**VCFSE Emergency Investment Fund for Community Anchor Organisations in Tameside and Glossop**

**Background**

Action Together has been keeping in touch with as many Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) groups as possible throughout the COVID 19 pandemic, to offer one to one support, raise awareness of help e.g. COVID emergency grants, COVID guidance and link groups to one another as well as the public sector to share insight and find solutions together e.g. Food Solutions network, BAME network etc.

Our local VCFSE sector ‘stepped up’ and has kept going throughout the pandemic to support the most marginalised in our communities from new mutual aid groups to established organisations, and the hundreds of volunteers who have supported our responses.

One group of VCFSE organisations has been particularly key throughout the pandemic - we call these **Community Anchor Organisations**. These independent community led organisations are generally defined as delivering multiple services or activities with and on behalf of local people within:

• A defined locality – place, (usually neighbourhood level)

• A specialist area of expertise and/or

• Represent a particular community of identity.

These anchors are rooted in the local area and have been there for years. In Tameside they are usually small organisations that employ staff and work with volunteers from their local community to deliver their activities and run their organisation. We know they are struggling and have been for some time with shorter funding cycles, less grant monies available and an increased demand for their services.

We have conducted research with 34 of these groups to review their current situation and their future sustainability. Many have been forced to reduce their activities and some are at risk of folding.

As a result, we have agreed with local budget holders to support a finite number of these groups with the following crisis support fund. We are working with local system leaders to look at developing an approach to longer term investment and support for the VCFSE in Tameside.

**About this Fund**

The total amount available is £300,000. This funding is one off, ‘non-recurrent’ emergency investment of up to £50,000 to be spent within an agreed timescale. This fund is finite, please only apply if you need to and for what you need.

**What can it be spent on?**

This fund is to be spent on sustaining core activities. This can include all the costs associated with running your organisation, staffing, HR, rent and insurance etc, whatever will put your organisation back on an even keel. This grant **CANNOT** be held as reserves, it must be spent within a clear timeframe, and not held over multiple years.

**What we expect from groups that are funded through this grant**

Grant recipients **must** agree to work with Action together to develop a business plan and must release capacity at a high level to do this work. All elements of this work will be agreed with the group and tailored to your needs.

**Who can apply?**

We expect a high volume of applications for this grant, and difficult decisions will have to be made.

Groups that apply **must** be able to demonstrate:

* They are genuine community anchor organisations rooted in Tameside (see definition above).
* They are financially vulnerable in the next 6-12months.
* Their dissolution/reduction in activities would have a detrimental effect on the communities they serve.
* They are willing and able to engage in a development package to help with their sustainability.

**How do we apply?**

To apply fill in the attached application form and return to investments@actiontogether.org.uk

**How will decisions be made?**

Decisions will be made according to a scoring system relating to the questions on the application, groups may be asked to clarify their application before it is submitted to the panel.

A one-off funding panel will be created for this fund comprising commissioners and system leaders from the NHS and Local Authority, VCFSE group leaders either from Tameside (not applying) and or from Oldham and Rochdale.

Action Together will not be involved in the decision making so we can help groups present their best case. We will facilitate the panel and present the applications, carry out the due diligence and provide context for applications from our knowledge of groups. If you are not applying, but would be interested in being part of the panel, please get in touch with anna.hynes@actiontogether.org.uk

**VCFSE Emergency Investment Fund**

**Application Form**

**Section 1: About your organisation**

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| * 1. Contact details
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| Name of organisation: |  |
| Main contact: |  |
| Position in the group: |  |
| Contact address for the group: |  |
| Contact Tel: |  |
| E-mail: |  |
| Website: |  |
| Facebook: |  |
| Twitter:  |  |
| * 1. What is the legal / charitable status of your group?
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| [ ]  Charity[ ]  Company limited by guarantee Company number ……………….[ ]  Charitable Trust [ ]  Community Association [ ]  Community Interest Company Registered number ……………. [ ]  Constituted Group[ ]  Co-operative[ ]  Friends Society [ ]  Registered Charity Registered number ………………. [ ]  Charitable Incorporated Organisation [ ]  Not Constituted [ ]  Social Enterprise  |

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| 1.3 Timescales can you commit to have spent this grant within 12months of receipt? |
| **Start date: End date:** |
| **Will you be able to commit capacity to working with Action Together to develop a business plan?** |
| **Yes****No** |

**Section 2: Details**

**2.1 How does you group’s constitution and activities meet the definition of a local Community Anchor as set out above? What makes your organisation unique and why is it needed?**

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| Max 500 words |

**2.2 Please give an overview of why you need this investment, and what you will do with it over the next 6-12-months. What has led to you being in this position?**

**Please bear in mind, we are not asking for additional activity, or outcomes – we are looking for how this funding will help you to continue to deliver in the borough.**

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| Max 500 words |

**2.3. What is the likely impact to your organisation if you do not receive this funding?**

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| Max 200 words |

**2.4. What is the likely impact on the people you work with if you do not receive this funding – what gap would your organisation leave?**

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| Max 300 words |

**2.5. Are you applying for funding elsewhere? What impact will this have on your proposed spend here? Please give details of how much, what for and when you expect to hear back.**

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| Max 300 words |

**2.6. What are the main issues facing the sustainability of your group over the next 12 months please score these in order of risk: High, medium or low**

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| Issue | Risk | Details |
| Financial Pressure |  |  |
| Capacity to meet demand |  |  |
| Ability/capacity to plan and develop your organisation |  |  |
| Leadership – from your Board/Committee |  |  |
| Other – please state |  |  |

If you wish to give more detail, please do so here:

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**Section 3: Financials**

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| **3.1 Please provide a detailed breakdown of how you will spend the grant** |
| **Budget heading** (e.g., Equipment, salary, etc) | **Breakdown of costs**(how have you worked out your costings?) | **Amount requested £** |
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|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Total**  |  |
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**Section 4: Final questions**

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| **Does anyone on your management committee / board have a prior connection, affiliation or interest in Action Together? E.g., employee, board member, affiliate. Yes / No** **If yes, please state relationship:** |
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| **Have you applied to Action Together for funding previously? Yes / No** **If yes, please state which fund:** |
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| **Have you carried out a Covid-19 secure risk assessment for all of the aspects of your project/activity? You will need to submit all risk assessments along with your application, where applicable. Yes / No**  |
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**Section 5: Check list**

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| **Required supporting information** | **Please tick** |
| Governing document (constitution / terms of reference) that has been signed by two or more members |  |
| Bank account in organisation’s name with at least two unrelated signatories (we will require a copy of a bank statement) |  |
| Insurance - public liability and employers’ liability if you employ staff |  |
| Safeguarding policy (if applicable) |  |
| Covid-19 secure risk assessment (if applicable) |  |