



Volunteer Celebration Fund 2026

Guidance Notes

About this grant

Volunteers' Week, 1-7 June, is a time to say thank you for the fantastic contribution volunteers make. During another difficult year, people from all walks of life have taken the time to volunteer and made a huge difference to people and their communities.

Action Together is inviting local VCFSE groups across Oldham, Rochdale and Tameside to apply for one of our Volunteer Celebration Fund grants to support an activity during 2026.

Background

Volunteers' Week, 1-7 June, is a time to say thank you for the fantastic contribution volunteers make. During another difficult year, people from all walks of life have taken the time to volunteer and made a huge difference to people and their communities.

Action Together is inviting local VCFSE groups across Oldham, Rochdale and Tameside to apply for one of our Volunteer Celebration Fund grants to support an activity during 2026.

Our [Volunteering Strategy](#) sets out our 'Vision for Volunteering' across each of our boroughs. A key strand of the Strategy is focused on Awareness & Appreciation; ensuring that the impact of volunteers is recognised, and that the public is aware of the volunteering opportunities available to them and how they can get involved.

Through the Volunteer Celebration Fund, we hope to give groups the opportunity to say thank you to their volunteers, recognising the importance of their contribution and commitment. The fund may also be an opportunity for groups to focus on recruitment of new volunteers, and in particular to consider how they might look to diversify their team of volunteers by engaging with underrepresented communities.

When thanking your volunteers, take a moment to remember each and every one of them. From trustees and campaigners to carers and fundraisers, this is a great time to think about the fantastic contribution all your volunteers make.

It's also a chance to think about what volunteering means to you. How can you celebrate people from every walk of life who are getting involved in volunteering? It might also be an opportunity to recruit new volunteers within your organisation.

What can the funding be used for?

Grants of up to **£500** are available for events and activities that include one or more of the following priorities:

- **Recruit**
Involving new volunteers to help run your group or support your organisation, which are inclusive and flexible to meet the diverse communities across Oldham, Rochdale and Tameside.
- **Retain**
Creating opportunities for your volunteers to feel connected, valued and supported.
- **Recognise**
Celebrating your volunteers, their achievements, and the difference they make within communities across Oldham, Rochdale and Tameside – particularly during the Cost-of-Living crisis.

Key Dates

Deadline for applications:
Tuesday 5 May TBC

- **Deadline for applications:** The application window will be open for two weeks from Tuesday, 21 April 2025, to Tuesday, 5 May 2025. Following this, the fund will close temporarily to allow for a full review of all applications submitted. Should any funding remain unallocated, the fund may be reopened.
- **Project length** – Projects must be completed by no later than **31 December 2026**.



Who is the funding for?

You can apply for a grant for:



- Up to **£500** if you are:
 - a voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise (VCFSE) group locally rooted or actively working in the borough of Oldham, Rochdale or Tameside; **and**
 - a member of Action Together (you can register for free to become a member [here](#)) **and**
 - you are formally constituted
- Up to **£200** if you do not have a constitution but you are involved in informal social action or mutual aid activity in Oldham, Rochdale or Tameside.
 - 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:

- You **may apply** for this grant if you applied and were successful in the last round in 2025; however, the panel will give priority to groups that did not receive funding in that round when making a decision.
- You may apply for the 2026 Volunteer Celebration Fund **once** only.
- To receive this funding, any outstanding monitoring information required by us, relating to other grant funding, must have been completed.

What can you spend the money on?

We CAN fund:

Only the items outlined below are eligible for funding:

- Venue hire
- Refreshments
- Marketing and publicity
- T-shirts and other merchandise
- Entertainment/activity costs
- Awards and Certificates



As a general guide, we suggest that total funding requested per volunteer supported does not exceed **£30 per person**.

What can't you spend the money on?

We CANNOT fund:

Direct staffing costs & training costs are not eligible for funding. If you need support to find other sources of funding, please contact development@actiontogether.org.uk



Completing and sending the Application Form

- Please ensure that ALL parts of the application form are completed.
- We have not included word count limits in the application form as we want you to be able to tell us about your ideas without having to worry about the number of words you are using – as a general guide, however, we are only looking for a summary and 1 or 2 paragraphs for each answer should be enough for you to be able to tell us about your plans.
- If you are using an Artificial Intelligence (AI) Tool to help you to write your application, please be aware that, whilst it can be a very useful tool, it often produces generic and inaccurate content. Using AI can be a helpful starting point, but please review content that has been generated using AI to ensure that it reflects your organisation's unique experiences, skills and community and that it is accurate.

What happens after your application is submitted?

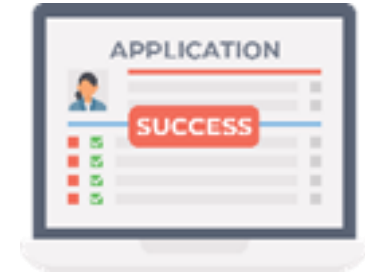
- Eligible applications will be considered, and recommendations made by an online panel.
- We aim to email you with the outcome within 10 working days of reviewing all applications received in the two-week window. In some cases, we may get in touch sooner to offer support or to clarify parts of your application before it goes to the panel.
- This fund operates on a rolling programme but will be paused when all available funding has been awarded.

If you are successful

We understand that planning a project in such challenging times is difficult and that your plans may need to change to respond to factors outside your control. If you feel at any point that you are unable to deliver your project as originally planned, please contact us so that we can discuss any changes that you may wish to make.

To help us understand the impact of this funding, successful applicants will:

- Be asked to provide a short report to us about your project when it has ended and tell the story of your project by providing copies of social media posts, photos, etc. We will provide a copy of sample questions at the start of your project so that you know what information we will be looking for.
- be offered further support from one of our community development workers or volunteering officers throughout and
- beyond this project; and
- be offered the opportunity to participate in networks of groups and organisations to be able to share expertise and experience.



If you are unsuccessful

You will be offered further support from one of our community development workers or volunteering officers and the funding team will be happy to discuss and give you feedback about your application.



Contact us

If you need help completing the application or [becoming a member](#) please contact your Community Development Worker.

If you are not sure who that is, please email development@actiontogether.org.uk or call 0161 339 2345 and ask to speak to a member of the Development Team for Oldham, Rochdale or Tameside.

If you have any questions about the **application process** or whether you are eligible to apply, please contact funding@actiontogether.org.uk or call 0161 339 2345 and ask to speak to a member of the Funding Team for Oldham, Rochdale or Tameside.

If you need any support around **working with volunteers**, please contact volunteering@actiontogether.org.uk



Submitting your application



Please email your completed application to: funding@actiontogether.org.uk