**Rochdale Communities Fund – Digital Inclusion Grants**

**Guidance Notes**

The Rochdale Communities Fund is a mutual fund to invest in and strengthen Rochdale Borough’s VCFSE sector. It funds groups and projects which directly benefit local people and communities, delivered by VCFSE organisations with roots in the borough.

Thanks to funding from Rochdale Borough Council, Action Together is offering investment to help VCFSE groups provide digital inclusion support to individuals and communities in the Rochdale Borough.

As there are limited funds, we will be prioritising applications who are already part of our Digital Inclusion Forum or can show how they will work collaboratively with this forum going forward.

**Your project must fall within one or more of the following priorities:**

* Multi-lingual digital skills training in communities that enable people to feel confident and independent
* Digital skills courses that are aimed at people with a learning disability and/or mental health issues
* Basic digital skills sessions and 1:1 support in communities that enable people to feel confident and independent
* Creative approaches to engaging people and getting them excited about learning digital skills i.e. digital art, AI, tech innovations
* Drop ins and digital skills sessions to help people use their existing devices i.e. smartphones

**Grant amount:** Grants of up £5,000 are available to apply for

**Deadline:** Wednesday 20th September 2023

**What we can fund:**

* Equipment, project resources and running costs
* Staff time and staff and volunteer expenses
* Tech equipment, refurbishing, operating systems or software if you can demonstrate it’s necessary for the project and can’t be provided elsewhere

Please note, we encourage all groups submitting an application form to include your management costs within the budget for your project.

For a clear and simple introduction to calculating the full costs of a project, read the [National Lottery Community Fund’s full cost recovery guidance](https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/funding-guidance/full-cost-recovery).

**Who is the funding for:**

* you are a voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise (VCFSE) group locally rooted or actively working in the borough of Rochdale; ***and***
* you are a member of Action Together CIO (you can register for free to become a member [here](https://www.actiontogether.org.uk/become-member))
* you are formally constituted.
* to apply for up to £5,000 you must have a turnover of less than £1million

To ensure limited funds reach as many groups as possible, there is also a limit on the number of times groups can apply to the Rochdale Communities Fund. Action Together members can apply to our funding if you have already received funding through the Rochdale Communities Fund as long as:

* The applications are for different projects, or you can show the project needs to continue
* You have submitted all monitoring for previous projects
* You are in contact with your Community Development Worker
* You have not already received a grant from the categories above the one you are applying for (i.e. a small grant and you’re applying for a micro grant)

**Decision making process:**

Grant decisions will be made by the Action Together community panel and representatives from the Digital Inclusion Forum. Decisions will be made once the fund has closed for applications. You may be asked for further information or to redevelop aspects of your proposal.

All applications must be sent to hayley.tomlinson@actiontogether.org.uk and you will receive the decision via email.

All successful applicants will be required to share their projects on Our Rochdale and attend the Digital Inclusion Forum.

**Monitoring:**

At the end of your project, we will ask you to fill out a monitoring form to tell us:

* The story of your project
* How many people benefitted
* Any other plans you have for your community following the project
* Photos, feedback sheets, promotional materials or anything else relevant to the project.

Our Community Development Workers will check in with you during the project and can help you plan how you want to share the impact and success of your project.

**Please note:**

* Action Together is an accredited Living Wage Funder. This means we encourage organisations that employ staff to become an accredited [Living Wage Employer.](https://www.livingwage.org.uk/become-a-living-wage-employer)

**Completing the application form**

* Please ensure that ALL boxes on the application form are completed.
* When completing your budget, please clearly evidence how you have arrived at your costings and use exact figures.
* If you have any queries about the application form or application process, please contact Hayley Tomlinson on 0161 339 2345.
* Please note, we can only accept one application per organisation.

**Please note that the Rochdale Community Fund is ongoing therefore our approach will be under constant review. If there are any changes, these will be communicated appropriately.**