**Rochdale Communities Fund**

**The Big Pan**

**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.

The Rochdale Communities Fund can support groups to try out a new project or sustain one that already exists. Action Together provides members with development support, training and other infrastructure alongside grant funding.

Thanks to funding from Rochdale Borough Council Public Health Team, Action Together is offering micro grants of up to £1000 for groups to get involved with The Big Pan Community Cooking programme.

**As part of the project, we expect all groups successful in receiving funding to:**

* To complete a BigPan cooking champion training session
* To have access to a venue which meets the needs of the programme and is accessible to the local residents.
* To deliver at least two 6 week Big Pan programmes in their community venue
* To deliver sessions where the participants are involved and cook their own food whilst following the demonstration
* To encourage residents to come together through food.
* To provide a hot, nutritious, low-cost meal to families
* To use food pantries/clubs to enhance the use of food provided
* To give families a safe, warm space for the duration of the session
* To provide a social environment for people to eat a meal together
* To reduce health inequalities through teaching independence through cooking skills
* Gather feedback from participants for evaluation purposes
* To identify other volunteers who may want to run additional sessions
* To attend the good help training and offer informal good help conversations

Evidence shows that people are more likely to try new foods and make changes to their diets if they cook the dishes for themselves. Cooking together and sharing what is made is good for people’s mental and physical health and combats loneliness, social isolation, and is an enjoyable experience for most.

During the winter of 2022, it was anticipated that many people would be experiencing fuel poverty meaning they were unable to heat their homes and/or cook hot meals for their families. These were also the families who were more likely to have poor health, and who would benefit from a place of warmth, a nutritious hot meal, and develop their cooking skills to enable them to prepare meals at home.

The Big Pan model has been running successfully for 12 months in four Rochdale community hubs presenting the opportunity to cooperatively test and learn the model and develop resources. We’ve seen great results including 99% of participants saying they were going to make the meal again at home for their families, as well as lots of positive, case studies where it’s brought communities together, created self-confidence in food preparation and encouraged attendees to try to new foods.

The next step now is to roll the model out further across other communities in the borough so we can all enjoy the benefits of cooking together and eating fresh, healthy, homemade food.

**Grant amount:** Grants of up to £1,000 are available

**Deadline:** Tuesday 5 December, 12pm

**What we can fund:**

* Ingredients
* Travel expenses covered for champions and attendees
* Equipment
* Room hire (if applicable)

**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.
* you have access to a community venue which meets the needs of the programme and is accessible to the local residents.

**If you are successful:**

If successful in receiving this funding, all volunteers delivering the project must attend The Big Pan cooking champion training.

The Big Pan cooking champion training programme will include:

* Detailed programme plans
* Appropriate recipes and supporting resources
* Practical cooking skills development
* Application of healthy eating and food hygiene guidance
* Budget management and food waste reduction tips
* Ongoing support from partners

We will also expect all funded organisations to connect with the Food Solutions Network, if you aren’t already members of this network.

**Criteria for attendees:**

To ensure the sessions have the greatest impact, we are suggesting that attendees meet the following criteria:

* Reside within the neighbourhood/ identified community
* Attend as a family/to represent a family unit
* Are interested in learning cooking skills to enable them to prepare nutritious meals at home for their families.

It is also suggested that they

* Are eligible for the Healthy Start Scheme
* Have been referred through schools/food clubs

However, families/households who feel they would benefit from this programme are welcome to attend.

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

**Decision making process:**

Grant decisions under £1000 are made by Action Together, while all decisions over £1000 are scored by the Action Together community panel. Decisions will be made within December, unless you are 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.

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)

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.

**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.
* Please ensure you include information in your application about how you will measure the impact and success of your project.
* 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.**