Oldham Best Start
Family Hubs

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Guidance Notes

Small Grants up to £6,000

26 Oct 26

About this grant

The One Oldham Fund is a strategic single investment fund that uses pooled resources for the voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise (VCFSE) sector in Oldham.

This investment from Oldham Council will support the sector's resilience to enable VCFSE organisations that are locally rooted and active in Oldham contribute to the delivery of Oldham Council's plan for Oldham's Best Start Family Hubs.

Grants of up to **£6,000** are available to support community led projects that deliver family hubs services or activities at outreach sites aimed at families with children aged 0-3 or expectant families.

National Context

Best Start Family Hubs is a national initiative which looks to connect a range of services that support families at a universal and targeted level. Best Start Family Hubs are a place-based way of joining up locally in the planning and delivery of family services. They bring services together to improve access, improve the connections between families, professionals, services, and providers, and to put relationships at the heart of family support.

The Best Start Family Hubs' ambition is for every family to receive the support they need, when they need it; all families should have access to the information and tools they need to care for and interact positively with their babies and children, and to look after their own wellbeing.

Local Context

Oldham's Best Start Family Hubs overall goal is to transform children and families' services in a system-wide model that provides high-quality, holistic, and whole-family support services:

- for families from prior to conception, through the child's earliest years, through later childhood, up to the age of 19 (or 25 for young people with special educational needs and disabilities)
- in Oldham's 5 districts
- to increase access to services,
- to improve connections among services and practitioners, and
- to strengthen relationships within families and between them and professionals.

What can the funding be used for?

One of Oldham's Best Start Family Hubs Strategic Objectives is to strengthen the outreach network to allow families to access services in different locations by different partners; services can be delivered through different sites recognised by the community and close to them.

Grants of up to £6000 are available to support the above aim for community-led projects that deliver services or activities at outreach sites aimed at families with children aged 0-3 or expectant families:

- that are aimed at families, that are rarely heard (e.g. dads and male carers, LGBTIQA parent and carers) within a framework of:
  - reducing stigma associated with access to services,
  - informing and supporting families to access services,
  - supporting parents to become more involved in the lives of children aged 0-3 and their development,
  - promoting friendly and welcoming places and activities for families,
  - virtual socialising services
- that can be delivered in parks and community spaces,
- that are aimed at new and expectant parents less likely to use Family Hubs that are at times convenient to them to support families and reduce barriers associated with stigma; or
- for virtual spaces that enable new parents or carers to access virtual peer support.

Key Dates

Deadline for applications:
Monday 7 December 2026

- We will stop accepting applications at **12 noon on Monday 7 December 2026**
- Applicants will be shortlisted for a follow up visit from the Best Start Family Hubs Team by **11 December 2026** and visits will take place between 14 and 23 December 2026
- The panel aim to make decisions about which applications will be successful during the week commencing **11 January 2027**.
- Delivery of a funded activity must start no later than **26 February 2027** and projects may last for **up to one year**.



Who is the funding for?

You can apply for a grant of up to **£6,000** if you:



- are a voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise (VCFSE) group locally rooted or actively working in the borough of Oldham; *and*
- are a member of Action Together CIO (you can register for free to become a member here); *and*
- are formally constituted; *and*
- have at least three people on your board or committee who are not related; *and*
- have a bank account in your organisation's name requiring at least two unrelated signatories

Please note:

- You may not apply for a grant if you are an organisation that can pay profits to directors, shareholders or members.
- To receive this funding, any outstanding monitoring information required by us, relating to other grant funding must have been completed.
- Action Together is an accredited Living Wage Funder. This means we encourage organisations that employ staff to become an accredited Living Wage Employer.
- You may only apply for a One Oldham Fund Best Start Family Hubs Grant once for this round. You can apply if you have received funding in the previous round of the One Oldham Fund Family Hubs Grants.
- You may also go on to apply for other grants within our One Oldham Fund Programme.

What can you spend the money on?

	The costs of the proposed activity on a full cost recovery basis including:
We CAN fund:	• equipment • one-off events • staff costs • training costs • organisational running costs • transport • volunteer expenses • small refurbishment projects

What can't you spend the money on?

We CANNOT fund:	• contingency costs, loans, endowments or interest • paying someone to write your bid for you. • profit making or fundraising activities. • VAT you can reclaim. • statutory activities. • expenses that have already been incurred – retrospective costs. This list is not exhaustive, so if you are not sure please contact us (contact details below)

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 amount of words you are using – as a general guide however we are only looking for a brief summary and 2 or 3 paragraphs for each answer should be enough for you to be able to tell us about your plans.
- We are happy for you to send photos or short videos to accompany your application. If you wish to send a video, please contact funding@actiontogether.org.uk and we will discuss the easiest way for you to do this.
- We have thought carefully about the questions in the application and only ask for information that we need to know. Please read the questions carefully and only provide the information that we have asked for. Don't be tempted to add lots of other information about your organisation – if we need to know anything else we will contact you.
- 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 ben 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 shortlisted for a visit by the Best Start Family Hub Team by 11 December 2026. Visits will take place between 14 and 23 December 2026. The purpose of the visit will be to connect with your local Best Start Family Hub and gain an understanding of how to connect families accessing your activities to the Best Start Family Hubs, the services they offer and connect to other partners.
- It is expected that final recommendations will be made by an online panel which includes representatives of the Oldham Best Start Family Team during the week commencing 11 January 2027.



If you are successful

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

- be expected to make contact with and work with your closest Best Start Family Hub to promote and encourage participation in any funded activities. Contact details and branding information for your local Family Hubs will be provided to you.
- be offered further support from one of our community development workers throughout and beyond the project,
- be asked to provide a report and case study to Action Together at the end of their project. You will receive an example of the questions that we will be asking with your grant agreement so that you can plan how to capture the story of your project as soon as it starts; and
- be offered the opportunity to participate in networks of groups and organisations to be able to share expertise and experience.

If you do not already have an up-to-date Quality in Action Award from Action Together or have not yet worked through a Health Check with your community development worker you may be asked to work towards completing one with our support as a condition of your grant.

We also 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, then please contact us so that we can discuss any changes that you may wish to make

If you are unsuccessful



You will be offered further support from one of our community development workers and the funding team would be happy to discuss your application 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 Oldham Development Team.

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 Oldham Funding Team.



Submitting your application

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