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Department for  
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COMMUNITY  
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Foundation

## Youth-led advocacy to improve community spaces: application guidance

### Introduction

In August 2019, we are launching the first strand of a new £3 million extension to the Co-op Foundation #iwill Fund. This fund supports the aim of the #iwill campaign to make social action part of life for as many 10 to 20 year-olds as possible, forming a habit of community involvement they will continue as adults.

Our extended fund will now run until 2022, with an overall focus on supporting social action that draws on young people's own lived experience in order to:

- Connect young people to social action opportunities that lead to genuine community impact
- Empower them through the difference this makes for themselves and their peers.

This fund will have three themed strands. The first of these, which is now open for applications, focuses on supporting youth-led advocacy to improve the design and use of community spaces.

The other two strands will launch later in 2019, focusing on:

- Social action which supports young people experiencing bereavement
- Social action which supports young people through the transition from primary to secondary school.

The #iwill Fund is available in England only. The Co-op Foundation will be announcing other funding opportunities in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland over the coming year.

[Follow our blog](#) to hear about all our future funding opportunities and when they are launched.

### Youth-led advocacy to improve community spaces

In the first round of this Fund, we expect to make around eight grants of up to £35,000 each. The deadline to apply for this strand is **midday on Friday 20 September 2019**.

Grants will be awarded for one year, although successful applicants will have the opportunity to re-apply for up to two years' further funding, to build on their learning and focus on sustaining their impact. There will also be further opportunities for new applicants to apply for this strand of the Fund from 2020 onwards.

When we say community spaces we mean spaces which are (or could be) open to members of the public. This might include places where young people interact with services and institutions, places that young people struggle to access or use in the way that they would like and/or where young people's voices aren't currently represented. You can see an example of how one of our current #iwill partners, KIDS, is equipping young people to advocate to improve community spaces [here](#).

## Application timeline

<b>5 August</b>	Applications open
<b>Midday, 20 September</b>	Deadline to submit applications
<b>4 October</b>	Shortlisted applicants notified
<b>14 November</b>	Final grant decisions made by Co-op Foundation Trustees
<b>By end of November</b>	Grant offers issued to successful applications

## What we're looking for

Applications will be assessed against the following criteria. Applications will be reviewed by our Youth Advisory Group, so please ensure your responses are clear, jargon-free and easy to understand, and have had input from young people themselves.

Young people engaged in your project should be aged between 10 and 20.

### 1. An approach that draws on young people's lived experience to improve community spaces

We want to support organisations who understand what high quality youth social action is and have experience of equipping young people with the skills they need to deliver meaningful advocacy-based social action.

Approaches should empower young people to take the lead and advocate to improve community spaces that are important to them and where their work can be embedded into spaces in the long-term. Your proposed plans should be informed by young people themselves.

### 2. Outcomes

We're interested in approaches that can demonstrate a clear double benefit - to the young person who takes part by developing their skills, character and life opportunities, as well as to a community, cause or social problem.

### 3. Diversity and inclusion

We want to fund organisations which can show they are open and welcoming to young people, and actively seek to include people who may face barriers to getting involved.

You'll need to show that your project will benefit young people in areas of deprivation and that you understand your local area well. If you like, you can refer to sources of data such as [Co-op's Community Wellbeing Index](#) or the [English Index of Multiple Deprivation](#).

#### **4. Organisational health**

We will look for evidence that your organisation is well-run, including its governance, strategy, financial management, and policies on safeguarding and diversity.

#### **What can the funding be used for?**

You can apply for up to £35,000 over one year to facilitate youth-led advocacy to improve the design and use of community spaces. Grants can be used to cover any costs related to carrying out this project, included but not limited to:

- Salaries of staff involved in delivering or supporting the project
- Costs of advocacy activities, including appropriate incentives and rewards for young people to take part
- Proportionate contributions to organisational running costs required to support the delivery of the project.

#### **How to apply**

Submit your application using [this online form](#) by **midday on Friday 20 September 2019**.

You can also download a word document version of the application questions [here](#). However, applications must be submitted via the online form.

#### **Contact us**

If you have any questions about this fund, please contact [foundation@coop.co.uk](mailto:foundation@coop.co.uk)

#### **Additional background information**

Since 2017, the Co-op Foundation has invested almost £2 million through our #iwill Fund to deliver projects aimed at addressing youth loneliness through high quality youth social action opportunities.

This funding builds on learning from our Building Connections Fund Youth strand, where we supported partners to work with young people to co-design improvements to services and community spaces. Our work highlighted that:

- Perceptions of space, as well as the space itself are important for young people

- Co-production of changes to community spaces can ensure they really meet the needs of young people, and embedding young people's voices into community spaces is important to maintain this
- Young people are able to clearly explain what they need from community spaces and are able to develop plans to make this happen.

The following sources of information may be of use when developing your proposal:

- [Building Connections Fund Youth strand Co-design and Community Spaces evaluation report](#)
- [All our emotions are important](#) (Co-op Foundation) - explores young people's experiences of loneliness.

### **The #iwill campaign**

#iwill is a UK-wide campaign that aims to make social action part of life for as many 10 to 20 year-olds as possible, forming a habit of community involvement they will continue as adults.

For more information about what youth social action is, the #iwill campaign and the findings from the 2018 National Youth Social Action survey, visit [www.iwill.org.uk](http://www.iwill.org.uk).

### **The #iwill Fund**

The #iwill Fund is a £40 million joint investment from the National Lottery Community Fund, using National Lottery funding, and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) to support young people to access high quality social action opportunities. Co-op Foundation is acting as a match funder.