

LEICESTERSHIRE AND RUTLAND COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

JULY 2026

AVAILABLE FUNDS

Making Local Life Better

Open all year round, Making Local Life Better does what it says on the tin! It supports locally run and managed groups across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland to make local lives better, with a focus on:

- Arts, Culture & Heritage
- Education, training, and employment
- Environment, wildlife, and biodiversity
- Equity, inclusion, and fairness
- Health (physical and mental) including social isolation, addiction issues and caring responsibilities
- Poverty and disadvantage, including homelessness, housing, food and fuel poverty, debt advice.
- Sport and recreation
- Stronger communities and cohesion, including refugee support

Although it should be noted that during the current economic climate projects focused on poverty & disadvantage, health, and inclusion are prioritised.

Grants up to £3,000

Assessment takes on average 12 weeks.

Next panel date due 10th November 2026.

OTHER SOURCES OF FUNDING OR SUPPORT

Leicestershire Communities Monthly Funding Bulletin

A useful and informative monthly bulletin of available funding opportunities across

Leicestershire: <https://www.leicestershirecommunities.org.uk/grants>

easyfundraising

Set up a free easyfundraising page for your organisation and 8,000 retailers will donate money to you when your supporters shop online with them – for free. It doesn't anything extra as the retailer pays the donation, not the shopper. Retailers include eBay, John Lewis, Tesco, Booking.com, M&S, Asda, Screwfix, Waitrose, Argos, Moonpig, Boots, Sainsbury's, trainline and thousands more.

Every 3 months, your organisation will receive the money your supporters have raised for you. As the funds you raise class as unrestricted, you can spend it on whatever you need.

easyfundraising enables people to give to your organisation without it coming directly out of their pockets. [Find out more.](#)

TOP TIPS

An applicant's approach to inclusion and how they remove barriers to participation is really important and strongly influences the recommendations of our grant panel. When responding to the question "Please explain your approach to equality, diversity and inclusion" it is important to share both your organisational policies but also the practical steps you take to include volunteers and participants.

Organisations don't need to engage all members of the community, some activities are purposefully targeted to meet the needs of different groups and as such barriers may look different – our panels bring a breadth of experience to recognise the different challenges faced by organisations across Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland.

In your response try to answer:

- What policies you have? How is practice monitored against policy commitments? How often they are reviewed?
- What experience or training do you or your team have?
- Who do you currently involve? How does this reflect the community you wish to work with?
- How you inform/reach volunteers and participants?
- How you remove physical or financial barriers to participation? This is particularly important for those organisations who charge a fee to participate in activities.
- How you support inclusion of those with additional support needs? What reasonable adjustments you make?

Here is an example of good response:

At xyz (organisation name removed), equality, diversity and inclusion are not only principles we endorse but practices we actively incorporate into our governance, programmes, and culture. As a community interest company based in Leicester, a city renowned for its rich diversity, we recognise that our effectiveness relies on our ability to reflect, respect, and respond to the diverse experiences of the communities we serve.

Our governance structure already demonstrates this commitment. The Board of Directors is made up of individuals from different ethnic backgrounds, including Black, White and Asian communities, ensuring that lived experience and cultural awareness inform our leadership and decision-making. We also value gender balance within our governance: our current ratio is three female directors to two male advisory committee members, which reflects our aim to ensure that women's voices and leadership are visible at the highest level. This combination of ethnic and gender diversity ensures that xyz is guided by perspectives that mirror those of our service users.

Our volunteers also reflect Leicester's diversity, with members from Black and Asian backgrounds. This diversity improves our ability to connect with communities that might feel left out from mainstream services. Volunteers are regarded as equal partners in our mission, and we foster a culture where everyone's contribution is appreciated and respected.

In practice, EDI guides how we design and deliver our activities. All sessions are co-designed with community members to ensure they are inclusive, culturally sensitive, and accessible. Our August 2025 menopause and menstrual hygiene awareness session is a practical example: we established a safe environment where women from diverse backgrounds felt able to speak openly about subjects often stigmatised. This demonstrates how we translate our values into real, lived practice by combining health education with an inclusive, respectful setting.

As a young organisation, we are also mindful of the need to strengthen our approach as we grow. We comply with equality legislation and will continue to review our policies to ensure accessibility and fairness are embedded throughout our governance and delivery. With future funding, we plan to expand staff and volunteer training on equality, unconscious bias, and inclusive practice, while strengthening our recruitment processes to ensure opportunities remain fair and non-discriminatory.

Our goal is to establish an organisation free from discrimination that values the dignity of all participants and reflects Leicester's diversity within its leadership and workforce. In doing so, we will not only meet national standards but also set an example of best practice locally.

In conclusion, xyz CIC considers diversity a strength and inclusion a responsibility. With our diverse board, gender-balanced management, and ethnically varied volunteers, we are creating an organisation where fairness, respect, and representation are central to every decision and activity.

FIND MORE INFORMATION [HERE](#)

SWEF Enterprise Fund

Open all year round, targeted support to young people aged 18-30 years who are looking to set up or develop their own business. Funding can support training, equipment, new materials and products.

Grants from £500-£2,000.

Assessment takes on average 2 weeks.

CASE STUDY

Grantee: Leicestershire Action for Mental Health Project (LAMP)

Donor: John Salmon Fund

Grant awarded: £3,000

The grant funded outreach across three community locations in Leicester and Leicestershire, providing advocacy, signposting, and mental wellbeing support to those who might not otherwise seek help. Over 12 months, the service helped individuals access support, navigate services, and improve their wellbeing.

As a result, people who initially felt unaware of their rights and disconnected from support became more confident, informed, and able to advocate for themselves. Beneficiaries reported feeling heard, more connected to their communities, and more hopeful about their future.

Q&A

Each fund managed by the Community Foundation will have tailored grant guidance documents available at <https://www.llrcommunityfoundation.org.uk/our-grants/apply-for-a-grant/>

Responses to questions below relate to the Community Foundations flagship Making Local Life Better programme.

"When will decisions be made?"

The making Local Life Better panel meets 4 times a year and panel recommendations are communicated immediately after their meetings. In most cases it takes 12 weeks to complete an assessment and prepare papers for panel meetings – so all applicants are advised to submit their application at least 3 months, ideally more, before they require the funding to begin.

"How soon can projects start after approval?"

Once a donor has agreed to fund an application the Grants Team will contact you and send you a Grant Agreement for review and signing. As soon as an applicant returns a signed Grant Agreement activity can begin.

The Community Foundation typically pays out grant funds within 10 days of receiving a signed Grant Agreement from successful applicants.

"Can funding be extended if the project is delayed?"

Life doesn't always go to plan, if you need to make changes to your funded activity due to changing circumstances – simply email grants@llrcommunityfoundation.org.uk

In most cases we will agree to amendments, as long as the activity continues to benefit the community identified in the original application.