articles of Association, we can work in the UK and worldwide. So far, we have been working only in the UK. We understand that you won't have control on where we will use these funds but, if we apply to this grant with a programme that is literally doable only in the UK, would you still exclude us?



A. We would not be able to award funding to your organisation if your governing document **allows** you to deliver work outside of the UK, even if you do not **actually** deliver outside of the UK.

### **Geographic Spread**

Q: Do you have priority areas within UK for funding?

A: Achieving a wide geographic reach, which includes all the UK nations, is an important factor in this programme but we will only use geographical information to prioritise if the programme is oversubscribed.

**If you have any questions that aren't covered in our FAQs, please email us at [applyfoundation@coop.co.uk](mailto:applyfoundation@coop.co.uk).**