

UKSPF Community Grants is a GMCA-funded programme to allow voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector groups and housing associations to launch local community projects to help disadvantaged, including unemployed, economically inactive people to take the next steps towards further education and inclusive employment through support with **digital skills, literacy, raising confidence, self-esteem, key skills and mental and physical health.**

There are two key strands for Community Grants:

Strand 2 – Progression Towards Inclusive Employment

Strand 2 closed in Jan 2024 and applications are currently being assessed.

Strand 1 – Essential Skills

Strand 1 was initially open in Dec 2023 and 5 VCSE sector organisations were successful in securing funding. Below is an outline of the successful Bolton projects.

There is **£69,000** of funding remaining of Strand 1 and WEA will be opening a second funding round to the VCSE sector and housing associations. The funding will open on **Fri 22nd March and close on Thu 18th April.** Details can be found here from 22nd March:

<https://www.wea.org.uk/greater-manchester-community-grants>

In Bolton projects could support, but not limited to, some of the key priorities groups below;

- Inspirational projects to inspire our NEET young people post-16
- Key communities e.g. deaf and hard of hearing community, adults and young people with SEND and minoritised ethnic groups
- Residents with poor mental and physical health

Projects are to be engaging and could be an extension of an existing VCSE or social housing offer that is working in your organisation or a new test and learn project. Some examples could be, but not limited to;

- Outdoor learning in wildlife settings / outdoor activities
- Creative activities, arts and crafts or media or drama
- Creative confidence building and raising self-esteem to support independent choices

- Activities to support residents who are functionally illiterate and have very low-level literacy skills in communities
- Testing out new skills activities to engage with residents who are resistant and/not confident to engage in essential digital skills provision

To consider:

- Funding decision will be near the end of April with projects to start on 1st May
- Payment schedule is 40% upfront with 30% half-way through and 30% after completion of paperwork (more detail available from WEA)
- WEA will meet with you before you start to set realistic outcomes and outputs
- Project funds to be spent by end March 2025 = 10 month project
- Organisations can apply for a total of £100K across the 2 strand

Please read the information from WEA carefully for more details.

Successful bids - Strand 1

VCSE Sector Organisation	Project Name	Project summary
The Flowhesion Foundation	Inspire	Inspire will engage low level literacy and IT levels and will engage participants to move them closer to education and training settings.
The Proud Trust	Proud Young Adults (PYA)	To prepare and support LGBT+ young adults for the future. Will draw on the National Youth Work curriculum and Skills for Life to engage and empower them to help them transition into adult life.
Adullam Social Enterprise	Bolton Bridges	Aims to reduce identified barriers for vulnerable residents who aren't engaging with mainstream services to progress in community life and work.
Stand Up Sisters	Supporting Women to Achieve their Ambitions Hopes and Dreams	Workshops aimed residents with trauma, health challenges and disabilities enabling them to develop skills, wellbeing and confidence. Courses are designed around their complex needs.
MHIST	Bounce Back to Work	Bounce Back to Work is a six-week participative course in how positive psychology can give a boost to your mental wellbeing and happiness.