**Rochdale Communities Fund – Seed Fund**

**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 Adult Social Care team, Action Together is offering up to £500 to micro groups to support individuals, families, and communities in the Rochdale Borough.

The Seed Fund is aimed at social action groups and micro groups who aren’t constituted but would like to work towards becoming a constituted group.

**Applications for this fund can only be completed and submitted by your local Community Development Worker.** If you would like to apply for this fund, we don’t require a formal application form, but we do require you to meet with a Community Development Worker to discuss your project idea.

**The priorities for grant investment**

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

**1. Challenging poverty and driving equality**

* Support people and communities to get back on their feet and take more control over their lives – i.e. practical support, advice or peer support
* Reduce inequalities and help more people reach their potential
* Strengthen community voice and action on the things that matter most to them

**2. Promoting health and wellbeing**

* Enabling people and communities to support their social, mental and physical wellbeing
* Challenging health inequalities through working with marginalised groups whose needs are not being met by existing services
* Build strong relationships in and across communities

**Grant amount:** Grants of up to £500 are available

**What we can fund:**

We can fund:

* Equipment, project resources and running costs
* Volunteer expenses

**Who is the funding for:**

* you are a social action group or micro group locally rooted or actively working in the borough of Rochdale; ***and***
* you are a member of Action Together CIO
* you have not already received a grant through the Seed Fund
* you are working towards becoming a formally constituted group and receiving support from a Community Development Worker

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 Seed Fund.

Groups are eligible to receive **one grant** through the Seed Fund. Following on from this grant, a Community Development Worker will support the group to constitute and apply for the Micro Grants where groups can apply for up to £1,000.

**Decision making process:**

To apply for this fund groups will be required to meet with a Community Development Worker to discuss their idea and answer some basic questions about their project.  The Community Development Worker will complete an application on the group’s behalf and submit this application for a grant decision.

**If your group is based in Rochdale or Pennines, please contact Julie Durrant:** **Julie.Durrant@actiontogether.org.uk**

**If your group is based in Heywood or Middleton, please contact Fi Oakes:** **Fi.Oakes@actiontogether.org.uk**

Grant decisions will be made by Action Together and will be assessed on the basis that your group and project meet the below criteria:

* **Compliant –** the group is in the process of setting up a group or prepared to do this**.**
* **Competent –** the group has a relationship with their Community Development Worker and we are confident that they have the skills and capacity to deliver the project
* **Comprehensive –** there is a need for the project and there is a plan in place on how the group will use the funding and what the money will go towards

Decisions will be made within two weeks and sent via email, unless we have to ask for further information or the group to redevelop aspects of the proposal.

Please note:

* This fund operates on a quarterly rolling programme and will be paused each quarter when available funding has been awarded.
* 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.

**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.**