**Rochdale Communities Fund – Food Solutions 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 Public Health team, Action Together is offering investment to help the VCFSE groups provide emergency and immediate food offers, as well as investing in supporting the longer-term sustainability of our borough’s food providers.

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

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

1. **Emergency FREE Food:** Groups providing short-term, emergency support (for example food banks, community fridges, waste food projects or soup kitchens) which aim to relieve immediate pressure, but also offer additional support so that people don’t need to use the food bank again in the future.

2. **Food Pantries or other membership food clubs (i.e.** **social supermarkets, community shops, local food hubs):** Established food pantries who are softening the blow of high living costs and creating conditions for communities to grow and thrive, by bringing people together around food.

3. **Social Eating Projects:** food projects that bring communities together and combine food with addressing root causes of food poverty (e.g. providing benefits help or debt advice)

4. **Food Growing Projects**: initiatives to help residents and community groups to learn how to grow food

5. **Educational Food Projects:** funding to enable community groups to find the time and space for learning and broader development around food I.e. Learn to Cook Programmes or Cooking on a Budget.

6. **Cultural Food Offers** – projects that represent the traditions, beliefs, and practices of a geographic region, ethnic group, religious body, or cross-cultural community.

**Grant amount:** Grants of up to either £5,000 or £10,000 are available to apply for

**Deadline:** Friday 22nd September 2023

**What we can fund:**

* Equipment, project resources and running costs
* Purchase of food
* Staff time and staff and volunteer expenses

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 Food Solutions Foundation group. 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](mailto:hayley.tomlinson@actiontogether.org.uk) and you will receive the decision via email.

**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. As part of this process, you will be required to undertake a due diligence exercise to ensure that your project meets the food safety standards.

**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.

**Reducing Disparities around food and nutrition**

**Please read the ladder from the bottom up**

When completing the application form you will be asked to refer to the Reducing Disparities Ladder below.

You will be asked to explain where your project sits on the Reducing Disparities ladder, and explain how will it support people to move out of food poverty.

**Regional learning and support**: GM Poverty Action/ GMFSAN/ GMCA

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **New business**: e.g. growing (including flowers), café, garden centre, veg box, greengrocers, staff co-operative, community shop/ pub, microbrewery, bakery, processing, preserving methods. |
|  | **Communities together**: Community activist/ food citizens/ climate champions/ local funding collabs/ planting for community benefit e.g. from herbs to trees |
|  | **Building resilience**: range of all these including social prescribing/ local food and markets/ supermarkets + Community Champions agree to waste less (?law) / farmers harvest everything and get fair prices + contracts/ claim entitlements/ make people aware of local funds e.g. Household fund, the Rochdale fund for Relief in Sickness/ lower cost kitchen appliances e.g. Pass It On/ money and debt management/ campaigning for real living wage and benefits / wraparound services including digital inclusion/ rules on advertising and marketing/ no profiteering on goods and services that meet basic human requirements/ land for public good/ help to complete applications and forms |
|  | **Social:** growing- allotments and community gardens as well as support to grow at home/ luncheon clubs and delivered meals/ community payback/ cooking opportunities e.g. Big Pan/ advice on social tariffs for utilities including wifi/ volunteer opportunities / food as a public good |
|  | **Reducing cost:** food pantrys and clubs/ social supermarket/ Community shop/ local food hubs/ free school meals and holiday vouchers/ Healthy Start/ community café/ Too Good To Go/ co-op approach – group or street or town/ buyers group/ FSN sharing surplus/ TBBT/ Fareshare/ HisChurch/ links with other distributors e.g. Surplus2Purpose and Eggcup – barter and share |
|  | **Free:** food banks/ donations/community fridge/ Olio/ FoodCycle/ Soup Kitchen/ crop drops/ gleaning/ free school meals and Uniform4All/ IT equipment loans |

**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.**