Celebrating Communities small grants fund

Application guidance

Version 1
September 2021

Contents

About the Celebrating Communities small grants fund

Birmingham City Council has made £2m of grant funding available for Birmingham community and voluntary groups to celebrate the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games. This could be through cultural events, sports and recreational activities, street parties, picnics or other community events.

The council's aim is to get people engaged in and excited about the Games, celebrating our local communities and our city's links to the Commonwealth.

Themes

Celebrating Communities small grants are available for projects under one of three themes:

- Getting Active

- Ready, Steady, Fun

- Celebrating Culture.

Allocation by Birmingham ward

A share of the total fund has been allocated to each of Birmingham's 69 wards. Decisions about which projects are offered grants will be made at a project selection meeting in each ward.

Grant amounts

Grants are available of between:

- £100 and £1,000

- £1,001 and £5,000

- £5,001 and over (up to a maximum of £10,000).

Eligibility to apply

Celebrating Communities grants are for Birmingham-based community and voluntary groups, charities, social enterprises, schools and other not-for-profit organisations (see page 12 for full details). The grants are not open to individuals or private businesses.

Deadline for applications

Applications for Round 2 of the funding will be accepted between 1 October and 30 November 2021. Round 1 has already closed.

Application support sessions

Grant briefing and support sessions are available on various dates in September, October and November 2021.

You can sign up at Eventbrite:

Grants briefing sessions
www.bit.ly/grantbriefing

'Start your form' sessions
www.bit.ly/startyourform

These events are being run by Birmingham Community Matters and Locality who have been contracted by Birmingham City Council to provide application support to eligible applicants.

Themes

Birmingham City Council is looking to award grants to projects that help people harness the spirit of the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games.

Your project should seek to engage your local community in the Games, meet at least one of your ward priorities where possible (page 7), and meet one or more of the following themes:

Getting Active

Help people of all ages and abilities to get out and get active in Birmingham, participating in sports and recreational activities that improve their health and wellbeing.

Have a think about:

- Active mobility (increasing activity through walking and cycling)

- Community games and sports days (bringing your community together with sports activities – for example, a Commonwealth Games-themed sports day)

- Active streets and parks (enabling communities to be active and connected in their streets, parks and open spaces).

Ready, Steady, Fun

Get your local area 'Games ready' with community celebrations that develop active citizenship and reduce loneliness and social isolation.

You might consider clearing green spaces for your local community to enjoy, planting Commonwealth-themed flower displays, or making and displaying Commonwealth flags. The idea is to celebrate our communities' history and diversity and help people to connect with one other.

Celebrating Culture

Develop intergenerational cultural events and initiatives that bring people together and celebrate the culture, heritage and stories of Birmingham's

many communities.

It's time to increase everyone's pride in 'being a Brummie', sharing stories and experiences – including:

- Birmingham's place in the Commonwealth (making an honest acknowledgement of Birmingham's legacy)

- Birmingham's unheard histories.

Projects spanning more than one theme

It's great if your planned project covers more than one of these themes and/or meets more than one ward priority, but your application will not receive special consideration because of this.

Ward-based allocation

Celebrating Communities grants are being allocated by ward across Birmingham. There is a funding limit per ward, determined by various data including indices of multiple deprivation, population size, and number of councillors.

You should apply for funding for your project in the ward (or wards) where your proposed activities will take place. This should be indicated clearly on your application form.

This fund is geared towards local, ward-based community projects and activities, so is not suitable for city-wide programmes. See page 23 for details of possible alternative funding for bigger projects.

To find out which ward you're in, you can enter your postcode into **Birmingham City Council's ward checker** (**birmingham.gov.uk/wardlookup**).

Ward priorities and project selection meetings

The way that Celebrating Communities grants are being awarded is a little different to other grants. Birmingham City Council's Neighbourhood Development Support Unit officers will appraise initial applications to make sure they are eligible*. Applicants will then be put forward to a ward-based project selection meeting. At the meeting, you will be asked to present your idea to attendees (including ward councillors, residents and other local stakeholders). Attendees will vote on the projects they wish to be funded in the ward.

Therefore, it's vital to make your Celebrating Communities project or activity fit in with your ward's priorities. You can find **ward plans and priorities at the Birmingham City Council website** (**www.bit.ly/wardplans**).

Birmingham Community Matters and Locality have also compiled ward packs for each ward that include key information on ward priorities, local councillor contact details and other local community activity. You can view this in a **public folder here** (**www.bit.ly/wardpacks**).

*Some applications may also need a little strengthening at this stage. If

this applies to yours, you will be contacted directly by Birmingham Community Matters with an offer of further support.

Wards without ward plans

A few Birmingham wards do not have ward plans yet. If this applies to your ward, you obviously won't be able to state how your project fits in with ward priorities. You won't be penalised for this – don't worry. Instead, it's **extra important** that you focus on how your project will help local citizens get the maximum benefit from the Commonwealth Games.

Ward FAQs

Can a project span several wards?

Potentially, yes. But do consider the fact that projects will be agreed at a ward-based project selection meeting via a voting process. You are encouraged to apply within your ward of interest (or the one in which your group is based or where the activity will take place) – unless you are known in two or more wards and have a track record of delivering cross-ward.

If you wish to apply in more than one ward, you MUST demonstrate that clearly on your application form.

Grant amounts

Grants are available of between:

- £100 and £1,000

- £1,001 and £5,000

- £5,001 and £10,000.

Please note that each Birmingham ward has a funding limit. Birmingham City Council wants the funding to benefit as many people as possible in each ward. Therefore it is important to consider the funding limit for your ward when thinking about the activities you would like to run.

You can find out the funding amount that has been allocated to each ward in this public folder: **Celebrating Communities ward funding allocations** (**www.bit.ly/wardallocations**).

These amounts will soon be updated to reflect the small grants that were awarded in Round 1.

A Celebrating Communities grant can fund:

- Core costs/essential running costs

- Ongoing activity costs

- One-off initiatives

- Capital costs – such as equipment.

A Celebrating Communities grant cannot fund:

- Projects which have already taken place or will have taken place before the grant start date

- Items purchased prior to or during a grant application

- Unspecified expenditure for general appeals or fundraising events/activities

- Requests to build reserves

- Statutory obligations

- Political activities.

For projects too big to be covered by a Celebrating Communities grant, or for projects that would take up a large amount of a ward's allocation, you may wish to seek additional or match funding. See page 23 for ideas.

Grant amount FAQs

Our project has lots of different parts. Can we present it in our application as a 'package' and seek funding for all or part(s) of it?

Yes you can. It makes good sense in the finance section of your application to 'itemise' your project elements against their costs to maximise the possibility of all or part of your project being funded.

Is there a potential for the application to be granted but not for the amount requested? (For example – could an applicant request £500 but have only £250 approved?)

This is possible. It might be that, following discussion at the ward-based project selection meeting, people decide that certain itemised elements of your project are more in line with ward priorities and Celebrating Communities themes than others.

This scenario may also happen where ward funding allocation is oversubscribed (that is – more applications than funding), in order to maximise the number of projects that can receive funding.

Eligibility to apply

Your Birmingham organisation can apply for a Celebrating Communities grant if it is a:

- Voluntary-led organisation with charitable aims

- Registered charity or charitable incorporated organisation

- Social enterprise

- Community interest group / company

- Company limited by guarantee that has charitable aims

- School.

The fund is not open to:

- For-profit businesses

- Individuals

- Projects based outside of Birmingham

- National programmes without a specific benefit to Birmingham

To be eligible your organisation should have:

- A management committee (the people who are responsible and make decisions) of a minimum of three unrelated people

- A signed constitution (or set of rules)

- A bank account in the name of your group which requires two signatories / dual authorisation (although see below for information if your group is a small or new group which is not constituted)

- A financial policy (a document which lays out how you manage money and payments).

If you work with children, young people or vulnerable adults you must have a safeguarding policy.

Small or new groups which are not constituted

Small and new groups which are not constituted may apply under the umbrella of another constituted, sponsor organisation, who will act as the fund holder for the grant.

You will need a statement from this organisation saying that they agree to act as a sponsor for your funding application.

Your sponsor could be a local community organisation, charity, CIC or school. The sponsor organisation must have a formal constitution and a community or charity bank account with at least two unrelated signatories.

The sponsor organisation will be able to purchase items or services on your group or collective's behalf and, if requested, prepare a funding report which details the spend of the grant.

If you have a sponsor organisation which has agreed to act as fund holder, your group does not need a bank account to apply to the fund.

Eligibility FAQs

Our organisation is awaiting registration as a CIC or CIO. Can we still apply for the grant?

Yes, you can apply for the grant while awaiting registration, but your organisation will need to have governance arrangements in place (that is: registered chair, secretary and board members, and an existing organisational bank account) before any grant payment can be transferred.

If you are not eligible to apply for a Celebrating Communities grant, see page 23 for other possible sources of funding.

If you're not sure whether your organisation can be funded, please contact Birmingham City Council's Neighbourhood Development Support Unit via **NDSU@birmingham.gov.uk**.

Planning your project and submitting your application

When planning your project, it will be useful for you to read this document called **'Developing your community project'** (**www.bit.ly/developingproject**).

Birmingham City Council recommends you also attend a grants briefing session with Birmingham Community Matters and Locality. These are available on various dates in September, October and November 2021:

Grants briefing sessions
www.bit.ly/grantbriefing

'Start your form' sessions
www.bit.ly/startyourform

Video recordings of these sessions will be shared at **www.birminghamcommunitymatters.org.uk**

and on the **YouTube channel** from Birmingham City Council's Neighbourhood Development Support Unit (**www.bit.ly/NDSUYouTube**).

In your application, you should explain how your proposed project or activity:

- Involves local people

- Links to the Commonwealth and/or the Commonwealth Games

- Supports your local ward plan, if relevant

  and

- Helps Birmingham citizens get the maximum benefit from the Commonwealth Games.

You will need to confirm that you will comply with the appropriate Covid regulations or guidelines and you should give details of how you will make sure that your events are Covid-safe.

There are three different application forms. Make sure you complete the one relating to the amount you wish to apply for:

- Up to £1000

- £1001 - £5000

- £5001+

You will find the application forms in Word document form at **www.birminghamcommunitymatters.org.uk/cc/**.

You can also apply via the online portal at **www.birmingham.gov.uk/celebratingcommunities**.

The application questions vary between each different application form, but they cover:

- The name of your group/project and ward

- Which theme(s) applies/apply to your project

- About your project/activity idea

- How your project/activity celebrates the Commonwealth Games coming to Birmingham

- The total cost and what you will be spending the grant on.

For £1001+ applications:

- How your project/activity aligns with your ward priorities and funding criteria

- How you will deliver your project/activity

- How will you know you've been successful? What will be the impact of the project?

- Do you have plans for the continuation of the project? Think about its legacy

- How have/will you bring people together in your local community and why is this project/activity a good way of doing that?

- Any external/match funding?

- Quotes for capital projects (sourced through **FindItInBirmingham** – **www.finditinbirmingham.com**).

For £5001+ applications:

It is important to think about the legacy of the activities you want funded and how they might be continued after the end of the project.

Will your project mean a new walking group is formed, a piece of community art is now on display, a green space is transformed, or lasting links are forged between neighbours?

To secure larger sums, a good application will detail how this activity will continue after the project and the project funding finishes. This may be through further funding, partnerships, volunteering and so on.

Planning FAQs

We want to talk to our local councillor about our Celebrating Communities project idea. How do we contact them?

You can find out who your councillors are and how to contact them via Birmingham City Council's **'Who's my Councillor?' page** (**birmingham.gov.uk/councillors/search**).

We would like to seek funding to provide street furniture (for example, benches) as part of our application. How much knowledge should we have about the process before we apply?

Please make your local councillor aware of your intention and, with their support, seek guidance from your local highways engineer and – if relevant – parks manager, and so on.

Here are the **contact details of Birmingham's highways engineers** (**www.bit.ly/highwayscontact**).

Is there a list of preferred suppliers to provide services at the events/activities (for example, photographers)?
No there isn't. The onus is on applicants to apply for funding and then to contract/commission any suppliers independently.

Will local people be paid for their professional services relating to the events/activities (such as photographers)?
The onus is on applicants to cover payments for project costs such as photography, supplies, services and so on.

Please confirm the closing date for applications in Round 2?
The closing date for Round 2 applications is Tuesday 30 November.

Planning resources

> Map of Birmingham with contact details of Birmingham's highways engineers (**www.bit.ly/highwayscontact**).

Appraisal criteria and next stages

Your initial application will be assessed by officers from Birmingham City Council's Neighbourhood Development Support Unit, who will be asking:

- Does the project/activity meet one of the themes?

- Does it meet ward priorities and/or does it help citizens get maximum impact from the Commonwealth Games? How?

- Timescales – are they realistic and achievable?

- Is the budget appropriate and does it represent value for money?

- What is the potential for sustainability and legacy (for larger projects of £5000 and above)?

If your initial application is accepted, you will be invited to a ward-based project selection meeting. There you will present your project to attendees (comprised of ward councillors, residents and other local stakeholders), who will vote on which projects are funded. If people can't attend, they can register to vote by email.

If your initial application needs strengthening, you may first be referred to Birmingham Community Matters for further application guidance.

Voting will be facilitated by a neutral facilitator, using either a show of hands, the virtual meeting chat box, or a digital voting poll.

Appraisal FAQs

We would like some support with pitching our project at the ward-based project selection meeting stage. Is there any help available?

Yes. Birmingham Community Matters is working with Locality to host a session called 'Creating and presenting your funding pitch', available on several dates. If your initial application is successful you will be contacted about attending this session.

If our application is successful, when will we receive payment to deliver our project?

Birmingham City Council's Neighbourhood Development Support Unit (NDSU) does not want community groups to be out of pocket in delivering Celebrating Communities projects. Therefore the council will endeavour to pay grants in full to successful applicants as soon as possible (once all necessary paperwork has been submitted, and applicants have been set up as council vendors), at the start of the project.

How will projects be monitored and evaluated?

As part of the monitoring and evaluation of your project you will need to submit a paper-based report on outputs. The NDSU team would like to see the impact your project has via a range of methods – including photos, videos and visits.

Successful applicants may be given a smartphone app for capturing photos, videos, quotes and ratings from participants. You'll get further information and support with this if your application is successful.

Timeline

Activity	Dates
Funding information and application packs will be available. Before this date please see **www.birminghamcommunitymatters.org.uk/cc** for the latest information	Friday 1 October 2021
Grants briefing sessions and 'Start your form' sessions are taking place. You can sign up at Eventbrite: **Grants briefing sessions** **www.bit.ly/grantbriefing** **'Start your form' sessions** **www.bit.ly/startyourform**	End of September to end of November 2021
Closing date for submission of funding applications	11.59pm on Tuesday 30 November 2021
Birmingham City Council will carry out internal due diligence processes and a review of funding applications. Applicants that pass this stage will be asked to submit a written or video summary/overview of their project. Applicants with applications that require strengthening will be invited to access support. Applicants will be able to access support to prepare their presentation for the ward-based project selection meetings.	February 2022
Facilitated ward-based project selection meetings will take place, where applicants will get a chance to talk about their proposal to the community and answer	February to March 2022

questions. They will then leave the room and the community will vote on which projects will be taken forward for funding	
Delegated officers from Birmingham City Council will make approvals on the projects to receive funding	February/March 2022
Confirmation letters and COGA (conditions of grant aid) forms will be sent to successful applicants	February/March 2022
Projects commence	March/April 2022
All funding must be committed	August 2022

Seeking part funding, further funding or alternative funding

If you are not eligible to apply for a Celebrating Communities grant, or the project you wish to run is bigger than the scope of a Celebrating Communities grant, there may be other/additional grants you could apply for.

You must not apply to two or more grant programmes for the same costs for the same activity. This is called double funding.

Creative City Grants

Birmingham City Council is running another fund called Creative City Grants (formerly Creative Communities), encouraging arts-led activity surrounding the Birmingham Commonwealth Games.

Find out more at **www.birmingham2022.com/festival/creativecitygrants/**.

You can apply to both the Creative City grants programme and the Celebrating Communities grants programme to support your creative project.

Other places to find funding

The NDSU team prepares a weekly **External Funding Bulletin** which you may find useful (**www.bit.ly/fundingbulletin**).

If your group's income is less than £30,000 per annum you can use **My Funding Central** (**www.myfundingcentral.co.uk**) to search for other grant opportunities. If your group's income exceeds this, you can still access the database but there is a cost to do so.

Birmingham-based Get Grants hosts a **Funding Finder** (**www.getgrants.org.uk/funding-finder**) on its website. It is also worth signing up to **Get Grants' monthly newsletter** (**www.getgrants.org.uk/newsletter**) which contains details of grants and trust funds.

Do also have a look at **Awards for All England** from the National Lottery (**www.bit.ly/awardsforallengland**)

Business opportunities

If you would like to look for business opportunities stemming from the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games, you can register for free at **FindItInBirmingham's business portal** (**commonwealthgames.finditinbirmingham.com**).

Further help and information

Here is a **short animated video** about the Celebrating Communities grants fund (**www.bit.ly/.ccfundvideo**).

See **www.birminghamcommunitymatters.org.uk/ccfaqs** for frequently asked questions. This will be regularly updated over the next few months.

If you're still unsure about something, please contact **NDSU@birmingham.gov.uk**.

If you have communication support needs that make completing an application form difficult or impossible, please contact **ccsupport@birminghamcommunitymatters.org.uk**. Birmingham Community Matters will find alternative ways for you to tell Birmingham City Council about your idea.

Application checklist

Before you submit your application for a Celebrating Communities grant, have you … ?

Prepared

☐ Checked the amount available in the ward in which you are applying and made sure that your budget is appropriate and represents good value for money

☐ Planned for your project to start on or later than Tuesday 1 March 2022

☐ Made sure that your timescales for delivering your project are achievable and realistic

☐ Planned for your project to be completed by Wednesday 31 August 2022.

Checked your eligibility

☐ Checked your organisation's eligibility to apply (or supplied the necessary paperwork from your sponsor organisation, if applicable)

☐ Filled in the correct application form for the grant amount you are applying for, being sure to complete every section and making it coherent and clear

☐ Ensured that your proposed project meets one or more of the Celebrating Communities themes and will help people to celebrate the Commonwealth Games coming to Birmingham

☐ Clearly indicated which ward or wards you wish to deliver your project in on your application form.

Included

Before you submit your application, please be sure that you have included:

□ Quotes for capital costs, if you are applying for a grant of more than £1000

□ A statement from your sponsor if your organisation is un-constituted / without a bank account

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Submitting your application

Submit your application to NDSU@Birmingham.gov.uk (preferred) or upload it online via
www.birmingham.gov.uk/celebratingcommunities.

Keep a copy of your application form for your reference (this is especially important if you are submitting your application through the online portal).