



Grants for capacity building support - guidance for applicants

Overview

The Co-op Foundation is looking to award 2 grants of up to £50,000 each, for capacity-building projects that will improve the effectiveness and sustainability of community-based organisations delivering environmental benefits.

Funding is available for work in Wales and parts of northern England. We aim to award one grant of up to £50,000 in each of these regions.

There is no fixed timeframe in which we expect the funds to be spent. We will ask you to propose the project timings that you think are most appropriate for work you would like to carry out.

You can apply for work that will take place within either or both of the following UK regions:

- Northern England - eligible areas include Yorkshire & the Humber, Lancashire, Greater Manchester, Merseyside, Cheshire, Staffordshire, Birmingham and the Black Country, Southern Cumbria
- Wales.

You don't need to work across the whole of these regions.

We will assess your application based on your ability to support community-based environmental organisations to achieve the following outcomes:

- Organisations are better able to deliver environmental benefits, and meet the needs of their community **effectively**
- Organisations have the skills and assets to be able to deliver environmental benefits, and meet community needs **sustainably**

In particular we will be looking for evidence of:

- Your experience of supporting community organisations that deliver environmental benefits
- A good knowledge of the environmental, community and voluntary sector in the region you are applying for.

We welcome applications from organisations working in partnership. We will expect one organisation to take overall responsibility for managing our funds and the arrangements with any other partners.



Foundation

Background

The Co-op Foundation is the Co-op's charity. We help disadvantaged communities to overcome their challenges by putting [co-operative values](#) into practice. We aim to stimulate and strengthen community action that connects and empowers people so they can work together to make things better.

One of our strategic goals is to invest in disadvantaged communities' capacity to overcome social, economic or environmental challenges. This includes making [interest-free loans and grants to help make community spaces more sustainable](#) by growing or developing trading activities to increase their long-term income. We prioritise support for organisations working in communities that face extra challenges.

Regional environmental funding

As part of our Community Spaces programme, we have some dedicated funding that is restricted for environmental purposes in northern England and Wales.

These are some of the projects that we have supported through these funds:

Hulme Community Garden Centre

Hulme Community Garden Centre sells organic plants and delivers gardening sessions for the local community. We're helping them refurbish and expand their growing and retail spaces, allowing them to trade on a larger scale. The extra income from sales will fund wellbeing gardening sessions for more vulnerable groups.

Heeley Trust

Heeley People's Park in Sheffield is managed for the benefit of the community, by local charity Heeley Trust. Co-op Foundation funding is being used to help develop a social enterprise which repairs and sells used bikes, using its profits to support the maintenance of the park.

Welcome to Our Woods

Welcome to our Woods, based in south Wales, manages woodlands to help trees and wildlife thrive. Our funding supports them to convert waste wood into sellable products like furniture and biomass on a much larger scale. This raises extra income, which helps them maintain more areas of woodlands sustainably, and provides jobs and volunteering opportunities for local people.

Capacity building support

Through our support for these projects we have seen that maintaining the environmental integrity of a space while also working towards financial sustainability can be very challenging for community organisations. We think that some community-led environmental organisations could benefit from extra support to deliver their work more effectively and sustainably. We hope to learn from the work that will be carried out with the 2 grants we are offering, and use this to inform our longer-term plans for capacity building support.

How to apply

Co-op Foundation is a working name of Co-operative Community Investment Foundation, a charity registered in England and Wales (1093028) and Scotland (SC048102)



Foundation

To apply for a grant, submit your expression of interest by 12pm on Wednesday 22 May 2019. If you are shortlisted, you will be invited to submit further information by Monday 19 June. You will be told the final outcome of your application their application in July.

If you have any questions about this funding, get in touch by emailing foundation@coop.co.uk.