**Oldham Community Champions Fund Small Grants Programme**

**(Up to £5,000) – Guidance Notes**

Oldham Council has been awarded funding from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government’s (MHCLG) Community Champions Programme.

MHCLG’s stated purpose of the funding is ‘to support people shown to be most at risk from Coronavirus (COVID-19) including those from an ethnic minority background, disabled people and others to follow safer behaviours and reduce the impact of the virus on themselves and those around them’.

**Aims & Objectives**

The aims in Oldham for this funding are to support those communities most at risk from Coronavirus:

* South Asian communities,
* Roma community,
* African communities,
* people with learning disabilities and autism,
* people with sensory disabilities and any others identified through data and insight gathering during the course of this work.

Small grants will be awarded to enable community groups / organisations to support Team Oldham to deliver it’s Covid-19 community engagement strategy within communities most at risk from Covid-19.

VCFSE groups have trusted relationships within their communities and a deep understanding of the issues that impact community members. By engaging with communities around increasing virus rates, changes to national and local guidance, health protection and infection control messages, promotion and information around vaccination and testing and the local support offer, those facing inequalities and at most risk from coronavirus, will be better informed and supported.

An important objective of Community Champions is to capture and understand insight from the communities at most risk from Covid-19 about their experiences of living through the pandemic, in order that Oldham’s Covid response and recovery strategy is informed and shaped to mitigate the impact of inequalities for those most at risk.

**What can the funding be used for?**

The grant funding can be used by the group / organisation as needed to support their capacity but must be used for community benefit and / or in line with the group or organisation’s charitable objectives.

In agreeing to receive a Community Champions grant the group or organisation will agree to do at least one of the following activities:

* Give specific support to community engagement with your beneficiaries via your group or organisation’s engagement channels, this could be on your facebook page, in your facebook or WhatsApp groups.
* Undertake Covid Community Champions training with your staff and volunteers
* Provide Covid community conversations either by telephone/online or in person as your activities start to re-open with your beneficiaries,
* Support the capacity of Oldham Council’s doorstep engagement and testing teams with staff or volunteers,
* Support local testing sites with engagement staff or volunteers,
* Support local vaccination sites with engagement staff or volunteers,
* Provide a community base for the door-step engagement and testing teams,
* Promote the Oldham Council / CCG communications work by delivering flyers or sharing the suite of digital comms messages via your social media channels.

This grant funding and the agreed support by your group / organisation is provided for the period until 31 December 2021.

**Who is the funding for?**

You can apply for a grant up to:

* **£5,000** if you are:
	+ a voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise (VCFSE) group working in the borough of Oldham with the communities most at risk (as described above) ***and***
	+ a member or are becoming a member of Action Together CIO ***and***
	+ you are formally constituted.
* **£500** if you are involved in informal social action or mutual aid activity.
	+ mutual aid is the term we use to describe people giving each other needed support in communities.
	+ social action is the term we use to describe people coming together (physically or remotely) to help solve the problems that are important in their communities.

**Please Note:**

* Any activity undertaken with this grant funding must comply with government guidance on helping safely [*how to help safely government guidance*](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-how-to-help-safely--2/coronavirus-how-to-help-safely)
* You may only apply once to this fund.
* In order to receive Community Champions Funding, any outstanding monitoring information required by us, relating to other grant funding must have been completed.

**If you are successful…**

For the purpose of understanding the impact of Community Champions funding, successful applicants will be asked to provide a short report to Action Together when requested about their support to the Covid19 community engagement strategy. Groups and organisations will also be asked to:

* Participate in training about the different elements of Covid-19
* Contribute to the [Community Insight Tracker](https://online1.snapsurveys.com/s/tsrbog) to capture insight from their engagement activities, which can inform the Team Oldham engagement strategy to understand what matters most to our communities in Oldham regarding Covid 19. What are you hearing on the ground? What response might be helpful? [This form](https://online1.snapsurveys.com/s/tsrbog) is to collect any insights, anecdotes, quotes and feedback from people in Oldham, from community conversations and activities. It will form a library of evidence which can be used by Team Oldham across our work, to amplify the voice of our members and the communities they represent, to better inform support we can provide and decisions taken within each area of our work.
* Participate in the Community Engagement Network, an online regular network meeting space.

**Completing the application form**

* Please ensure that **ALL** boxes on this form are completed.
* Submit your application online to grants@actiontogether.org.uk
* Eligible applications will be considered and awarded by representatives from the Oldham Community Champions Steering Group, which meets fortnightly. We aim to notify you of the outcome by email within 2 working-days of the steering Group Meetings.

If you have any queries about the application process or would like support to complete the application form, please contact a member of the Oldham Community Development team on grants@actiontogether.org.uk or 0161 339 2345.