



Foundation

Guidance Notes



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

Future Communities Fund Round 2 - Guidance Notes

Overview

Co-designed by our [Future Communities Collective](#) and informed by justice experienced young people, Future Communities Fund Round 2 builds on the priorities of [Co-op Foundation's](#) first round of funding under its five-year '[Building Communities of the Future](#)' strategy, which launched in 2022.

This next round will continue the priorities of the first round of funding, which focused on **diverse, equitable and inclusive organisations** and **organisations that prioritise youth activism, shared power and transparent governance**.

Building on these priorities, Future Communities Fund Round 2 will also focus on a further strategic priority: 'safer communities'. This is because young people who shaped our [Future Communities Vision](#) championed a world where everyone can feel safe and respected – and where young people feel welcomed, even when they have made mistakes.

We have expanded this vision through commissioned research, extensive stakeholder engagement and active participation of young people, some of whom have direct lived experience of the justice system.

In line with our strategic priorities, Future Communities Fund Round 2 is aimed at organisations:

1. Whose main purpose is to **help young people transition away from the justice system, to re-engage with their communities**.
2. Which are **diverse, equitable and inclusive**
3. That prioritise **youth activism, shared power and transparent governance**.

We will offer unrestricted funding to charitable organisations whose mission delivers against these priorities and which actively engage the life experience expertise of young people who have knowledge of the justice system.

We are offering funding of up to a maximum of £30,000 per year, for a maximum term of five years (£150,000 in total).

Applications will open on 16 May 2025 and close at **12pm (midday) on Monday 16 June 2025**. This application is the first stage of a 2-stage assessment process and will be reviewed and scored by our Future Communities Collective after the closing date.

We have set up a resources webpage which you can find [here](#). We strongly recommend watching the recording of our fund presentation as this will help you with your application and save you time if your organisation is not eligible for funding.

You can view a recording of the presentation on the resources page.

Please email applyfoundation@coop.co.uk if you have any questions.

Please note you can save and resume the application form as many times as you need (we recommend you save often), using the box on each page. **However, the form does not save automatically.**

Guidance for Application Form

1. Data declaration and authorisation

Please read and confirm by ticking the boxes.

2. General information

2(a) Your organisation's full name

As stated in your constitution/articles or governing document.

2(b) Organisation's legal name (or aka), if applicable

This is an optional question. Please complete this if your organisation uses a different name in its day-to-day operations, or your organisation's legal name is different to the one you use in your day-to-day work.

2(c) Organisation's address

This should be your organisation's main registered address, which is used for any written correspondence (although please note we will primarily communicate with you by email).

2(d/e) Telephone numbers

We find the most common delay to processing funding applications is when we have difficulty speaking to organisations which have applied for funding. Whilst we appreciate that many organisations are volunteer-led, or have part-time workers, if we have the right numbers for you, we'll be able to quickly contact you to arrange a convenient time to speak. If we cannot contact you on a timely basis, we may not be able to proceed with your application.

2(f/g) Website and social media addresses

Reviewing any public presence your organisation has platforms can help us to understand more about your organisation and is used as part of our due diligence process. If you don't have a website, or are in the process of updating, this doesn't prevent you from applying, but please leave blank.

2(h/i/j) Primary contact name, email address and position in organisation

This can be a different contact to the person who completed the application form. It should be the name and email address of the main point of contact for the application. This person should be able to answer detailed queries about the application. Please also tell us the role this person holds in the organisation.

2(k/l/m) Secondary contact name, email address and position in organisation

We require a second contact from within your organisation in case we can't get hold of the primary contact. This person should be authorised to respond on behalf of your organisation and should be familiar with the details of the application. Please also tell us the role this person holds in the organisation.

3. Organisation's legal status and governance structure

3(a) What is the legal structure of your organisation?

You can only choose one option from this list. We appreciate that many organisations are registered charities and also a Company Limited by Guarantee, but we cover this elsewhere in the form.

3(b/c) Registered charity details

These questions appear if you have ticked:

- Registered Charity in England and Wales
- Registered Charity in Scotland
- Registered Charity in Northern Ireland

If your Charity is also a company limited by guarantee, we ask for your Companies House registration number as well.

3(d) Question relates to organisations which are Companies Limited by Guarantee or Shares or Community Interest Companies Limited by Guarantee or Shares

Please enter your Companies House registration number

3(e) Question relates to Co-operative or Industrial and Provident Societies

Please enter your FCA registration number

3(f) Question relates to Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisations

Please enter your SCIO registration number

3(g) Not sure/Other

If you are unsure about your legal status, please tell us as much as you can about how your organisation is run and by whom. Please provide an outline of how decisions are reached in your organisation and who is responsible for strategic and operational delivery. If anyone has significant or majority control, tell us about how that works here.

3(h) Does your organisation have at least two unconnected people on your management board? Yes or No?

By connected, we mean people who are related, married/in a civil union or domestic partnership. Having unconnected trustees/directors helps mitigate risk and helps to assure financial transparency but having related directors/trustees does not prevent us from funding your organisation if this is managed adequately and there are sufficient numbers to ensure transparent governance.

4. Organisation's financial position

4(a) Is the total income of your organisation £250,000 or less as reported in your last filed accounts? Yes or No?

By £250,000 annual income we mean a total combined figure including restricted, unrestricted and capital income. All income received during a financial year, counts towards your organisation's total income figure.

If your total annual income is generally below £250,000 but you can provide an outline of why your income was inflated in the previous financial year, you can upload a statement to that effect at question **4(b)**. This could be, for example, that your organisation received of a one-off legacy payment during the financial year which is unlikely to be repeated in the future. We will review any such applications on a case-by-case basis.

4(b) Please enter your organisation's annual income/turnover as reported in your last filed accounts.

Please only enter whole numbers, no £ signs or commas

4(c) Please upload a copy of your organisation's most recent set of published accounts.

These accounts must be complete and contain a Profit & Loss Statement, Balance Sheet and Trustees/Directors' report. If you are unable to provide a completed set of accounts, please upload a statement explaining why this is not possible. Whilst we appreciate that some accounts are publicly available, these are sometimes incomplete, or organisations are too new to require filing etc, therefore we ask that everyone uploads accounts. If you would also like to upload new draft accounts to clarify an updated position, you can do so here.

5. Organisation's area of delivery

5(a) Does your organisation exclusively deliver its services in the UK? Yes or No?

We ask this question because we are offering funding which is completely unrestricted. If your governing document allows you to deliver work outside of the UK, even if you do not actually do so at present, you are ineligible to apply for this funding.

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Criteria for funding

6. Eligibility Criteria - age range

6(a) Does most of your organisation's work involve the support of young people leaving the justice system, aged 10-25? Yes or No?

If you answer 'no' to this question, your organisation is ineligible for funding.

Your organisation should predominantly work with young people in the 10-25 age range. Answer Yes, continue to **Q6(b)**.

6(b) If most of your organisation's work supports young people aged 10-25 but you also support those aged up to 30, please outline why you think your organisation is eligible to apply under this criteria.

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.

Give us as much information as you can so that we can consider your case for funding fully.

7. Eligibility Criteria - Organisational Mission

7(a) Do you consider that the main area of focus for your organisation is to help justice experienced young people to engage or re-engage with their communities? Yes or No?

If you answer 'no' to this question, your organisation is ineligible for funding.

It will not be sufficient for this fund if your organisation works in many different service delivery areas and only a small part of your work involves justice experienced young people.

7(b) Please give a full explanation of how your organisation's main objective, as outlined in your governing document or strategy/mission statement, is to help justice experienced young people to re-engage with their communities.

If you answer 'yes, please provide an outline of your organisation's main areas of focus, this could include service delivery examples and/or the reasons why you consider the majority of your organisation's aim is to support young people transitioning out of the justice system.

7(c) Please upload a recent copy of your incorporation/governing document or a published strategy/mission statement which supports your organisation's main objective as you have outlined above.

We will need to see that your organisation's central mission or strategic objective is to support justice experienced young people, so please provide documentation to support this. If you are not able to provide this governance/mission documentation, please upload a statement explaining why.

Fund Criteria

In this section, scoring for your application will be based on the strength of your responses to each criteria question (Q8-Q12). However, you are not required to answer 'yes' to each question in order to be eligible to apply.

If you answer 'no' to any of the questions, you may still be eligible to apply for this fund, but you should provide a full explanation of why you believe your organisation meets each of the fund criteria. You will be required to provide additional information to support these answers should your application be selected to progress to the second stage.

For each criteria, we have tried to be clear about what we mean in the questions by giving some generalised examples of what you might mention in your responses. These are only suggestions and they not exhaustive lists, so you should mention whatever is relevant for you particular organisation.

8. The provision of 'non-stigmatised support'

8(a) Does your organisation have experience of supporting young people to navigate any stigma they may experience from their community or wider society in response to their association with the justice system? Yes or No?

8(b) If you answered yes, please tell us how your organisation helps young people overcome social stigma as they transition out of the Criminal Justice System. You should provide examples of how you do this. If you answered no, please tell us why you think your organisation meets this criteria.

Our definition of social stigma is '*any stigma that young people leaving the justice system may experience from their community or wider society in response to their association with the justice system.*'

If you answered yes, please provide additional information, such as examples of your work and why you consider your approach to support helps young people overcome social stigma.

We are aware that social stigma is very much society's problem to address and systemic change on that scale is not easy to achieve, but please tell us about any work you are doing with young people to help address the stigma they may experience.

Some examples might include work you do that utilises:

- Positive role modelling to improve self-esteem and consideration for others.
- Embedding youth voice so that young people feel they matter.
- Stretching young people out of their comfort zone in a healthy, supportive way
- Support an understanding of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) and the importance of different perspectives for young people.
- Ladder of progression where young people can increase their involvement as their confidence grows.
- Open door policy (the ability to return to services when needed) so that young people can always come back for support, even when life takes them in different directions.

If you answered no, please explain why you think your organisation should still be considered under this criteria, This could include for example:

- A track record of delivering your services in ways which you consider to be similarly effective.
- How you might benefit from a close affiliation with another organisation that does work in the way suggested in the criteria.

Include any examples of how you think your way of working is just as effective as the criteria stated.

9. Relationships and Partnerships

9(a) Does your organisation have strong, existing relationships with referral agencies, which help ensure a smooth transition for young people leaving the justice system?

Yes or No?

9(b) If you answered yes, please tell us about your existing relationships and partnerships with referral agencies and how this helps young people in their transition from the justice system. You should provide examples of how these relationships/partnerships help facilitate more positive outcomes for the young people you support. If you answered no, please tell us why you think your organisation meets this criteria.

If you answered yes, please provide as much information as you can including examples of how your referral relationships enhance the level of support you give to young people. Agencies may include prisons or youth justice statutory services or may be fewer formal

relationships that work well for your organisation and the young people you support. Good practice may include:

- How partnerships might be mutually beneficial resulting in a better service for young people
- How partnerships should be adaptable, allowing for young people to progress at their own pace
- How you keep young people at the heart of your collaborations and seek to avoid competing with other organisations
- How you might compromise with other organisations for the benefit of supporting young people

If you answered no, please explain why you think your organisation should still be considered under this criteria, This could include for example:

- A track record of delivering your services in ways which you consider to be similarly effective.
- How you might benefit from a close affiliation with another organisation that does work in the way suggested in the criteria.

Include any examples of how you think your way of working is just as effective as the criteria stated.

10. Development routes for young people

10(a) Does your organisation have experience of developing routes for young people transitioning from the justice system into training, employment and/or mentoring for future endeavours? Yes or No?

10(b) If you answered yes, please tell us about the experience your organisation has in providing positive support pathways for justice experienced young people. These could include pathways into training, employment and/or mentoring for their future plans. You should provide examples wherever possible to show how these pathways are beneficial to the young people you support. If you answered no, please tell us why you think your organisation meets this criteria

If you answered yes, please provide as much information as you can - including examples of how these pathways provide meaningful support for young people transitioning out of the justice system.

Examples might include work your organisation does to facilitate:

- Developing roles for young people to try out such as organised leisure or education and training.
- Routes into employment or apprenticeships
- Supporting young people to develop or be part of social enterprises that are focused on creating opportunities for justice experienced young people.
- Improving practical skills and workplace confidence

If you answered no, please explain why you think your organisation should still be considered under this criteria, This could include for example:

- A track record of delivering your services in ways which you consider to be similarly effective.
- How you might benefit from a close affiliation with another organisation that does work in the way suggested in the criteria.

Include any examples of how you think your way of working is just as effective as the criteria stated.

11. Promoting pro-social identities

11(a) Does your organisation have experience of supporting young people to develop pro-social identities and to feel empowered to make positive changes in their lives? Yes or No?

Our commissioned research has shown that young people are able to gain empowerment through the development of a pro-social identity. The term pro-social identity has been drawn directly from our commissioned research and our working definition of the term is as follows:

Young people with a pro-social identity see themselves as individuals who will benefit other people or society as a whole and are therefore less likely to get involved in negative or criminal activity. If a young person has a pro-social identity, they feel empowered to make the right choices in their behaviour and with wider life decisions, including relationships.

11(b) Please provide examples of how you support young people to develop pro-social identities, in particular how your organisation helps them move away from traditional gender stereotypes which may encourage an anti-social identity.

If you answered yes, please provide details - including examples of how you support justice experienced young people to develop a pro-social identity. Strategies employed by your organisation may include:

- Providing opportunities for young people to experience 'fresh AIR' (activities, interactions and roles) that promote pro-social identity development.
- Encouraging positive future-focused role modelling
- Engaging young people based upon their individual needs and desires - not a pre-determined agenda.
- Interventions which deconstruct historical gender identities

If you answered no, please explain why you think your organisation should still be considered under this criteria, This could include for example:

- A track record of delivering your services in ways which you consider to be similarly effective.
- How you might benefit from a close affiliation with another organisation that does work in the way suggested in the criteria.

Include any examples of how you think your way of working is just as effective as the criteria stated.

12. Valuing lived experience

12(a) Is your organisation committed to embedding people with lived experience of the justice system into its governance and service delivery? Yes or No?

12(b) Young People If you answered yes, please tell us about how your organisation values justice experienced young people and how they influence the design and delivery of your services and/or the strategic direction/governance of your organisation. You should give examples of how this strengthens your delivery support services and/or governance structure. If you answered no, please tell us why you think your organisation meets this criteria.

If you answered yes, please explain clearly and give examples of how young people are embedded into the design and delivery of your services. This may include:

- How young people are involved with your organisation at every level.
- How you provide opportunities to harness and nurture the skills of young people
- How you avoid a tokenistic approach and ensure young people are heard in a meaningful way
- How you develop roles for young people (including paid and/or volunteer roles)
- How your organisation has changed/grown as a result of involving young people at a deeper level.

If you answered no, please explain why you think your organisation should still be considered under this criteria, This could include for example:

- A track record of delivering your services in ways which you consider to be similarly effective.
- How you might benefit from a close affiliation with another organisation that does work in the way suggested in the criteria.

Include any examples of how you think your way of working is just as effective as the criteria stated.

12(c) Governance and Leadership If you answered yes, please tell us about how your organisation embeds lived experience of the justice system into your governance and leadership and/or frontline staff working with young people. You should give examples of how this strengthens your delivery support services and/or governance structure. If you answered no, please tell us why you think your organisation meets this criteria.

We consider it particularly important for applicants to have justice experienced people embedded across their organisation, ideally with experience of the justice system.

If you answered yes, please explain clearly and give examples of how embedding staff into leadership roles and governance enhances your service delivery for young people. You may include examples of:

- How those in leadership or governance roles had/have direct experience of the justice system
- How those in frontline support staff roles had/have direct experience of the justice system.
- How this lived experience strengthens the delivery service for young people.

If you answered no, please explain why you think your organisation should still be considered under this criteria, This could include for example:

- A track record of delivering your services in ways which you consider to be similarly effective.
- How you might benefit from a close affiliation with another organisation that does work in the way suggested in the criteria.

Include any examples of how you think your way of working is just as effective as the criteria stated.

Prioritisation questions

We are committed to achieving a fair and equitable spread of funding for Future Communities Fund Round 2. The following two sections may be used to prioritise applications if the fund is oversubscribed.

13. Geography

Achieving a wide geographic reach, which includes all the UK nations, is an important factor in this programme. The following questions will help us to achieve this aim.

13(a) In which part of the UK does your organisation deliver its services? Please choose the main country of your delivery.

You can only choose one option, so pick the main area of your delivery, even if you operate in more than one country. If you operate throughout the UK then choose the UK wide option. This information will help us ensure an equitable spread of funding.

13(b) Please tell us the town or city nearest to your main area of delivery.

Answer the town nearest to your main area of delivery.

13(c) Please tell us the county of your main area of delivery.

Answer the county which represents your main area of delivery.

14. Diversity and Protected Characteristics

For Future Communities Fund, Round 1, Co-op Foundation's working definition of diversity was:

Any group who are additionally marginalised in society because of their race, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, socioeconomic status or any other attribute that impacts their inclusion.

Our Future Communities Collective of young people consider diversity and protected characteristics to be important priorities for this fund, as our research shows how intersectionality often compounds the problems justice experienced young people face.

For this round of funding, our Collective are also keen to add to this working definition the addition of young people affected by **neurodiversity and/or young people with experience of the care system.**

14(a) Does your organisation work with groups of justice experienced young people who have any of the characteristics as referenced in the above definitions?

Answer 'yes' if you work regularly with any groups of justice experienced young people who you consider to have any protected characteristics. This is not an eligibility question, so you will not be prevented from continuing if you answer 'no.'

14(b). If your organisation regularly works with groups of justice experienced young people who have added characteristics, please tell us about this. Include examples of how your work with these young people improves their opportunities to re-engage with communities as they transition out of the justice system.

If you answered yes, please give us as much information as you can about the particular groups you work with, for example:

- Why you feel your approach is particularly impactful for them as individuals.
- How you think they are adversely affected
- How their protected characteristics disproportionately affect their opportunities and progression.
- Which strategies you employ in your work with young people
- Details of any specialist relationships you have entered into to support these groups of young people.

15. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Co-op Foundation is committed to funding in a fair and equitable way. As members of the [UK Funders' DEI Data Standard working group](#), we collect Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) data from all our applicants. Your completion of this form will strengthen our understanding of DEI in communities and help us shape our approach for our future strategy.

Please follow the link in the form which will take you to new questionnaire. There is also a link to the guidance for the form should you require further information.

We will not use the information you share in this form to assess your application for this programme.

We appreciate your co-operation in completing this form and helping us with our inclusivity practices. Don't forget to complete your application after you have completed the questionnaire.

16. Final questions

These questions are for our use and do not form part of your application or assessment.

16(a) Where did you hear about this fund?

Telling us how you learned about the fund will assist us greatly in our outreach for future programmes. Your answer will also help us ensure our programmes are accessible and inclusive.

16(b) Did you watch the presentation recording or make use of the resources on the Webpage before completing your application? Yes or No?

16(c) Please tell us which resources were useful and anything we could improve

Knowing the answer to this question will help us gauge the effectiveness of our communication methods for this programme and inform us on any additional resources we need to provide for future programmes.

16(d) On a scale of 1-5 how easy did you find this application form to complete (where 1 is difficult and 5 is easy)

We will use your scores to judge the accessibility of our application process and use the data to make improvements for future programmes.

16(e) Please share further details about this score, this will help us to improve future funds

Providing us with further information on why you provided the score you gave in Q16(d) helps us to understand what is working well and where we can improve our application forms.

Ensuring a successful submission

After you have pressed 'Submit' you **must** click the **confirm** button at the bottom of the page to finalise your response. If you want to print the page for your record, you can do it here. If you don't receive a message from us saying your application has been submitted, please re-check that you have completed all the steps.

If you have any questions throughout the application process, please email us at applyfoundation@coop.co.uk.