

Ilford Community Fund 2026

Programme guidelines
July 2026

Programme guidelines

About the Programme

The Ilford Philanthropic Society was a charity working in Ilford with the aim of alleviating poverty. The charity no longer exists, however, London Community Foundation has been charged with distributing the remaining charitable funds through the Ilford Community Fund.

London Community Foundation is delivering the Ilford Community Fund with Community Action Redbridge and Redbridge Giving to support organisations working in Ilford to apply for and deliver grant-funded work.

London Community Foundation (LCF) is a charity that invests in small, local charities and community groups in London to improve the lives of the most disadvantaged people. LCF has overall responsibility for the delivery of this grant programme.

Community Action Redbridge exists to support strong and resilient communities and will be supporting this grant programme by assisting applicants with the application process, including guiding applicants on LCFs core eligibility requirements.

Redbridge Giving will be working with LCF on the grant decision making process, supporting a panel of local residents to guide the decision-making process.

Programme aims and priorities

Through community engagement and outreach work between 2023 and 2024 Community Action Redbridge has identified key strategies for addressing inequality in the borough. The outcome of this work has informed the key priorities for this grant programme.

Organisations applying to this fund should be undertaking activity in Ilford that addresses one of these four priorities:

1. Cost of living
2. Food insecurity
3. Community safety and belonging
4. Loneliness

Priority will be given to proposals that look to address the root causes of issues.

Geographical area

Applications to the Ilford Community Fund are welcome from organisations across the borough of Redbridge for delivery of activity in Ilford for the benefit of Ilford residents.

Grant size and duration

- Organisations can apply for grants of up to £10,000 per year for two years (£20,000 total over the two years).
- Grants can start to be spent from January 2027.
- Grants must start within three months of the grant offer being made and all spending should be completed within two years of the grant start date.

Grant types

Organisations registered and based in Ilford with an IG1 postcode and delivering activity in Ilford can apply for core organisation costs (these are the essential, behind the scenes expenses required to keep your organisation running and delivering services but are not directly tied to a specific project or service). **Please note, your organisation's main office/delivery venue and registered address must be an IG1 postcode to qualify for a core costs grant.** This means that if your application is successful you will report to LCF on how you have spent the funds and how the grant has helped you to continue to deliver your services, however, you will not need to report on any specific measurable outcomes.

Organisations delivering activity in Ilford but based outside the area, within the wider borough of Redbridge, can apply for costs to deliver a project or activity in Ilford. This applies to any organisation that's main office/delivery venue and registered address is outside of the IG1 postcode area.

Project funding guidance (non-Ilford based organisations):

For project funding requests, you can apply for any costs towards your project, including e.g. staff/sessional staff costs associated with delivering the project, volunteer expenses, venue hire, materials and small equipment and insurance.

We encourage applicants to follow the principles of 'full cost recovery' and include core costs within the budget, i.e. including an appropriate portion of the organisation's rent, administrative costs and utility bills. For further information please see: www.culturehive.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/Full-cost-recovery.pdf.

Flexible grants: Although your application needs to explain how you expect to spend the grant and grants will be restricted to activity that meets the fund's priorities, you can change plans and redirect funding as needed. This is to ensure that you can respond to the needs of the people you support. You can do this without formally requesting changes to your delivery or waiting for approvals. As long as any change to activity remains focused on the programme's aims, we trust you to make any changes you need.

Eligibility criteria – Who can apply and what for?

Programme specific criteria:

Please pay close attention to the geographic criteria above to identify if you are eligible for a core costs grant or whether you should apply for an activity/project grant. Organisations that incorrectly apply for core costs when they are not eligible will not be considered for a grant. If you are unsure about what grant type you can apply for please speak to London Community Foundation (contact details at the end of

this document) or Community Action Redbridge.

All posts (including staff members, sessional workers, part-time or full-time posts and freelance workers) funded by these grants must be paid at or above the London Living Wage (currently £14.80 per hour).

Organisations must be based in the London Borough of Redbridge and delivering activity in Ilford. If we receive a large number of applications we may prioritise organisations that are both based in and delivering in Ilford.

LCF's core eligibility criteria:

- **Eligible Legal Structures:**

- 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.

There must be a 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):

- **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.
- **Finances:** You must have a bank account in the same name as the organisation you are applying for, with a minimum of two unrelated signatories.

When you apply for funding from The London Community Foundation, you will be required to submit accounts from the last completed financial year. If these accounts were submitted to Charity Commission/Companies House more than 18 months ago, then we require management or draft accounts for the most current year.

New organisations that do not have accounts for the last completed financial year are required to provide an income and expenditure forecast for the current year and include a note as to why accounts are not available for previous years.

The following template can be used if you do not have your own: [IE Forecast template](#)

- **Safeguarding:** You must have a safeguarding policy in place that has been reviewed in the last 12 months and meets the requirements listed in our [Safeguarding checklist](#).

Additionally, you must submit a safeguarding policy that has been reviewed within the last year and is reviewed annually (this needs to be in writing on the safeguarding policy). If your safeguarding policy has not been reviewed annually, please provide a rationale for this and outline when it will be next reviewed.

- **Previous LCF funding:** All conditions from any previous London Community Foundation grants must be met and there must be no outstanding monitoring at the time of application.
- **Registration:** If the organisation's income is over £5,000 at the time of application, the organisation must be registered with The Charity Commission or the relevant regulator (e.g. Companies House, CIC regulator or Financial Conduct Authority) or be in the process of registration. Evidence of this must be submitted with your application. If it is not, your application will not be considered for funding. Please visit [this website](#) for guidance on setting up a charity, including information on legal structures.
- **Supporting Documents:** Please make sure you have submitted all three of the required supporting documents:
 - **A copy of your organisation's governing document.**
 - **A safeguarding policy that is dated, has been reviewed within the last 12 months and meets the requirements listed in our safeguarding checklist.**
 - **Annual accounts for the last completed financial year or an income and expenditure forecast template if your organisation is less than one year old.**

Please note that organisations that do not meet the above programme and core eligibility criteria, or do not submit the required documents at the time of application, will not be considered for this fund. If you have any difficulties submitting these documents with your application please contact LCF or Community Action Redbridge.

Shortlisted organisations will undergo social media and Google checks in line with the London Community Foundation [Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion statement](#).

Who and what isn't eligible:

- The following types of organisation are not eligible:
 - Companies limited by shares (including CIC limited by shares).
 - Statutory organisations, such as schools.
 - NHS bodies.
 - Co-operative Societies.
- The grant funds cannot be used for:
 - Activities that promote religious or political views.
 - Purely commercial ventures (for profit).
 - Spending that has already taken place (i.e. retrospective funding).
 - Individual sponsorship or redistribution of a grant to individuals or other organisations.
 - Activities where people are excluded because of religion, sexual orientation, gender or ethnicity (unless the issue is group-specific).
- There must be no [personal benefit](#) attached to the grant.
- The organisation must not have two years of late submissions to the Charity Commission/Companies House within 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.

Monitoring and evaluating your work

We aim to keep reporting requirements to a minimum. However, we also need to understand the impact of the programme so that what we can use this information to demonstrate the fund's impact, learn, and improve our future programmes. We are interested in knowing:

- **If you received a core costs grant:**
 - How the grant was spent.
 - How the funds helped you continue to deliver services for the benefit of Ilford residents.
- **If you received a project/activity grant:**
 - How the grant was spent (what activity you undertook).
 - The number of Ilford residents benefitting from your project.
 - Outcomes/impact of the funding.

We will also request a case study demonstrating the impact the funding has had on an individual that your organisation has supported through this funding.

Year 2 funding will be released subject to receipt of a satisfactory Year 1 progress report. A final grant impact report will be required one month after the end of the grant period.

How to apply

In August and September, Community Action Redbridge and London Community Foundation will be hosting online and in-person opportunities to hear more about the programme and ask any questions.

Online event: 2pm, Tuesday 18th August [Link to online event](#)

In-person event: 2pm, Tuesday 8th September at Community Action Redbridge, Gaysham Avenue, Gants Hill, IG2 6TD.

Before applying you will be asked to complete our eligibility check to make sure that your organisation is eligible to apply for a grant from this fund: [Check eligibility and apply](#)

Once you have completed the eligibility check, and if you are eligible to apply for a grant, you will be directed to the application form to start your full application.

Application deadlines

Programme Timeline	
Open for applications	Tuesday 4 th August 2026, 12 noon
Application deadline	Wednesday 30 th September 2026, 12 noon
All grant decisions communicated by	Friday 11 th December 2026

Some top tips for top applications:

- Draft responses before completing the online form and save them in a Word document.
- Make sure that every question has been answered in full.
- If you are applying for project funding, please ensure your budget section has a clear breakdown of all the costs associated with your project.
- Ask somebody to read through the application before sending, preferably someone who knows nothing about the project. This is a great way to pick up on any mistakes or lack of information

and rectify it before submitting.

Please note, we are unable to consider applications that are submitted after the deadline or those that do not have the supporting documents included (see Supporting Documents above for what we need you to include with your application).

Living Wage Funder

The London Community Foundation is a Living Wage Funder. This scheme, run by the Living Wage Foundation means that The London Community Foundation will actively encourage and support applications from organisations willing to pay staff the real Living Wage (currently £14.80 in London), or higher.

If you are applying for funding of any staff costs (this could include existing staff members, sessional workers, part-time or full-time posts and freelance workers) you should budget these at the Living Wage or above. We are sensitive to circumstances where applicants feel that taking up the Living Wage could cause difficulties, in these instances, please explain the circumstances in the Living Wage section of the application form. This does not require employers to pay the Living Wage to apprentices or interns, although we recommend it as best practice for employers who can afford to do so.

You can learn more about The Living Wage Funder Scheme at <https://www.livingwage.org.uk/living-wage-funders>.

What happens next?

Please contact LCF or Community Action Redbridge during the application process with any questions you may have. Following the application deadline, we will undertake due diligence to check that your organisation meets LCF's core eligibility criteria as detailed above. At least two LCF grant managers will shortlist applications before shortlisted applications go through a full assessment process. During the assessment process, LCF may contact organisations to discuss their applications in more detail or request additional information.

A grant-making panel from the Redbridge community, supported by Redbridge Giving and LCF, will then discuss the applications and decide which projects to fund within the budget available. All applicants will receive a decision letter attached to an e-mail by Friday 11th December 2026.

If your application is successful, you will be required to:

- Credit support from The London Community Foundation (LCF) on materials related to the funded work using the correct logos (available on request and from our website).
- Provide a satisfactory end of year one report before year 2 funds can be released.
- Complete spending within two years of your grant start date.
- Complete a final monitoring form within one month of the end of year 2 of your grant.
- Maintain financial records for all grant spending and submit requested information to LCF.

Further Information

Please contact Leigh Ogden, Grant Programmes Lead at LCF on leigh.ogden@londoncf.org.uk or call us on 020 7582 5117 if you have any questions about the programme. Alternatively, you can contact Community Action Redbridge on fundingdevelopment@communityactionredbridge.org.uk and 020 8553 1004.

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