



COMMUNITIES MENTAL HEALTH AND
WELLBEING FUND FOR ADULTS

General Information

2024-2025



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INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The **Communities Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund (CMHWF)** for Adults was established in October 2021 and to date, it has distributed around **£51 million** to community initiatives supporting mental health and wellbeing across Scotland.

Funding for a fourth year was announced in March 2024 and a **further £15 million is available for 2024/25**. The fourth round of funding has a strong focus on **prevention and early intervention** - it aims to support grassroots community groups in **tackling mental health inequalities** and addressing priority issues of **social isolation and loneliness, suicide prevention** and **tackling poverty and inequality**.

In Year 4, there will be a continued emphasis on responding to the ongoing **cost of living crisis** and supporting those facing socio-economic disadvantage, with a particular focus on supporting the six priority groups identified under the [Best Start Bright Futures: Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan](#).

The Fund directly contributes to outcome 4 of the [Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy](#): *"Better equipped communities to support people mental health and wellbeing and provide opportunities to connect with others."*

It also clearly supports the three key areas of focus within the Strategy:

- » Promote positive mental health and wellbeing for the whole population, improving understanding and tackling stigma, inequality and discrimination;
- » Prevent mental health issues occurring or escalating and tackle underlying causes, adversities and inequalities wherever possible; and
- » Provide mental health and wellbeing support and care, ensuring people and communities can access the right information, skills, services and opportunities in the right place at the right time, using a person-centred approach.

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

In addition, the Communities Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund for Adults delivers on the following strategic actions of the accompanying 2023 - 2025 Delivery Plan:

"We will continue to build capacity in local services and third sector community groups, in order to ensure everyone in Scotland, particularly people most at risk, are able to access mental health and wellbeing support within their local communities."

"We will drive a shift in the balance of care across mental health to ensure a focus on prevention and early intervention in the community, including a focus on providing high quality mental health care in General Practice."

The Fund also seeks to contribute to the following national outcomes from the National Performance Framework:

- » We are healthy and active.
- » We live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe.
- » We tackle poverty by sharing opportunities, wealth and power more equally.

FUND AIMS AND PRIORITIES

The overarching aim of the Fund is to **support community-based initiatives that promote and develop good mental health and wellbeing**. It also aims to **protect against the impact of distress and mental ill health within the adult population**.

The Fund aims to:



Tackle Mental Health Inequalities.



Address priority issues of social isolation and loneliness, suicide prevention, and poverty and inequality.



Support small 'grassroots' community groups and organisations to deliver such activities.



Provide opportunities for people to connect with each other, build trusted relationships and revitalise communities.

The priorities of the Fund which link directly to these aims are:



Tackling priority issues within the Transition and Recovery Plan such as suicide prevention, social isolation and loneliness, prevention and early intervention.



Addressing the mental health inequalities exacerbated by the pandemic and the needs of a range of 'at risk' groups locally.



Providing opportunities for people to connect with each other, build trusted relationships and revitalise communities.



Responding to the cost-of-living crisis and tackling child poverty through interventions which support adults.



Supporting small grassroots community groups and organisations to deliver such activities.

All projects must have a specific community focus within South Lanarkshire **ONLY**, although the project can be accessed from individuals living outside South Lanarkshire.

EXISTING PROJECTS AND CONTINUATION

Groups can apply to the Fund for existing projects funded by the Communities Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund for Adults.

Panels may ask if there is any additionality to previously funded projects however this is not a requirement. We will be looking for real life impact over additionality.



The Fund must not be seen as a way to replace other funding streams. Granting funds to projects that are previously funded through statutory bodies is at the discretion of Third Sector Interfaces (TSI's).

However, projects must demonstrate value added to statutory provision. This will allow projects that meet the Fund's objectives to be considered, but only granted funding if they can demonstrate clear additionality. For instance, a project that adds value by addressing unmet needs beyond statutory provision.

WHO CAN APPLY?

The ambition of the Communities Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund for Adults is to support initiatives that promote mental health and wellbeing at a small-scale, grassroots, community level.

It is accessible to all groups, no matter how small or inexperienced you are. National organisations undertaking initiatives in South Lanarkshire are not excluded but are not the main focus of the Fund.

Funded organisations do not need to have mental health and wellbeing as their sole focus, but, as this is the purpose of this Fund, the application does have to clearly outline how it benefits the mental health and wellbeing of people in their community.

Applications will only be accepted from a range of voluntary, 'not for profit' organisations, associations, groups, clubs or consortiums/partnerships which have a strong community focus for their activities.

The range of organisations eligible to apply are:

- Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisations (SCIO)
- Unincorporated Associations
- Companies Limited by Guarantee
- Trusts
- Not-for-profit company or asset locked company or Community Interest Companies (CIC)
- Cooperative and Community Benefit Societies
- Community councils
- Parent councils (only for activities or projects aimed at 16yrs+)

Please note that parent councils are eligible to apply, subject to the following conditions:

- The funded activities must meet the aims of the Fund and specifically must focus on supporting young people aged 16 or over - supporting adults rather than their children.

- Any parent council applying to this Fund must have a statutory duty to keep proper accounts, for which there may already be legal and regulatory requirements for them to do so depending on the status of the parent council. For example, some parent councils are registered with OSCR as a charity.

Un-constituted groups

If you don't have a written governing document, you can apply for grant funding up to a maximum of £2,000 but only where you are working in partnership with either a community council or an established, incorporated, or constituted organisation that is willing to hold the funding on your behalf.

If you select this category, we will ask for further information and written evidence to show an agreement in place between organisations.

Examples of potential organisations who may agree to hold funds on an un-constituted group's behalf:

- Community councils
- Church's (Please note, projects can't be faith-based)
- Well established constituted organisations

Please note: VASlan cannot hold funds for any organisation

Some types of projects which may benefit from the fund include (but are not limited to):

- Arts and creative projects
- Physical and recreation activities
- Befriending or peer support groups
- Lunch, food or cookery clubs
- Gardening and green space initiatives
- Mindfulness sessions (Non Clinical)
- Work to support people in distress

Examples of groups which were successful in applying to the Communities Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund 22/23 can be found on our website: www.vaslan.org.uk/cmhwf.

What size of grant can be awarded?

The ambition of the South Lanarkshire Communities Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund for Adults is to support initiatives which promote mental health and wellbeing at a small, grass roots, community level. It should be accessible to all groups, no matter how small or inexperienced they are.

There will, therefore, be four levels of grant funding:

- Micro Grants of up to £2,000 aimed at un-constituted organisations.
- Small Grants - £2,001 - £7,500
- Main Grant - £7,501 - £20,000
- Partnership Grant £20,001 - £40,000

Successful applicants have 18-months to carry out the intended project.



We can be funded:

- Equipment
- One-off events
- Hall and room hire (including appropriate refreshments)
- Staffing costs
- Training costs
- Transport
- Utilities and running costs
- Volunteer expenses
- Safety equipment and PPE



The Fund will NOT support applications for:

- Clinical mental health treatment such as therapy or counselling
- Contingency costs, loans, endowments or interest
- Profit-making or fundraising activities
- VAT that you can reclaim
- Statutory activities
- Overseas travel
- Alcohol and other harmful substances (e.g. tobacco)

Salary Information

There are requirements for all grant recipients awarded a public sector grant on or after 1 July 2023 to meet the following criteria. This includes: paying at least the real Living Wage and providing appropriate channels for effective workers' voice, subject to limits on devolved competence.

With regards to the real Living Wage, the guidance notes that:

All UK-based staff aged 16 and over, including apprentices, who are directly employed by the grant recipient, must be paid at least the real Living Wage; and any UK-based workers who are not directly employed but are directly engaged in delivering the grant-funded activity, whether they be sub-contractors or agency staff, must also be paid at least the real Living Wage.



CRITERIA AND FURTHER INFORMATION

Eligibility

Read this guidance, our application guidance notes *carefully*. Please ensure that your application is eligible before you submit it. In particular, check that:

- Your project meets the criteria and is aimed at adults over 16.
- You have answered all relevant questions.

The focus of the Fund is on prevention and early intervention, and we would expect all funded projects to focus on one or both of these themes. The Fund also aims to support the adult population - which is considered to be anyone aged 16 years and over.

Impact on Mental Wellbeing

Your application should make it clear how your project will improve mental wellbeing for the participants of the project.

Equalities / Inclusive / Accessible

Be clear about how this project is targeted towards people who would benefit from it the most. Tell us about the practical steps you are taking to ensure your project is inclusive. Think about what equality, inclusiveness and accessibility really mean - and have you taken the appropriate steps to ensure your project meets all three?

Community Focus

Show us how your project is embedded in your community. Be clear about the research you have carried out to determine the need for your project.

- Be clear about how many volunteers are, or will be, involved in your project.
- Tell us who you are working in partnership with, and how you intend to monitor and report on your project.

CRITERIA AND FURTHER INFORMATION

Who Can the Fund Support

The Fund should be inclusive of the following 'at risk' groups:

- People, particularly women, experiencing gender based violence;
- People with a long-term health condition or disability;
- People from a Minority Ethnic background;
- Refugees and those with no recourse to public funds;
- People facing socio-economic disadvantage;
- People experiencing severe and multiple disadvantage;
- People with diagnosed mental illness;
- People affected by psychological trauma (including adverse childhood experiences);
- People who have experienced bereavement or loss;
- People disadvantaged by geographical location (particularly remote and rural areas);
- Older people (aged 50 and above);
- People with neurological conditions, learning disabilities or from neuro-diverse communities;
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI) communities;

Collaboration

Have you looked at other small organisations in your area and considered if there could be a partnership or collaborative work?

HOW TO APPLY?

Please visit the VASLan website for full information about the Fund and to find resources that will help you to make a strong application: www.vaslan.org.uk/cmhwf.

Applications should be submitted online. If you are new to the funding process or require support with your application, please call the office or send an email to funding@vaslan.org.uk.

To continue with the online application, you can access the form through the link on the website.

What Happens After You Apply?

Once your application is received by VASLan, one of the Development Officers from your locality will be in touch to discuss your application and ask any relevant questions. Once any additional information has been provided your application will be assessed by the Development Officer and then pre-panel assessed by the fund management team. Pre-panel assessment ensures that all applications going to panel are ready to be presented and meet the fund criteria.

There will be three panels, each tasked with categorising applications as: ready for presentation, further information needed or not suitable to Fund.

In January, a final panel will convene to evaluate all applications ready to be presented and applications where further information has been gathered before issuing award notices to the successful applications. This meticulous process ensures that all deserving applications receive fair consideration for awards.

Successful applications will be paid throughout February and March depending on how quickly invoices can be sent to our finance team.

Feedback For Rejected Applications

VASLan will always aim to support organisations and will strive to offer feedback where it is possible. Please allow up to four weeks after requesting feedback as this will be a very busy period for staff.

END OF YEAR REPORTING

As well as an interim check-in, VASLan will request that the questions below are recorded throughout the duration of your project. We will also ask for case studies, photos (if you have any) and possibly the opportunity to interview some of your participants to create an impact report for the Fund.

Evaluating Impact - Questions to ask projects

What we were expected to do and what we actually did (max 350 words):

Please outline activities undertaken, specifically against original plan, including details.

- How many activities were planned?
- How many activities were undertaken?
- How many participants benefitted?
- Who the main beneficiaries were?

Please let us know of any achievements to date that you are particularly proud of, or that demonstrate the difference made to individuals mental health and wellbeing (max 500 words).

Please tell us how you achieved each of your proposed outcomes:

The outcomes your project should have delivered against were in your funding agreement and you **MUST** use these outcomes as described.

- The outcome;
- What methods were used to gather evidence;
- Did you achieve the outcome? What are the indicators that demonstrate success?;

Challenges/changes made (max 350 words):

Any problems you encountered that slowed progress, stopped the outcomes happening or things that were changed.

USEFUL LINKS AND CONTACT INFORMATION



VASLan office phone number: 01698 300390



VASLan email address: funding@vaslan.co.uk



VASLan website: www.vaslan.org.uk or
www.vaslan.org.uk/cmhwf



[Living Wage Scotland | The Real Living Wage](#)



[Mental health transition and recovery plan: CRWIA Stage 1 | Scottish Government](#)



[National Performance Framework | Scottish Government](#)



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