



UK YOUTH | In partnership with:
Pears
Foundation

Frequently Asked Questions



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About UK Youth

Who are UK Youth?

As the UK's infrastructure body for youth work and outdoor learning, we exist to widen the reach and deepen the impact of youth work and outdoor learning. We support a network of thousands of youth organisations across the UK to improve young lives every day.

At the same time, we are transforming the policies, investment, and ideas needed to future-proof youth work for generations to come.

- We back youth leaders with the evidence, connection, and investment they need to thrive
- We keep youth work effective with research, large scale pilot programmes, and professional development initiatives
- We work with young changemakers to inspire lasting change in the attitudes of the public and funders

Together, we hope to build a society that backs every young person – through each spark, struggle, and success.

I'm having trouble completing the application, can I ring UK Youth for help?

Unfortunately, we do not have the resources to respond to incoming calls. The quickest way to get the help you need is to email grants@ukyouth.org with your query. This inbox is monitored 9am-5pm every weekday and we will get back to you within 48 hours on any questions related to the fund or application process.

I have accessibility requirements. Can I get a different format or additional support?

Please email grants@ukyouth.org with 'Accessibility' in the subject line and we will prioritise responding to your request. It is our intention to remove all barriers that may prevent an organisation from completing the questionnaire so do not hesitate to get in touch if you require additional support.

About The UK Youth Fund

Where has the money come from?

This funding comes from our partnership with the [Pears Foundation](#). Over the past five years, we've delivered major programmes together, such as the £2.2m Covid Relief Fund and the £7m Cost of Living Fund.

These programmes have provided hundreds of organisations with stability and hope during a period of profound uncertainty. At a time when dependable youth spaces are needed more than ever, our aim is for the UK Youth Fund to continue to extend the reach and quality of youth work across the UK.

How much funding will you be awarding overall?

We expect to award grants up to the value of £10 million in total, and this pot may increase as we bring additional funding partners on board. We therefore encourage all eligible organisations to apply.

Why is this a two-stage application?

It is designed to identify organisations that will benefit most from multi-year unrestricted support while keeping requirements proportionate and accessible.

We have set clear eligibility criteria to ensure funding reaches those who need it most, discourages ineligible applications early, and reduces time spent by applicants where possible.

Eligibility

Who is eligible to be considered for funding through the UK Youth Fund?

The following criteria will be checked at EOI Stage:

- Must be delivering services for young people who are based within key geographical areas in the top 3 deciles of the Index of Multiple Deprivation. This criteria focusses on the communities and young people you serve rather than your head office location. There is no minimum threshold for the number of young people supported, if your organisation supports even one young person from any of the eligible location, you are eligible to apply. You can see the full list of eligible locations [in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland](#), and [in England](#).

This criteria focusses on the communities and young people you serve rather than your head office location. There is no minimum threshold for the number of young people supported, if your organisation supports even one young person from any of the eligible location, you are eligible to apply.

- Have a turnover of less than £500,000 in the last financial year.
- Be a charitable/not-for-profit organisation/Community Interest Group and can provide supporting documentation.
- Have a primary purpose of provision to benefit young people – with at least 70% of applicant organisations' beneficiaries aged 8-25 years old.
- Be in operation for a minimum of two years.
- Must not currently be receiving unrestricted funding from UK Youth.

The following criteria will be checked in second stage applications:

- Have one full year of accounts.
- Safeguarding and Health and Safety policies.
- Relevant insurances or qualifications. Could include public liability insurance, leaders or instructors with special qualifications.
- Compliance with the Equality Act, the General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act, Public Services (Social Value) and all other relevant statutory or regulatory requirements.

What are the areas in the top 3 deciles of IMD?

You can find the list of 127 eligible Local Authority areas across [England](#) and [Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland](#).

The list has been compiled using the official national deprivation indices for each UK nation, with a primary focus on Local Authority level data.

Eligibility

How many young people do I need to work with in the top 3 deciles of IMD to be eligible?

There is no threshold on the number of young people your organisation supports for eligibility. If your organisation supports one young person from the eligible locations listed, you are eligible to apply.

In the second stage of the application process, you will be asked to tell us more about your organisation and the young people you support. This gives you the opportunity to explain more about the areas in which you work and how you meet the needs of the young people and community.

My organisation works in multiple eligible regions, which should I select in the EOI?

You only need to select one of the regions you work in that makes you eligible. There will be a question in the full application where you can explain how you support young people in multiple regions.

Why is IMD being used to determine eligibility?

Through this Fund, we seek to direct funding towards organisations delivering high-quality youth provision of under-resourced areas. Eligibility for this is based on communities served rather than where your head office is based. This approach also ensures access to this fund remains practical, fair and responsive to how youth provision is delivered in reality.

My Organisation received a Cost of Living Grant, are we eligible to apply?

Yes, organisations that hold a Cost of Living Fund grant are eligible for this fund.

Do I have to be a member of the UK Youth Network to apply?

No, but we encourage all applicants to join the [UK Youth Network](#) to become part of a network that shares opportunities for young people and the youth sector, gaining free access to events, campaigns, training, peer support, themed networks and programmes.

You can also sign up to our newsletter where you will get up to date information on network, and other funding opportunities.

Eligibility

Do I have to be a youth club or a youth charity?

The primary purpose of your organisation must be to support and deliver services for young people. There must be a strong developmental aspect of your work with young people. Schools are not eligible for this funding.

Do you fund faith-based organisations?

Yes, we support faith-based organisations so long as you meet our other eligibility criteria for the fund.

Do you fund schools?

No, we do not fund schools.

Are we eligible if we deliver sessions in schools?

Your organisation must operate independently from the school and meet our other eligibility criteria to be considered for the fund.

Do you fund private limited companies?

No, we do not fund private limited companies.

What age range do we have to support to be eligible?

UK Youth goes by the approach that youth work refers to the ages of 8-25 and 70% of applicant organisations' beneficiaries must be in this age range. However, we are taking each application on a case-by-case scenario, and if you are slightly out of this age range, we will review your application based on what you have told us about your organisation and its impact on the lives of young people.

Eligibility

Is the grant only applicable to organisations working solely with children/young people, or can organisations who work with a wider audience, including young people, also apply?

To be eligible, the primary focus of your organisation must be young people. Organisations that work with a wider audience, including young people, would be eligible for the fund. However, you must be able to demonstrate the proportion of work focused on young people in the full application, letting us know how the funds will help the young people you serve specifically.

Can we apply if we are hoping to expand our work with young people through the grant?

This is possible but only if you already meet the eligibility criteria currently. If you only work with 50% young people organisationally and would use the grant to expand to 70% then unfortunately you are not eligible.

Can we apply if we work with young people outside the age range of 8-25 years old?

As long as your organisation supports 70% young people within the range of 8-25 years old then you are still eligible to apply even if you work with young people outside of this range.

Are we eligible if we only work with an age group within the range, like 14-16?

Yes, you are eligible.

In our last published accounts our income exceeded £500,000 but this is not typical for our organisation. Are we eligible?

Unfortunately, no. Income level eligibility is strictly assessed on your most recent published accounts. If this is above £500,000, you are not eligible for this fund.

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Eligibility

Do you fund infrastructure organisations?

We anticipate that infrastructure organisations will not be eligible to apply as you must be delivering direct youth work/outdoor learning and be based in the eligible areas. Your primary focus must be youth work and at least 70% of your beneficiaries must be young people. We're aware some organisations offer infrastructure support and delivery but this fund is intended to support smaller grassroots organisations delivering youth work to young people.

Do you accept partnership or collaborative applications?

No, we do not. We recognise how important partnership and collaborative working is especially with benefits of reducing duplication, maximising skillsets and reducing competitive opportunities too. This grant fund aims to support individual organisations to become financially resilient and sustainable for the future, so in this case the organisation must apply individually.

Do you fund individual Girlguiding/Scout groups?

Yes and you are encouraged to apply. In your EOI please clarify your charity status and upload governing documents.

Will you fund organisations that have started operating from this year?

We are only able to fund organisations that have been operational (delivering services/activities) for at least two years at the time of applying. This helps us ensure applicants have an established track record, proven delivery, and robust systems to effectively use the funding.

My organisation registered as a CIC/CIO/charity in the last year, are we eligible?

Unfortunately, no. Your organisation must be registered and in operation for a minimum of 2 years at the time of submitting your EOI form.

Our organisation is transitioning from a one registered organisation type to another (e.g. Charity to CIC). What should we enter on the EOI?

Please select "Other" in the organisation type and put the all the relevant details for your organisation (e.g. companies house number and charity commission number).

You can find question guidance for EOI form in our [Application Guidance Document](#).



Expression of Interest (EOI) Form

When is the deadline for the EOI form?

The deadline for submitting an Expression of Interest is 11:59pm on Wednesday, 6th May 2026.

Can I make more than one application?

Only one application per organisation can be made.

Will you help us determine if we are eligible?

We will be holding a Meet the Funder Q&A webinar at 2pm on Tuesday, 21st April to provide additional information about the fund, application process and eligibility. This session is open to any organisation considering submitting an EOI. We'll be talking through the EOI form and taking questions on the overall application process. To book your place on the webinar please register [here](#).

UK Youth is committed to making our grant funding accessible to all applicants, please contact us if you require additional support. If English is not your first language and you would like assistance with any aspect of the application process please contact us and we will be happy to help you.

To contact the grants team directly please email grants@ukyouth.org.

Do I have to complete the EOI form in one go?

No, if you would like to save and return to the form please use the 'Save for Later' button at the bottom of the form.

You can also use the buttons at the bottom of the page to export your form. Please note that if you export your form in the middle of working on it, you will have to copy and paste responses you draft in the export back into the form.

Why do I need to create an account on Plinth?

To access the application form you need to register first so that we can keep track of your EOI and application information. If your application is successful, you will be able to use Plinth for your payment and reporting requirements across the grant period.

Expression of Interest (EOI) Form

Can we apply if our organisation does not have a website?

Yes, you can still apply to the fund if you do not have a website. Where the EOI form asks for your website, share a link to one of your organisation's social media accounts (e.g. LinkedIn, Facebook) and it should let you proceed.

Why are you asking about EDI Data in the EOI?

We are asking about the young people your organisation works with and the leadership of your organisation to support our grant making to ensure we are equitable and inclusive. This data is designed to be the least burdensome possible while providing us with important information on who applies for our funds, who does not, and if there are inequitable or unconscious biases that play a role in different stages of our grant making. Providing this information at the start of your application process allows us to determine this information.

Will the EDI Data I provide be published or impact my chances of funding?

The data you provide will help us to evaluate our grant making and potentially change processes moving forward. Any data that is published publicly will be collated and anonymised and will not include identifying information about individual organisations. If you are worried that the information you provide will identify your organisation, you can reach out to us at grants@ukyouth.org or enter 'Prefer Not to Say.' All EDI Data is only used for evaluation of our grant making and will not impact your chances of securing funding.

I've made a mistake on the form I completed - can I amend?

Don't worry, these things happen. Please email grants@ukyouth.org with the correct information. We will match this to your submission ensuring we have the correct information to review.

I didn't receive a submission confirmation email. What do I do?

You can still check the status of your EOI form through your account on Plinth to verify that your form was submitted. Navigate to the 'Funding & AI' section on the left-hand menu of your Plinth account and click on 'Manage Funders.' Scroll down to the bottom of the page and you will be able to see the status of your EOI form which should be 'Submitted.' You will receive an email inviting you to the full application stage if eligible.

If you receive a high number of eligible EOIs, will you invite all eligible applicants to the second stage, or will there be a further shortlisting process?

We will be inviting all eligible applicants to the second stage.

Application Form

You can find question guidance for the application form in our [Application Guidance document](#).

When is the deadline for the application form?

The deadline to submit an application is 11:59pm on Wednesday, 3rd June 2026.

How much funding can I apply for?

Up to approximately 10% of your organisation's total annual turnover.

Why can I only apply for up to 10%?

This funding is targeted at organisations with an annual turnover of under £500,000. Based on this information, and the average grant size through previous funding initiatives, we believe this to be an appropriate limit. We also want to ensure we can support as many organisations as possible.

Is there a minimum funding request?

No there is no minimum funding request. Organisations are advised to ask for 10% of your most recent annual income. Requesting less than this amount will not make your application more likely to be successful.

Do you fund capital projects or costs?

Yes, our grants are unrestricted and can cover any costs towards your organisational purpose. This can include capital costs, staff salaries, and core costs (including rent, utilities, etc.) amongst other things.

Do organisations need to be youth-led to be eligible?

No, there is no requirement to be a youth-led organisation to apply for funding. In the full application, there is a question about how you include youth voice and young people in the work you do which is part of our funding criteria.

Will you help us to write a bid to apply for funding?

We will be holding a meet the funder Q&A webinar at 2pm on Tuesday, 19th May. This will be open to organisations that are invited to submit a full application. We will talk through the application form and take questions on writing a great application. We will send you an invite link if you have been successful for the second stage application.

UK Youth is committed to making our grant funding accessible to all applicants, please contact us if you require additional support. If English is not your first language and you would like assistance with any aspect of the application process please contact us and we will be happy to help you apply.

Application Form

Can I use AI in my application?

Our questions and prompts aim to support you to write your application. You are welcome to use AI to help draft or refine your answers, improve structure, or check clarity.

However, we still want to hear your voice. Your lived experience, institutional knowledge, and understanding of the nuances of your work with young people are essential, and AI cannot provide this. These unique insights about your organisation are very important to us and will help us to inform our funding decisions.

All applications, whether AI-assisted or not, will be assessed using the same criteria and reviewed for quality, authenticity, and alignment with our funding aims.

Is there a limit to funds in the bank account or reserves?

We have not stipulated a limit to funds available in bank accounts or reserves. If you do have large cash reserves, you might need to explain why you are unable to use those resources to assist you in the second stage application.

Funding Decisions and Feedback

Who will make the funding decisions?

All eligible submissions will be assessed by independent assessors following a clear scoring framework. The shortlisted submissions will then go to a panel for final decision. The panels will be made up of 50% young people and 50% professionals including UK Youth staff.

Will you use AI in eligibility or funding decisions?

No, we will not be using AI in our decision-making process. You can find more about our approach to our AI in our statement [here](#).

How will we make funding decisions?

Applications that meet the eligibility criteria and have submitted all requested information will be assessed against the following:

1. **Youth participation and voice:** Are young people meaningfully involved in shaping services, leadership, or decision-making?
2. **Organisational impact and value:** Will funding strengthen the organisation and sustain youth benefits long-term?
3. **Quality of youth provision:** Are the services high-quality, and inclusive to young people and their communities?

Can I appeal the decision?

No.

Will I get feedback if I am unsuccessful?

We know how important feedback is and will be able to provide a summary of feedback from the second stage application if you request feedback after receiving your decision. EOI forms that are unsuccessful will not receive feedback.

We will also share general learning and reflections from applications and our two-stage process once we have made all the awards. We will include total numbers on applications and funding across nations and regions. This is likely to be in the format of a report, blog and webinars.

Next Steps and Reporting

What due diligence checks will be done before the grants are awarded?

Before we make any awards, we will carry out due diligence checks to understand each organisation's governance structures. We will review the following:

- Charity Commission and Companies House records to ensure details are accurate and up-to-date.
- Your governance structure, including information about directors and trustees. We recommend that organisations have 2–3 unrelated trustees, directors, or independent members of your board.
- The key policies submitted at the second stage, such as safeguarding, health and safety, and insurance, to confirm they are current and up-to-date.

When will I receive the funding?

We aim to make the payments to grantees by September 2026 as long as we have a signed grant agreement from you.

When does the grant have to be spent by?

Grants must be spent out by final reporting in August 2029. If you do not spend your yearly grant by reporting each year, you must notify your regional Project Officer or the UK Youth Grants Team.

What reporting requirements will there be?

We recognise the challenges you are currently experiencing, and we want the reporting requirements to be proportional to the size of the grant. Therefore, we will be asking for you to complete a short online reporting form each year of the grant. Reporting questions will be sent out 3 months in advance of the reporting period, which will likely be August of 2027, 2028, and 2029.

What is the Grants + capacity building support programme?

In partnership with the Tavistock Institute, we have designed our optional Grants + programme to suit grantees day-to-day context. It has been co created using the input of grantees and learning from what areas are needed to lead organisations effectively. The content and format of the offer were shaped by a scoping review, including a workshop with grantees, evidence from our network survey, and drawn from best practices from across the Youth Work sector as well as other sectors where Grants + support is offered.

Our Grants+ programme will gives grantees the opportunity to come together with other grantees to think about the challenges and successes encountered in day-to-day contexts. It's designed to give useful and tangible ideas to put into practice so grantees can continue doing excellent work to support young people.

UK YOUTH

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