

**The London
Community
Foundation**

M O P A C

MAYOR OF LONDON
OFFICE FOR POLICING AND CRIME

MOPAC VAWG Grassroots Fund 2027 - 2030

Prospectus

September 2026

Fund guidelines

About the fund

The London Community Foundation (LCF) is pleased to launch the third round of the Mayor's Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Grassroots Fund, delivered by LCF on behalf of the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) (hereafter referred to as 'the/this Fund'). This Fund is part of the Mayor's refreshed [Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls \(VAWG\) Strategy 2026-2029](#) and aligns with the vision to build a safer London for everyone. This vital fund is launched as continued incidents across the UK have highlighted the growing epidemic of VAWG and the need for more to be done to achieve the Mayor's ambition of eradicating VAWG. The Fund is informed by the commitment to ensure support is available for all victims and survivors of VAWG, including the most marginalised. The Mayor firmly recognises the need for specialist services for those with protected characteristics. Through delivery of this fund MOPAC continue to embed approaches that support an intersectional lens to equity, diversity and inclusion and that continue to champion the role of grassroots led by and for organisations.

The Fund builds on the success of the first two rounds of the MOPAC VAWG Grassroots Fund, which was initially launched in 2020 and has since supported 56,800 women and children by funding 57 specialist organisations, that have worked to end violence against women and girls through two-year grants of up to £100,000. For details of organisations funded through the VAWG Grassroots Fund so far and for further information on the background and development of the Fund, please visit londoncf.org.uk/grants/vawg-grassroots-fund.

This new fund will build on the original co-design and [Theory of Change](#), as well as the knowledge, strengths and learning from the last two rounds. It recognises the changing context in which VAWG specialist organisations are operating, including the lingering impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and cost of living crisis on services alongside emerging forms of violence and exploitation and the wider societal and political context in which VAWG is experienced and responded to. Black and minoritised women and

girls experiencing VAWG are disproportionately impacted, often facing barriers to accessing support. The cumulative impact on existing intersecting pressures have further compounded the structural inequalities affecting women and girls, particularly from minoritised and marginalised communities, and can create additional barriers to accessing safety, support and justice. This Fund supports specialist services for them – catering for under-served communities and ensuring an effective response to this impact and their intersecting needs.

All of this means the need to continue funding and supporting grassroots specialist VAWG service providers, particularly those led by and for Black women and girls and those led by and for women and girls from minority ethnic backgrounds, remains vital. The VAWG Grassroots Fund has been developed to respond to these issues through ringfenced funding.

The Fund will continue to support the development of a grassroots response to VAWG in the capital through a programme of funding for VAWG service delivery, accompanied with support for a co-designed capacity building programme, peer support and networking. Through a published independent evaluation, the Fund will continue efforts to further develop and deepen the understanding of the needs of Black and minoritised women and girls experiencing VAWG, and the crucial role that VAWG specialist grassroots organisations have in tackling violence against women and girls in London.

Fund objectives

The VAWG Grassroots Fund forms part of the Mayor of London's commitment to tackling VAWG and building a safer London for everyone. It will contribute to the delivery of the Mayor's commitments in the refreshed Mayor's Tackling VAWG Strategy [which you can read here](#). The Fund recognises the vital role that specialist grassroots organisations play in preventing VAWG, supporting survivors and responding to the diverse needs of women and girls across London.

The objectives of the VAWG Grassroots Fund are to:

- a) Support survivors to recover, gain independence and address the multiple issues they may face through sustained access to specialist services;
- b) Increase the accessibility of specialist grassroots VAWG services for women and girls among London's diverse communities who face barriers to accessing support, including women with no recourse to public funds for whom mainstream provision may not always be appropriate or safely accessible;
- c) Strengthen the reach of specialist grassroots VAWG services across London, that are responsive to communities of protected demographic groups at a grassroots level and can reach survivors across borough boundaries. Particularly where there are gaps in provision and a specialist service may not be commissioned locally due to low density of users;
- d) Support prevention and early intervention approaches that address the root causes of VAWG and stopping further harm and re-victimisation for survivors;
- e) Support VAWG grassroots organisations to deliver their specialised services, especially those impacted by systemic inequalities;
- f) Sustain effective interventions by supporting organisations that are facing challenges in continuing service delivery, including maintaining existing services, whilst supporting the stability of grassroots organisations;
- g) Strengthen the resilience of specialist grassroots VAWG organisations, supporting them to maintain and develop their services in the context of continual changing VAWG sector landscape and uncertain funding environment;
- h) Build the capacity of existing grassroots VAWG services to respond to changing needs and an evolving VAWG landscape;
- i) Facilitate the sharing of good practice across the funded cohort on supporting survivors to experience better outcomes;
- j) Strengthen funded organisations' capacity to monitor, evaluate and evidence the difference their work makes, while building a robust evidence base of the difference and impact of the Fund;
- k) Convene collaborative spaces for the funded cohort as a network of experts in services tackling VAWG to build overall sector capacity;

- l) Amplify the voices of led by and for, and specialist VAWG organisations to raise awareness of the survivor experiences of minoritised and marginalised communities;
- m) Highlight the value of specialist VAWG organisations by using collective insights to demonstrate their expertise, impact and need.

Key features of the fund

- £5,700,000 of grant funds are available over three years (February 2027 – January 2030)
 - The Fund will provide three-year grants of up to £150,000 (£50,000 per year) for individual organisations. Partnerships of up to three organisations can apply for three-year grants of up to £180,000 (£60,000 per year)
 - We expect between 49-69 grants to be awarded
 - There is no income threshold for the Fund however organisations with an annual income of less than £500,000 will be prioritised
- An allocation of £300,000 is allocated to the delivery of the capacity building programme, evaluation of the impact and achievements and a contribution to a dedicated expert Programme Manager. **This means the programme will also include:**
 - Co-designed capacity building support programme
 - Networking events and peer support across grantees
 - Grantee participation in the independent Fund evaluation
 - Strategic dissemination of insights and learning from across the funded cohort to inform wider sector learning and practice
 - Meet & Greet Event and end of Fund Showcase Event
 - Amplification of grantees' work through LCF communications channels
 - Dedicated Programme Manager providing relational grant management and support throughout the Fund

Fund priorities

The Fund will prioritise organisations which:

- Are led **by and for** the communities they serve, where the service user group is reflected in staffing, management and governance structures. **This means at least 80% of trustees and staff are from the protected characteristic the organisation aims to work with;**
- Have a **track record** of meeting the diverse needs of the following minoritised and marginalised service-users;
 - Black women and girls and women and girls from minority ethnic backgrounds
 - Women and girls with disabilities
 - Neuro-diverse women and girls

- LGBTQ+ women
- Young women and girls (under 25 years of age)
- Older women (over 55 years of age)
- women with no recourse to public funds (NRPF)
- women involved in prostitution
- women and girls involved in modern slavery and human trafficking
- A **minimum of 60%** of funding will be prioritised for grassroots, specialist organisations for which:
 - Ending VAWG is their organisation's priority
 - Can demonstrate they are led by and for black women and girls
 - Can demonstrate they are led by and for women and girls from minority ethnic backgrounds
- Up to a **maximum of 40%** of this funding will be awarded to grassroots organisations who are specialist organisations who provide ending VAWG services for other marginalised groups (see priority groups listed above).
- Can demonstrate deep **understanding** of their community need and context;
- Deliver services which are **co-designed** with survivors and delivered *with* survivors, not to or for;
- Can demonstrate a clear **need** for organisational investment and how this will strengthen service delivery, accessibility, reach, continuity and inclusivity of service user engagement;
- Recognise that VAWG is preventable and affects women and girls disproportionately due to unequal power relations (**gender-informed**);
- Deliver interventions that connect VAWG to wider **intersectional** inequalities including ethnicity, class, gender identity, age, disability, sexuality, religion, belief and immigration status which impact on experiences of violence and exploitation, as well as access to safety, support and justice;
- Demonstrate an understanding of and responsiveness to the impact of trauma, that emphasises physical, psychological and emotional safety for both organisations and survivors, and that creates opportunities for survivors to rebuild a sense of control and empowerment (**trauma-informed**);
- Demonstrate a commitment to collaboration, developing partnerships and active participation in the wider Fund programme.

About grassroots

LCF defines grassroots organisations as rooted in, and led by, the communities that they serve. In this context we mean communities of women and girls who may or may not live in the same local area but who are connected by their social identity and shared concerns, e.g. a community of disabled women or a network of black women and women from minority ethnic backgrounds who are survivors of sexual violence.

In line with this definition, we include grassroots organisations as:

- Specialist organisations addressing VAWG;

- Women's community organisations delivering services to address VAWG as a core aspect of their work; and, or
- Specialist community organisations (e.g. disability rights groups providing services that address VAWG as a core aspect of their work or organisations providing support for women involved in prostitution)

Preference will be given to organisations which are led by and are for communities experiencing inequity. **This means at least 80% of trustees and staff are from the protected characteristic the organisation aims to work with.**

Funding split

- A minimum of 60% of this funding will be prioritised for specialist grassroots VAWG organisations who can demonstrate they are **led by and for black women and girls, and women and girls from minority ethnic backgrounds.**
- Up to a maximum of 40% of this funding will be awarded to **grassroots organisations who are specialist VAWG community organisations who provide ending VAWG services for other marginalised communities** (see priority groups listed above).

This priority means that if your organisation is not a VAWG-specialist organisation led by and for black women and girls, and women and girls from minority ethnic backgrounds, there is likely to be higher competition for the available funds, i.e. a maximum of 40% can be awarded to specialist grassroots organisations. You should carefully consider this prior to making an application.

Location

Women and girls suffer violence regardless of borough boundaries; they live, study, work, socialise and travel across London and can experience violence at home, in educational institutions, workplaces and public spaces. Women and girls may also move across different localities as part of their survival and help-seeking strategies. Their movement can relate to immediate safety issues, such as fleeing a local area because of violence, as well as seeking and accessing support appropriate to their individual need.

Applications will be accepted from any London Borough, including City of London.

Organisations based outside of Greater London may be considered for funding, but only activity within London and for Londoners will be considered and a track record of delivering your services within London must be demonstrated.

MOPAC Victims Small Grants Fund

MOPAC is running two grant funds concurrently. Further information regarding the Victims Small Grants Fund, including eligibility and funding priorities, can be found here: [Victims Small Grants Fund](#)

During the application window, LCF can help organisations identify which fund is the best fit

for their service if they are unsure which fund to apply to. If you are unsure whether your proposed project and/or the expenditure requested meets the aims of the Fund, or whether you should apply to this Fund or the MOPAC Victims Small Grants Fund **please contact LCF prior to submitting your application** using the details at the end of this document.

After the application closing date, if LCF considers that an application would be better suited to a different fund, we reserve the right to contact the applicant to discuss transferring their application for consideration under that fund.

Commitment to the Programme

The Mayor of London's VAWG Grassroots Fund is built to respect the expertise, experience and knowledge of the specialist organisations it supports. Alongside financial investment, the Fund provides opportunities for organisational development, peer learning, networking, sharing insights and working in partnerships. The wider programme will be shaped by learning from previous rounds of the Fund and partly co-produced with the successful grantees following the grant awards.

Successful applicants will therefore be expected to engage in the wider programme as part of their grant award. **Applicants should consider the time and resources required to participate in the programme before applying to the Fund.**

1. Capacity building

Capacity building through training, peer learning, networking and wellbeing activities creates opportunities to connect with other funded organisations, share expertise and experience, develop relationships and explore partnership prospects including collective action.

Funded organisations will be required to participate in a needs assessment (format to be confirmed) and a co-design workshop during the first six months of grant delivery. This will be followed by involvement in a variety of sessions delivered through interactive webinars and face to face events. Successful applicants will be expected to attend at least one session every quarter throughout the Fund period.

2. Networking

LCF and MOPAC are committed to learning from the expertise, insights and perspectives of grantees on the Fund. This will include attendance at networking events and profile-raising opportunities, facilitated by LCF to platform your work and hold space for your voice.

3. Sharing insights

LCF will actively engage with the successful grantee cohort to capture data, insights and learning that can be used to highlight the value of specialist organisations and promote the expertise of grassroots organisations and the needs of minoritised and marginalised communities to best position the VAWG grassroots sector to influence practice and policy

advocacy. Successful applicants will be expected to contribute towards sharing insight and good practice, this may include completing surveys and attending workshops which will also serve as an opportunity to network, engage in peer support and collaboration.

4. Engagement

Successful applicants will have a dedicated Programme Manager that will support grantees with their commitments to the Fund. This will include regular catch ups, in-person visits and monitoring report guidance.

5. Evaluation

MOPAC is committed to understanding and measuring the impact of this Fund as it is an important part of the refreshed Mayoral Tackling VAWG Strategy. Evaluation of the Fund will be performed independently from MOPAC and LCF. Successful applicants will be expected to participate in at least one evaluation activity per year. At least one evaluation report will be published after the Fund has ended to share the impact, however no organisation will be contextually referenced without their explicit consent.

6. Monitoring reports

Funded organisations will be required to complete quarterly data returns and an annual narrative report as part of their grant commitment.

7. Transition planning

Funded organisations will be supported to plan for the end of grant period, including how services can be sustained beyond the Fund where possible.

LCF and MOPAC recognise that participation requires a significant time commitment, particularly for smaller grassroots organisations with limited resources. We also recognise the benefits of engaging with the programme fully, therefore, the Fund supports full cost recovery so organisations should budget for the time required to participate. We recommend allocating a minimum of half a day each month throughout the three-year Fund period.

Who can apply?

Only one application per organisation will be accepted, **including partnership bids**.

Applicants must:

- Currently be providing services to address VAWG
- Be able to demonstrate a minimum of three complete years of operation
- Be delivering the work they are requesting funding for in London, with a preference for organisations based in London
- There is no income threshold for the Fund however organisations with an annual

income of less than £500,000 will be prioritised.

Eligibility criteria

- **We will accept applications from organisations with the following legal structures** – there must be a signed governing document in place appropriate to the legal structure which includes an asset lock (or equivalent clause), and the purpose of all funded activities must be charitable (not for profit):
 - Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)
 - Company Limited by Guarantee (CLG) – may also be registered as a Charity or a Community Interest Company Limited by Guarantee (CICLG)
 - Trust
 - Unincorporated Association
 - Community Benefit Societies (CBS). Ideally, the CBS will also be registered as charitable with HMRC, however this is not essential.
- **Governance**
 - You must have at least three unrelated members legally responsible for the governance of the organisation; trustees/directors/management committee as appropriate to your structure. Please note that this refers to the highest level of governance, a management committee that sits below a board of trustees (e.g. charities, CIOs) or directors (CLG or CICLG) does not count towards this.
- **Bank account:** a bank account in the same name as the organisation applying with a minimum of two unrelated signatories must be in place by the start of the grant.
- **Policies:** Policies and processes in place to ensure compliance with relevant legislation including (but not limited to) equalities, safeguarding and data protection.
- **Safeguarding:** you must have a safeguarding policy in place that has been reviewed in the last year.
- **Previous LCF funding:** all conditions from any previous The London Community Foundation grants must have been met, and any monitoring that is past its due date must have been submitted on time at the point of application. This means that we cannot fund an organisation that has overdue monitoring, but we can fund organisations with future monitoring due on other grants with us.
- **Registration:** if the income for charitable purposes is more than £5,000 at the point of application, organisations must have submitted an application to register with the Charity Commission or the relevant regulator (e.g. Companies House, CIC regulator or Financial Conduct Authority). If the LCF grant will take the organisation over £5,000, please visit [this website](#) for guidance on setting up a charity, including information on legal structures.
- **Insurance:** Your organisation will have current and appropriate insurance certificates (e.g. professional indemnity and employer's liability).

Who and what are **not** eligible

- The following types of organisation are not eligible:
 - Companies limited by shares (including CIC limited by shares)
 - Statutory organisations, such as local authorities
 - Statutory agencies in the criminal justice system, including the Metropolitan Police Service
 - NHS bodies
 - Co-operative societies
- Grants cannot be used for:
 - projects benefiting people who do not live, work or study in London.
 - activities that promote religious or political views.
 - spending that has already taken place (i.e. retrospective funding).
 - activities where people are excluded on the basis of religion, sexual orientation, sex or ethnicity unless the issue is group-specific.
 - Contributing to capital build ('bricks and mortar') projects.
 - Projects that solely focus on political campaigns and/or lobbying individuals.
 - Activities generating private profit.
 - Individuals or projects run by individuals as opposed to an organisation.
 - Organisations where trustees are paid, unless evidence of approval is provided from the Charity Commission and this arrangement is referenced in the governing document.
- There must be no [personal benefit](#) attached to the grant.
- The organisation must have submitted required financial information to the Charity Commission/Companies House for the last two completed financial years. The organisation must not have two years of net current liabilities within the two most recent completed financial years.
- Organisations where trustees are paid are not eligible unless evidence of approval is provided from the Charity Commission and/or this arrangement is referenced in the governing document.

If you are unsure whether your proposed project and/or the expenditure requested meets the aims of the Fund, please contact us prior to submitting your application.

Grant size

Individual organisations

- For individual organisations, three-year grants of between £45,000 (£15,000 per year) and £150,000 (£50,000 per year) are available. If your organisation has an annual income of less than £30,000 you may need to demonstrate that you have the capacity, experience and/or contingency plans in place to manage the risk of dependency on one source of funding.

- Organisations with an annual income of less than £30,000 are encouraged to call the Programme Manager to discuss an appropriate size of grant request.

Partnerships

- Established partnerships of up to three organisations can apply for three-year grants of up to £180,000 (£60,000 per year) for the partnership.
- Lead partners (those organisations leading on a partnership bid) are subject to all the eligibility areas listed in the prospectus. Other Partners are also subject to the eligibility criteria listed, with exception of the point below which will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- Lead partners must be able to demonstrate a minimum of three complete years of operation. However newer organisations, for example those set up in response to a particular need, are able to be considered if they are applying under a partnership. A track record of delivering VAWG services is still required.
- Intended financial distribution of the grant to partners should be limited to up to 50% of their individual organisation's annual turnover. Smaller organisations (with less than £30,000 annual income) are eligible to apply as a partner and have contributions of less than £15,000 a year if appropriate. The lead partner will be awarded the funds and then distribute the relevant amount to the sub-grantee.
- If applying under a partnership bid, the lead partner must be confident with the sub-grantee organisation's capacity to be able to deliver the proportion of the project which is assigned to a partner. Mitigation actions should be considered by the lead partner to ensure outcomes can still be achieved should the partner organisation be unable to deliver the planned services for any reason.
- We are unable to accept an application from an organisation who is also listed as a partner in a partnership bid, as only one bid can be allowed per organisation.
- In order to qualify as a partnership, applicants must have a formal partnership agreement in place at the point of application submission. Partnership applications must be submitted by one lead applicant, **with all required supporting documents for all partner organisations provided by the lead.**
- We recommend you carefully consider the expectations for each partner when engaging in the capacity-building programme if successful. All organisations will need to engage in the wider programme. It may be preferable to apply as an individual organisation and pay another organisation for the specific service they deliver in relation to your project.

Eligible costs

Applicants can apply for costs in relation to the continuation or expansion of existing VAWG services, or a new element of their work in tackling VAWG. For example: staffing, volunteers, training, publicity, equipment. small capital items, office/overheads/premises costs.

Please note that the allocation to core costs should not exceed 50%. LCF consider core costs as day-to-day running costs such as office overheads, bills, rent, insurance, systems, and training.

Applicants will need to include a balanced budget which considers project/service delivery costs, core costs and costs to cover engagement in the wider elements of the programme, such as capacity building. Full recovery costs for the wider participation in the programme do not need to be included in core costs. This means organisations can maximise the core cost offer this Fund allows.

Living Wage Funder

The London Community Foundation and Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime are both Living Wage Funders. This scheme, run by the [Living Wage Foundation](#), means that The London Community Foundation aims to pay all grant-funded staff posts at or above the real Living Wage (currently £14.80 per hour in London).



If you are applying for funding for any staff costs (this could include existing staff members, sessional workers, part time or full-time posts, freelance workers), you should budget these at the real Living Wage or above. For this three-year programme, applicants should also consider anticipated increases in staffing costs over the grant period, including appropriate annual pay increases, and budget accordingly. This will be reviewed during the assessment process. You can find out more about The Living Wage Funder Scheme [here](#).

Timeline

Funding period

Funded activities can start from the week beginning 01 February 2027 and must be completed by 31 January 2030.

We recognise that the period between notification and the start of delivery is short. We do not expect services to be operating at full capacity from 01 February 2027. Your first quarterly return should reflect mobilisation activity including recruitment, and we will agree a realistic delivery profile with you at the start of the grant.

Programme Timeline	
Open for applications	16 September 2026: 12 noon
Application deadline	4 November 2026: 2pm
LCF checks all applications for eligibility and shortlists eligible applications against fund criteria and priorities	5 – 26 November 2026
Non shortlisted applicants notified	27 – 28 November 2026
Shortlisted organisations assessed	30 November 2026 – 8 January 2027
Panel meeting to decide awards	w/c 11 January 2027
All grant decisions communicated	w/c 18 January 2027
Programme delivery period	01 February 2027 – 31 January 2030

After the deadline, all applications will be checked to ensure they are eligible and then shortlisted based on the priorities in this document and how well the proposal meets the aims of the Fund. Shortlisted applications will be assessed by assessors with VAWG expertise in detail using the [assessment indicators](#). A decision-making panel (including VAWG experts and fund priority groups expertise) will meet to review the full assessments of shortlisted applications and agree funding awards, ensuring that sector expertise is included in decision-making. Decisions will then be communicated to all applicants in line with the timetable given above.

Unsuccessful applicants may request written feedback on their application within 20 working days of being notified.

If you believe your application has not been handled in accordance with the process set out in this prospectus, you may submit a complaint in writing to complaints@londoncf.org.uk within 6 weeks of being notified. A review considers the process followed and does not revisit the funding decision itself. Grant award decisions are final. Further details on LCF's Complaints Policy can be found here [The London Community Foundation | Complaints procedure](#).

Monitoring and reporting

Monitoring and reporting are important both for funded organisations to reflect on their work and project planning, and for LCF and MOPAC to understand the collective impact, learning and contribution of the Fund.

We recognise that reporting requirements can feel burdensome on smaller organisations with limited capacity and have designed the approach for this round to minimise duplication. Funded organisations will be asked to provide information through two complementary reporting processes:

Quarterly data returns

Funded organisations will complete a short quarterly return in alignment with MOPAC's data capture system via Excel document. These returns will focus primarily on quantitative information about service user demographic and service.

Annual narrative report

Once a year, funded organisations will complete a more reflective narrative report covering progress, learning, outcomes and the wider context in which their work is delivered. This will provide an opportunity to reflect on what is working, what has changed, challenges encountered, organisational learning and the difference the funding has made. We will use this alongside the quarterly data to understand the wider impact and nuanced learning from the Fund.

The information collected will help LCF and MOPAC understand the reach, needs and impact of specialist VAWG organisations in London and inform efforts for future investment and support for the sector.

How we use information about your service users

Monitoring returns ask for aggregate, anonymised information about the people your service supports. You should not send us anything that identifies an individual service user, and we will not ask you for it.

No personal data about service users is shared with MOPAC. Information collected through this Fund is not shared with the Metropolitan Police Service, the Home Office, or any immigration enforcement function.

Where we publish information about the programme, it is aggregated across funded organisations. No organisation is identified in published material without its consent. The London Community Foundation is the data controller for information you provide in your application. Its privacy notice is available [here](#).

How to apply

The online application form can be accessed by clicking on the '**Apply now**' button on the [fund webpage](#). Before you can start your application, you will need to complete an eligibility check to establish your eligibility for the programme. If eligibility is confirmed you will move on to the full application form.

The deadline is 2pm on Wednesday 04 November 2026.

Please note we are unable to consider applications submitted after the deadline or which do not have the relevant, up-to-date supporting documents included.

Please do not send attachments directly to the Programme Manager or any other LCF team member unless they have requested this. If you have any concerns or experience any problems attaching key documents – please get in touch with LCF before the deadline.

Application support

The London Community Foundation will be providing support throughout the application process to answer any questions you have. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you would like to discuss your proposal prior to making an application, if you need assistance with completing the form or providing the supporting documents, or require an alternative format for this information.

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