

# Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse Community Innovation Fund - Application Guidance

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The Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse Community Innovation Fund aims to strengthen preventative and early intervention domestic abuse support in Oxfordshire.

The focus is on reaching people experiencing emerging abuse, where timely support can reduce harm, improve safety, and prevent escalation to crisis. This includes people experiencing controlling or coercive behaviour, emotional or psychological abuse, financial or other non-physical forms of abuse, or those at an early stage of recognising abuse and seeking help. This fund is not designed for crisis response or MARAC (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference) situations.

We are keen to hear about community-led, culturally appropriate and inclusive work, particularly for marginalised communities and people who face barriers to accessing existing services.

Thanks to funding from Oxfordshire County Council, we have £150,000 available to award in multi-year grants of approximately £30,000 each.

## Key Information

Amounts available	£30,000 + (available to spend over multiple years)
Group annual income	Under £1 million
Type of cost	Project costs, including a proportionate contribution to organisational costs which enable the project
Closing dates	EOI: midday 25 <sup>th</sup> June Detailed Applications: midday 6 <sup>th</sup> August

**Round opens for Expressions of Interest (EOI) submissions** – Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> June

**EOI closes:** Midday Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> June

**Applicants notified of EOI decision:** W/c Monday 6<sup>th</sup> July

**Detailed Application opens:** Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> July

**Detailed Application closes:** Midday Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> August

**Funding decisions announced** – W/c Monday 21<sup>st</sup> September



**Successful applicants provide required financial and governance evidence** – by Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> September

**Grants paid** – By 30<sup>th</sup> October

We anticipate that the grant period will begin on 1 November 2026. Please let us know if you would want a different start date.

## Desired Outcomes for This Grants Round

The overall aim is to reduce harm and improve safety for people experiencing domestic abuse before crisis point is reached. Specifically, funding will achieve:

- Stronger community-based organisations delivering impactful, survivor-centred and culturally appropriate services for people experiencing emerging domestic abuse
- Increased access to early support and preventative domestic abuse services, helping to reduce harm and prevent escalation to higher-risk situations
- Increased early intervention, prevention and awareness of domestic abuse within marginalised communities

## Required Activities and Outputs

The Fund will support a balanced mix of established, evidence-informed approaches and new or emerging innovative ideas:

- Approximately 60% of the available funding will support tried and tested approaches that build on existing community-based activity and strengthen what is already working within Oxfordshire communities.
- Approximately 40% of the available funding will support innovative approaches, including new ideas, pilots, or alternative delivery models that respond to unmet need or test new ways of working. Innovation may include new partnerships, delivery models, engagement methods, or adaptations of existing practice for new populations or settings.

Project activities could include:

- Support Services
  - Casework, advocacy, counselling, therapeutic or peer support.
  - Holistic wrap-around services improving survivor safety and wellbeing.
- Prevention & Awareness
  - Community education, prevention campaigns, culturally specific outreach.
  - Innovative projects promoting earlier help-seeking or reducing stigma.
- Capacity Building
  - Staff/volunteer training, leadership development, partnership strengthening.
  - Tools/systems that strengthen organisational ability to deliver domestic abuse support.

It is acceptable to ask for a proportionate contribution to organisational costs which enable the project, aka 'full cost recovery'.



## Beneficiaries

The beneficiaries for this fund are people in Oxfordshire experiencing emerging or ongoing domestic abuse, who would benefit from early intervention and support before crisis.

Priority will be given to organisations that demonstrate reach into underserved communities, as identified in the [Oxfordshire Overarching Domestic Abuse Strategy Needs Assessment](#). These are:

- Black, Asian and minoritised communities: These groups face increased risk, alongside cultural and language barriers that reduce access to support.
- People with disabilities or long-term health conditions: Disabled individuals often experience dependency-related vulnerabilities, increased coercive control, and face accessibility barriers within support services.
- LGBTQIA+ people: LGBTQIA+ people are at heightened risk and may face stigma, fear of discrimination, and limited specialist provision tailored to their needs.
- Older people (61+): Older people experiencing domestic abuse are less likely to be identified or seek help, and age-related dependency can increase risk.
- People with mental health or complex needs: Victims with significant mental health issues or complex life circumstances are highlighted as particularly vulnerable and harder to reach through standard pathways.
- People with drug or alcohol misuse needs: Substance misuse can be both a contributing factor and a barrier to accessing support, leading to lower engagement and system exclusion
- Pregnant people: Pregnancy is identified as a heightened risk period, yet victims may face additional barriers related to healthcare access or fear of child protection involvement.
- Men experiencing domestic abuse: While most recorded victims are female, the Needs Assessment shows that 29% of domestic abuse victims in Oxfordshire are male, meaning a substantial number of male victims. Despite this, services and public perceptions remain largely oriented toward female victimisation, contributing to barriers such as stigma, under-reporting, and a lack of visible male-specific service pathways.
- People living in rural or isolated communities: Victims and survivors in rural areas may face increased isolation, reduced access to services, transport barriers, and greater challenges in maintaining anonymity. Applications that address access, outreach, and tailored responses for rural communities are particularly encouraged.

## Assessment

### Strategic alignment

The assessment process will review applications to ensure alignment with the Oxfordshire [Overarching Domestic Abuse Strategy](#), which has four strategic areas of focus:

1. Prevention: Preventing domestic abuse from happening by challenging the attitudes and behaviour which foster it and intervening early where possible to prevent it.



2. Provision: Providing high quality, joined-up support for victims-survivors where domestic abuse does occur.
3. Pursuing: Taking action to reduce the harm to victims-survivors of abuse by ensuring that perpetrators are held to account and provided with opportunities for change in a way that maximises safety.
4. Partnership: Working in partnership to obtain the best outcome for victims-survivors, children and their families

## Safeguarding

Safeguarding is always important to OCF, and you can read more in our [Safeguarding Policy here](#). Applicants are required to confirm in their application form they have appropriate safeguarding controls in place, and evidence of this will be required from successful applicants before OCF awards a grant.

- All applicants are required to have in place a safeguarding policy that is in line with current legislation, and procedures for dealing with issues of concern or abuse and prevention of risk. Best practice includes obtaining an appropriate criminal record check from the Disclosure and Barring Service and other relevant checks for appropriate trustees, staff and volunteers. We would expect to see a statement to this effect within a safeguarding policy document, also confirming the appointment of a designated safeguarding lead and the existence of appropriate whistleblowing policies. In addition, we would expect all grant applicants to have appropriate training in place and other recruitment procedures, such as references and risk assessments where there is a flag on the DBS and an appointed person who approves and signs off the risk assessment.

## Eligibility

Applicant organisations must fulfil the following criteria:

- Be a:
  - Registered Charity
  - Charitable Incorporated Organisation
  - Charitable Company (Limited by Guarantee)
  - Community Interest Company; or
  - a Constituted but Unincorporated Club or Association (i.e. you have a constitution but are not one of the other entities listed above)
- Already operating in Oxfordshire
- Income under £1 million
- At least one year of operation; if constituted for less than one year but active for longer, evidence should be provided
- Have a bank account in the organisation's own name with at least two unrelated signatories, open for three months or more
- Have at least three trustees/committee members/directors who are not related to each other



- Have at least three months' running costs in reserves (if there are more than 12 months' reserves, an explanation may be requested)
- Up-to-date accounts – annual accounts for the financial year ending 31st March 2025, plus management accounts or an income/expenditure document covering the last 12 months, as provided most recently to your trustees/directors or equivalent
- Up to date monitoring and reporting to OCF for any previous grants received from OCF

If you are part of a larger national charity but with an Oxfordshire branch, if your finances are separate (your own bank account) from the national organisation and you have a local management committee then you can apply. If your finances are integrated into the national organisation, then you are ineligible.

## Eligible Costs

The following costs are eligible:

- Project costs; all costs associated with delivering the proposed activity including:
  - Staff costs (including staff doing delivery, and staff doing management and supervision)
  - A proportion of organisational annual running costs that support project delivery (also known as "overheads" like insurance, training, energy bills)
  - Monitoring and evaluation of the project
- Costs incurred within the agreed grant period

We know that including these costs helps ensure your project is properly resourced and can be delivered safely and to a high standard. Please ensure your budget reflects everything you need to run the project effectively.

## External requests for any of the following are not eligible for our funding:

- Crisis or high-risk domestic abuse response
- Capital expenditure
- Debt repayment
- General organisational costs not linked to the project
- Activities without a clear connection to domestic abuse
- One-off or short-term events with limited impact
- Contributions to general appeals or circulars
- Activities where the primary benefit is the advancement of religion
- Activities where the primary benefit is to enable a public body to conduct its statutory obligations
- Activities where the primary benefit is the advancement of animal welfare
- Activities which have already taken place before 1 November 2026
- Grant-making or equivalent gifts in kind by other organisations
- Applications from privately owned and profit-distributing companies or partnerships.



## Monitoring & Evaluation

You will be asked in the detailed application form to define **outcomes** and **indicators** that are relevant to you and that you will be able to report on. This will help us analyse the potential impact of your application and, for successful applicants, it will go into the grant agreement between yourselves and OCF. Please consider how you would collect information for reporting on these.

**Outcomes:** An outcome is the result or change caused by the funding, usually the benefits that individuals or groups receive from your activities. Eg: increased awareness of domestic abuse within a marginalised community. You will be asked in the detailed application form to set 1 - 3 outcomes you will deliver if you receive funding.

**Indicators:** For each outcome you should propose at least one indicator. An indicator is something measurable which can track whether your intended outcome has happened. Eg: the numbers of people who attended activity which raised awareness of domestic abuse.

Madison Community Foundation has a useful explanation of this kind of measurement: <https://www.madisongives.org/nonprofits/measuring-outcomes>

Successful grantees will be required to attend one online learning event to share their insight on best practice.

## Application Guidance

### Application Toolkit

The following documents are available to help you complete your application form:

- FAQs
- [A budget template](#)

### Support and Guidance Sessions with the Grants Team

We want to make your application process as easy as possible. We will be holding a variety of sessions to talk you through the application process and to help resolve any issues or questions you may have.

- Online Expression of Interest advice sessions – Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> June. Individual 15-minute bookings can be made with our Grants Team by emailing [grants@oxfordshire.org](mailto:grants@oxfordshire.org)
- In-person and online Detailed Application advice sessions – Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> July. Individual slots will be offered as a choice of online via Teams, over the phone or in person at our central Oxford office. Details will be provided to all groups who are eligible to submit a Detailed Application
- [Find us](#) at 3 Woodin's Way, Oxford, OX1 1HD. We are located a 5-minute walk from the Westgate shopping centre, Gloucester Green bus station and Oxford train station.
- Parking is extremely limited and may not be available on the day, so public transport is the best option when visiting us in person

If you are unable to make either of the sessions above, please get in contact with our Grants team and they'll be glad to have a chat and answer any questions you may have.



- **Grants team telephone: 07927 539699** (you can also WhatsApp us on this number with a short message)
- Main office telephone: 01865 798666
- **Email: [grants@oxfordshire.org](mailto:grants@oxfordshire.org)**

## How to apply

Once you have read the Guidance Document in full, please complete the Expression of Interest form [here](#).

The link for the Detailed Application form will be shared by email once EOIs have been reviewed.

## Accessibility

We want to make our grant application process as straightforward as possible for everyone and to be fair and equitable to all.

### Translations

Google can be used quite easily to automatically translate our grants webpage and guidance document. It will work best on a Chrome browser. [See advice here](#) on how to set this up.

### Alternative ways to apply

If you are finding it hard to complete the online application form due to your accessibility needs, please get in contact to chat to us about how we can help. Depending on the issue you face we may be able to offer a printed application form, a larger print version or a video application process.



## Appendix A. Standard End of Grant Form

# End of Grant Report

NOTE: if you would like support to complete this form (e.g. through phone call or video call with a member of staff), please contact the Grants team: [grants@oxfordshire.org](mailto:grants@oxfordshire.org).

If you want to use grant funds in a way which is significantly different to the proposal in your original application, then you need approval from OCF first. We have legal and financial responsibilities around assuring the use of charitable grants. However, we always seek to be flexible about permitted activities, as long as the original objective stays the same. Please contact the Grants team for a discussion: [grants@oxfordshire.org](mailto:grants@oxfordshire.org).

<b>Date of Report</b>	
<b>Name of Organisation</b>	
<b>Name of Grants Round</b>	
<b>Grant Amount Received</b>	
<b>Start Date of Grant Spend</b>	
<b>End Date of Grant Spend</b>	
<b>Grant Application Number</b>	
<b>Name of Person Submitting Report</b>	
<b>Role of Person Submitting Report</b>	
<b>Contact Email</b>	



**Q1. How was the money spent? Did anything change from what you had planned?**

**Recommended maximum word count: 150 words, plus a budget table of maximum 10 line items**

Please refer back to your original application in your answer and provide a simple breakdown of how the grant was used, referring to your original budget. You can share this as a separate Excel spreadsheet if that is easier by emailing this to [grants@oxfordshire.org](mailto:grants@oxfordshire.org).

Item/Activity	Amount Spent £




**Q2. What did you achieve, and how did you track those achievements?  
Did anything change from what you had planned?**

*Recommended maximum word count: 200 words*

Please refer back to the goals of your original application, and any outcomes and indicators you proposed for measuring your achievements. We would appreciate numerical data and/or written descriptions to illustrate these achievements. We would like to know how these achievements contribute to your overall goals as an organisation.



**Q3. Were there any challenges in delivering your intended activities and results? If so, what did you do to overcome these challenges?**

***Recommended maximum word count: 150 words***

Please tell us about any difficulties so we can understand changes from the original plan, and we can learn from your experience.

**Q4. OPTIONAL: Did this grant enable you to access any additional resources?**

***Recommended maximum word count: 150 words***

If relevant, we are keen to know if this grant enabled you to access any additional funding or any in-kind resources such as training or equipment.



**Q5. Are there any lessons learned to share with us? Is there anything you would want to repeat in the future, or want to do differently?**

***Recommended maximum word count: 150 words***

These can be specific examples or general reflections. We expect these to be both positive and negative experiences – we know that life rarely goes exactly as planned. We genuinely value learning from grantees’ experiences and we use your feedback to improve our own understanding and operations. We are also happy to have a verbal conversation if that is an easier way for you to explain lessons learned.



**Q6. Have you got any feedback for us (positive or negative)?**

*No recommended word count*

**Q7. What's next?**

*Recommended maximum word count: 150 words*

Please tell us if you are planning to carry on these activities, or do something different. Were you successful securing additional funding from others? We are interested to know if you have funding to continue this work.





### Q8. Grant Impact

*Any format welcome.*

Please share at least one photo, testimonial, story or feedback from people involved.

These really help illustrate the difference the funding has made, and help us to convince our donors to give again to local organisations. Please don't name a specific individual, we are happy with anonymised information.

If you would like to share a photo, video, or other digital format, please email it to [grants@oxfordshire.org](mailto:grants@oxfordshire.org).

