

Bristol Impact Fund 3: One City, Many Communities

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Foreword

I am pleased to be introducing this prospectus, opening applications for the third round of the Bristol Impact Fund (BIF) programme 2026 to 2030.

Cohesive, inclusive, and vibrant communities with good opportunities and strong organisations provide the foundations for a resilient city. The BIF is a strategic approach to delivering grant investment. It aims to increase the capacity of the community and voluntary sector to empower and support those experiencing the greatest inequity.

Bristol has a diverse network of organisations with longstanding, trusted, and important connections to people and communities across our city. These organisations provide life-changing support and make vital contributions to the council's strategic and statutory priorities.

We are proposing to invest £8.8 million over four years for the third round of BIF.

Since BIF began, the fund has evolved, to respond to a changing city context and to build on what has been learnt. The second round (BIF 2) put community priorities and equality at its heart. This responded to the recommendations in the report *'Designing a New Social Reality'* from February 2021¹ which challenged the city to build back better from COVID-19. Groups funded through BIF 2 have taken an asset-based community development approach where they focus on strengths to empower people, build connection and mobilise resources.

Now, as we launch BIF 3: One City, Many Communities, we are building on the foundations of the work done over the past seven years. With a goal of growing the power of communities, the four-year programme will invest in organisations and groups to strengthen community infrastructure. It will enable the long-term work needed to build capacity at community level and nurture a shared set of values and resources to achieve a common goal, also known as 'social capital'. This in turn improves wellbeing and resilience across Bristol. I look forward to seeing a wide range of strong applications from groups around the city, with a common theme of working together towards a more equitable Bristol.

Councillor Stephen Williams

Chair, Public Health and Communities Policy Committee

Introduction

The Bristol Impact Fund has been developed with the community and voluntary sector. By prioritising neighbourhood organisations and citywide equalities communities, it funds

¹ 'Designing a New Social Reality' (2021) available at <https://www.blacksouthwestnetwork.org/vcse-research>

approaches that build capacity. This means developing the skills, knowledge, connections and confidence of communities and encouraging them to come together and take a lead. By putting resources into the hands of communities and supporting them to make connections and harness their skills and knowledge, they become more resilient. Resilience means being better able to survive and thrive for the long term, through challenging times. This approach ultimately grows the power of communities.

This document describes the vision for the third round of the Bristol Impact Fund (BIF 3), running from April 2026 to March 2030. It is for groups who want to apply for funding to understand the goal, intended impacts and practicalities of the grant programme, and to help them shape their proposals.

The Bristol Impact Fund will achieve its goal of growing the power of communities by a focus on equity. Equity means justice and fairness and recognising that we do not all start from the same place. To tackle inequity, we must acknowledge the disparities and make adjustments for these.

Context

Bristol's citizens and communities currently face many complex challenges, including increasing poverty and inequity, the climate emergency, and pressure on the NHS, adult social care and children's services. The council and wider public sector is having to make very difficult financial decisions at a time of increasing need. Local Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) organisations are also under significant pressure, facing rising costs and rising demand².

In response to these challenges, in April 2023 Bristol's VCSE organisations and One City partners adopted a '*One City, Many Communities*' approach which, alongside Bristol City Council's Corporate Strategy 2022 to 2027³ and the 2023 to 24 Director of Public Health annual report '*The Power of Us*'⁴, recognise that power, connection and inclusion in our communities are key to creating a fair, healthy and more sustainable city. Community building activities which enable social connection, develop community assets and empower those communities most impacted by systemic inequality can help support everyday wellbeing and are essential for long-term city resilience.

² Voscur Pulse survey (2023) available at: <https://www.voscur.org/news/latest-pulse-survey-results-suggest-nearly-half-vcse-services-risk>

³ 'Bristol City Council's Corporate Strategy 2022 – 2027' (2022), available at: <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/council/policies-plans-and-strategies/corporate-strategy>

⁴ 'The Power of Us' (2023), available at: <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/council/policies-plans-and-strategies/social-care-and-health/director-of-public-health-annual-report>

It is widely recognised that VCSE organisations across the city play a critical role within this process and are key to creating the conditions for resilient, healthy communities⁵. It is only by working together, with a strengthened VCSE sector and equitable access to funding opportunities, that we can tackle the significant challenges we face as a city.

The government has recognised the importance of a strengthened and effective partnership with civil society (or VCSE) organisations in meeting today's challenges, with the launch of the Civil Society Covenant⁶. In parallel, the new Locality Manifesto, *Building Thriving Neighbourhoods*, advocates for a 'community power revolution', emphasising that local communities are best placed to drive transformative social change⁷. Other organisations⁸ and funders are placing increasing importance on community led approaches and solutions. The new National Lottery funding vision and strategy has put community agency, power and control at its heart⁹.

⁵ For example, in the 'One City Economic Recovery and Renewal Strategy' (2020) and the 'One City Climate Strategy' (2020), available at: <https://www.bristolonecity.com/one-city-strategies/> and Quartet's 'In View' report (2024), available at: <https://quartetcf.org.uk/in-view/in-view-2024/>

⁶ The Civil Society Covenant is a new agreement to improve the relationship between civil society and government. It will act as a principles-based foundation for a new relationship and will symbolise the UK government's recognition of the sector as a trusted and independent partner, support collaboration between civil society organisations and government, and ensure respect for the different roles each plays. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/civil-society-covenant-framework-launch>

⁷ The manifesto outlines a vision for a thriving society built on three pillars: a community-powered economy, preventative public services, and inclusive spaces that empower local voices. See <https://locality.org.uk/reports/the-locality-manifesto>

⁸ The NHS Confederation and Local Trust have joined forces to promote and test community-led approaches to health and wellbeing in some of England's most deprived neighbourhoods. See <https://www.nhsconfed.org/topic/system-working/integrated-neighbourhood-working>

⁹ See <https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/programmes/our-vision-for-funding-in-england> and <https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/about/our-strategy>

About the Bristol Impact Fund

What we want to achieve

The overall goal for the Bristol Impact Fund 3 is:

‘To grow the power of communities experiencing the greatest inequity’

By ‘communities’ we mean both:

- geographical for example, neighbourhoods and communities of place
- communities of interest or shared experience of inequity or disadvantage.

Focusing on inequity is about recognising that social exclusion and injustice, disadvantage and discrimination cause harm to citizens, communities and the city. To address this, we need to be intentional about removing barriers, changing the way things are done and empowering people and communities. This will increase social connection and solidarity and reduce isolation, which will enable people to take control over their own lives and help communities to work together to support one another for the common good.

BIF 2 has purposefully channelled funding to organisations that are ‘of their community’, for example groups led by racially minoritised people and Disabled people as well as those based in the 20 per cent most deprived neighbourhoods. This is about supporting and encouraging communities most impacted by inequity to support one another, take a lead and have the capacity to contribute to the life of the city. This is important for our resilience as a city. BIF 3 will continue this approach and encourage applications from Bristol’s diverse communities including LGBTQ+ people and young people (16 to 24)¹⁰.

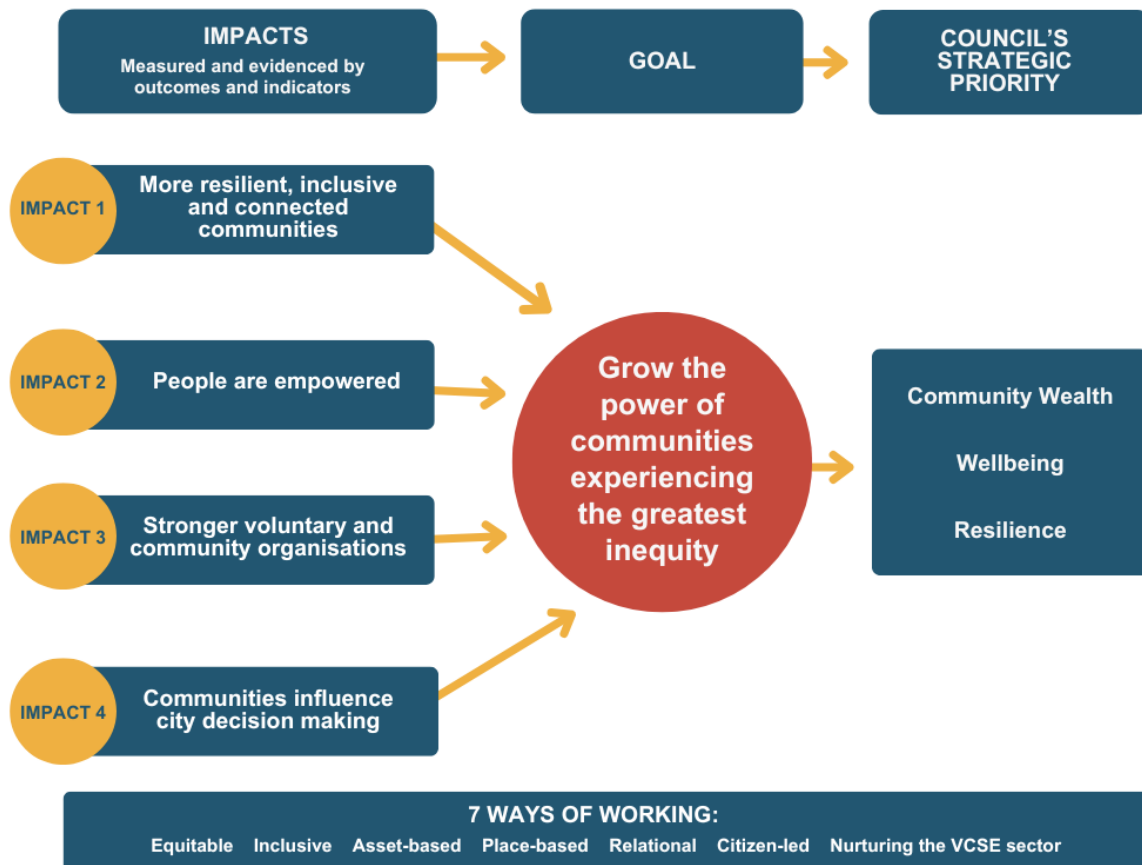
To build resilience within this context, social capital and community wealth must be continually nurtured. BIF 2 has shown that it takes time to build a way of working which focuses on what is strong, fair and is led by diverse communities.

The approach to BIF 3 takes this into account, with a continued commitment to the current BIF 2 ways of working and the overall goal of growing the power of communities who experience the greatest inequity.

BIF 3 Strategic Framework

The diagram below gives an overview of the BIF 3 strategic framework which is made up of 4 Impacts contributing to the overall goal to ‘Grow the power of communities experiencing the greatest inequity’. The BIF 3 seven ways of working underpin all the funded work.

¹⁰ Please note Bristol Impact Fund does not fund any work for under 16s because alternative streams of funding from Bristol City Council are available for this.



Programme impacts

To achieve this goal of growing the power of communities BIF 3 will deliver four impacts. These impacts have been developed over time with BIF 2 funded partners to enable organisations to show how they are contributing to the overall goal.

It is expected that grant funded work will evolve and grow during the four-year programme to achieve these impacts.

Note that 'people' refers to 'people experiencing the greatest inequity'.

Impact 1 (Community): More resilient, inclusive and connected communities

What this looks like:

Empowered communities build strong, inclusive connections and trust, drive change for common good and create the conditions for collective wellbeing.

All grants will contribute towards this impact.

Organisations will also choose from one or more of the following impacts:

Impact 2 (Individual): People are empowered to make decisions and take action

What this looks like:

Barriers are removed and people can unlock their skills, talents and ideas. Individuals are informed, engaged, connected with others and able to take collective action. People from minoritised and excluded communities are part of purposeful collective action to tackle inequity.

Impact 3 (VCSE sector): Stronger, more resilient voluntary and community organisations

What this looks like:

Bristol benefits from a vibrant community of interacting VCSE organisations that is representative of the diverse city. VCSE organisations become stronger by involving a wider network of people and growing their collaboration and partnership.

Impact 4: (Policy/decision-maker): City decision-making is influenced through community involvement

What this looks like:

Communities can effect change in the city. They are connected to resources and opportunities to shape policy and decision-making, through civic structures.

Seven ways of working

The ways of working are principles that are central to BIF. Funded groups will need to demonstrate how they will apply the following ways of working:

1. Equitable

Bristol is a wonderfully diverse city – our diversity is an asset in so many ways. But the structures of our society (the way organisations work, the way decisions are made, the services available) affect people and groups differently. We want BIF 3 to work towards an equitable city, meaning fair and just, where everyone has access to power to take a lead, influence decisions and make change happen.

The lives of poor people who are often working class, as well as racially minoritised and Disabled people are disproportionately impacted by the decisions and services determined by others. We want to fund work that reduces the inequity felt by communities. This would mean giving communities the space, resources and support to be themselves, work out their priorities, develop better ways of doing things and have the capacity to be properly represented in important city conversations. Some people call this levelling up.

2. Inclusive

Inclusion is about deliberately and actively reaching out to include people and communities who are often left out or excluded. We then create separate spaces for the people who don't quite fit in. Often it is the experience of the people who are not in the conversation who will move us forward. We will create better solutions and build greater resilience if we include people with diverse views.

BIF 3 will fund initiatives that make things possible by including everyone and making connections across difference.

3. **Asset-based**

Communities, whether they are based in a location or city-wide equalities communities, are full of assets. An asset is any collective knowledge, skill, talent, or resource that belongs to the community and can help it solve its problems.

Across Bristol, from litter picks to storytelling events with people from across different generations, people give their time, skills, and creativity to help each other, make things better and find new ways of using what we have.

Inequity, poverty and top-down processes and systems can take away a community's confidence, break community connections and encourage them to depend on others to find solutions. Sometimes communities are recognised for their problems or what they are missing. This all creates a negative cycle which seems impossible to break.

Work funded by BIF 3 should start with understanding the community's opportunities and assets. We want to fund good ideas, rooted in communities, which make things possible by building community connections and confidence.

4. **Place-based**

A sense of community where we live is vitally important. Strong neighbourhood communities with access to free and welcoming community facilities and support, to enable people to act on their interests and share their skills supports our individual and collective wellbeing.

5. **Relational / Relationship oriented**

Building community confidence, power and resilience is all about the connections between people which create possibilities for exchange, shared action, good ideas and helping each other out.

BIF 3 will grow four types of strong and lasting connections:

- within communities
- across communities
- between communities and decision makers
- across the city

6. **Citizen-led**

Communities often hold the solutions to their own challenges. BIF 3 will grow their power to take action on issues that are important to them. BIF 3 welcomes proposals which respond to issues that communities say are important to them (community-identified priorities), and which are led by the community themselves, building their skills, confidence and therefore, their power to make change happen. Organisations should encourage

community action through volunteering or informal action and work with communities as active participants in funded projects.

7. **Nurturing the voluntary and community sector ecosystems**

The voluntary and community sector is diverse. It is made up of small organisations, organisations led by volunteers, and large organisations who employ staff and deliver contracts. Organisations may grow and shrink during their lifetime. They support and rely on each other, sharing resources, ideas, and assets - from physical spaces to supporters in their communities to funding. This is what makes it an ecosystem. BIF 3 will continue to nurture resilient, diverse communities and organisations within the VCSE ecosystem.

Working together is vital, if we are to make the most of the assets we have to grow the power of communities. Funded groups would need to demonstrate they understand their context and are making the right connections with other groups, formal and informal, either within or across communities. This could include informal networks, sharing resources, working together to support community led priorities and collaborating for greater impact. It could also be about building a common vision and sense of belonging, sometimes known as community cohesion, between two distinct communities.

BIF 3 will continue to provide opportunities for funded groups to share reflection and learning.

Thematic priorities - What type of activity does the Bristol Impact Fund fund?

BIF funding is not prescriptive. Communities are best placed to identify their own priorities and find solutions to their own challenges. Funding applications must demonstrate how the proposed activities respond to priorities identified by communities themselves. It is expected that these priorities may evolve over the four years of the grant.

Examples of the type of initiatives that could be funded include, but are not limited to, those that:

- deliver **community-identified priorities**
- support **social justice and social inclusion**, such as activities that tackle isolation, peer support, facilitating connections digitally or in person, supporting equalities groups to self-organise and influence the life of the city
- build **economic resilience and community wealth**, such as collective action to tackle poverty, anti-poverty stigma work¹¹, local economic development and local employment and skills training opportunities, improving digital and financial literacy skills, and community-controlled assets for income generation
- promote **wellbeing and connection**, empower people through activities that increase people's sense of belonging and connection and reduce stress, promote social action and

¹¹ See Joseph Rowntree Foundation 'Poverty stigma' (2024) available at: <https://www.jrf.org.uk/stigma-power-and-poverty/poverty-stigma-a-glue-that-holds-poverty-in-place>

volunteering, or community hubs that coordinate and connect people and organisations in their geographic area or equalities community to increase community action

- tackle and prevent **hate crime and discrimination**, by supporting victims of hate crime and discrimination and building community cohesion

Demonstrating impact

Successful applicants will be able to tell a story of change. BIF 3 uses impacts, outcomes, and indicators to show how each application will contribute to the overall goal. The application process will guide applicants through this. The purpose of this document is to explain how all the grants will contribute to the goal.

Outcomes

Successful applicants will be able to link their contribution to four programme impacts, as listed below, through a set of outcomes.

Outcomes describe the desired change that BIF funded organisations will work towards. These outcomes have been developed over time with BIF 2 funded partners to enable organisations to show how they are contributing to the overall goal of the fund. Having a common set of outcomes across grants makes it easier to measure impact and value for money and to evidence the change made by individual organisations and the overall grant programme.

- Each applicant will choose one outcome from Impact 1
- Applicants can then select up to five more outcomes from Impact 2, Impact 3 or Impact 4 depending on grant size¹².
- There are good reasons for asking everyone to work within the same strategic framework. It is understood that there may be instances where the proposed outcomes do not fully capture what the work is trying to achieve. In this instance applicants can propose one bespoke community-identified outcome. This can be co-designed with participants/community members during the first six months of the grant.
- Applicants are not encouraged to try to cover all four Impacts as this would stretch resources too thinly.

Impact 1 (Community): More resilient, inclusive and connected communities

Outcomes:

1. People feel more connected to their community
2. People participate more in community life
3. More people take on leadership roles within their community
4. People self-organise to take action on issues that are important to them

¹² We recommend a maximum of two outcomes for small grants, four outcomes for medium grants and six outcomes for large grants.

Impact 2 (Individual): People are empowered to make decisions and take action

Outcomes:

5. People gain knowledge of their rights and the services available to them
6. People have improved wellbeing
7. People gain skills and build capacity
8. People feel more confident to take action on things that matter to them

Impact 3 (VCSE sector): Stronger, more resilient voluntary and community organisations

Outcomes:

9. My VCSE organisation becomes more representative of the community it serves
10. New skills, knowledge and practice are embedded in my VCSE organisation, building its capacity
11. VCSE organisations coordinate, collaborate and work in partnership better
12. Community spaces and activities (physical and virtual) are more accessible and inclusive

Impact 4 (Policy/decision-making): City decision making is influenced through community involvement

Outcomes:

13. People are better able to engage with decision makers in the city
14. Underrepresented groups have a stronger voice in the city
15. Local policy or strategic decisions are informed by diverse and marginalised views and experiences
16. People feel that they can influence decisions that affect them or their community

BIF 3 work will evolve over the four years of the grant as funded partners respond to and work alongside their communities and the changing context. The outcomes listed above will not all occur at the same time. BIF funded organisations are encouraged to think about the links and dependencies between outcomes and the 'chain of events' that will lead towards the desired change for individuals.

Indicators

Indicators are things that organisations can measure to show progress towards their chosen outcomes and impacts.

The BIF 3 programme has a menu of standard indicators. All funded organisations will choose indicators from this list use to measure progress. These indicators have been developed to align with those used by other funders in the city where possible and are based on learning from BIF 2. Work will continue to develop the list so that it remains helpful and relevant and meets the needs of the diverse organisations funded.

The list of indicators will be available with the application pack.

Monitoring, evaluation and learning

All BIF funded groups will be required to take part in monitoring, evaluation and learning.

The purpose of the monitoring, evaluation and learning programme is to be able to tell the collective story of impact and how the grant investment is growing the power of communities experiencing the greatest inequity and contributing to Bristol City Council's strategic priorities.

Funded organisations will be able to capture and communicate the impact of their work and the council will be able to demonstrate the impact and value of the grant programme. The Bristol Impact Fund is not simply about giving out money to individual organisations but is about working together to achieve a goal.

Building on the learning from BIF 2, there will be an allocation of £264,000 over four years to support evaluation. An evaluation framework is already in place. It builds on the evaluation framework for BIF 2 that was co-designed by the funded organisations, an external evaluation partner and Bristol City Council.

Developing your grant application

We encourage applicants to take a 'story of change' approach to develop their grant application. A story of change is a shared, logical plan of the change that will happen as a result of the funding – a chain of events including **who, how, what** and **why**. It helps to focus on making a difference, inform planning and allocation of resources, decide what evidence to collect, reveal and test assumptions, and support co-production or at least ensure all stakeholders are involved.

A good story of change can be used to plan delivery as well as evaluation.

For more information on creating a story of change, please [read guidance](#) from JEM Associates, an organisation that helps individuals and groups increase social impact.

Applicants will need to think through the following questions:

Who? (stakeholder mapping)

1. Who are the people that matter? Who are your community members, participants and stakeholders?

Why? (longer term vision and purpose)

2. What is the change you want to make? What difference will you make with your community members?

How? (investment, context and commitments)

3. How will you grow the power of communities in the way you work? Think about how you will apply the BIF seven 'ways of working' in your work.
4. What existing assets can you build on?

What? (delivery and participation)

5. What is your main focus or priority? How do you know that this is the priority of your community?

6. What do you need to deliver to make the difference you want to make? How do you see the work evolving over four years?
7. How will your activities be shaped and led by your participants and community members?
8. How will you know you are being successful? What evidence will you draw on?

Funding Approach

The third Bristol Impact Fund will have a budget of £8.8 million over four years.

Small Grants

The purpose of the small grants fund is to encourage new ideas and involvement from more diverse communities. We will take positive action to reach communities underrepresented in the medium and large grants awarded in April 2026. We will run two rounds of small grants and grants will last two years. The total amount of funding available each round will be £200,000 making a total allocation of £400,000 to small grants across the Bristol Impact Fund 3 programme.

The aim is for the first round of new small grants to start on 1 July 2026.

Individual small grants will range between £2,500 and £11,000 per year.

Medium and large Grants

Medium and large grants will run for the whole of the four-year funding period: 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2030. The total amount of funding available for medium and large grants will be £6,730,000.

To increase the number of grants awarded there will be an upper limit of £110,000 per year per organisation or £220,000 per collaborative or partnership application per year. The average grant to a single organisation is expected to be around £55,000. Exceptional applications of over £100,000 (per organisation or partnership) will be high quality, demonstrating very strong community building principles and be very well placed to make a significant impact.

We propose:

- Individual medium grants range between £11,000 and £55,000 per year
- Individual large grants range between £56,000 and £110,000 per year
- Up to £351,500 per year for partnership applications to support people and communities who experience hate crime and discrimination.
- No organisation receives more than £110,000 per year across the programme (the exception to this is for organisations which are part of a collaborative application to deliver hate crime support)
- We expect all applicants to be able to demonstrate informal collaborations in the way they work with others .
- We will accept collaborative applications from several organisations working together.

Hate crime and discrimination support and prevention

Hate crime is experienced by a wide group of people in the city including Disabled people, racially minoritised communities, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender people, women, and faith

communities. Nationally the occurrence of hate crime has increased in the past five years¹³. In Bristol in the past two years, racially-motivated hate, disability, religion, gender and transphobic hate increased, while there was a slight decrease in sexual orientation motivated hate crime¹⁴. The increased occurrence and threat of hate crime and the impact it has on the resilience of equalities communities in the city makes hate crime support and prevention an important priority of the fund.

At the same time there is cause for hope as all over the city we see examples of communities coming together to proactively build communities that welcome everyone. It's important therefore that our hate crime work builds on this, taking a preventative community-led approach.

Funding to tackle hate crime and discrimination including preventative work and community cohesion is one way of the council meeting its Public Sector Equality Duty¹⁵ as the funded activities seek to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it.

The third round of BIF will consider proposals of up to £351,500 per year to tackle hate crime and discrimination by providing support to victims and by working preventatively to build community cohesion. The total amount of funding available for tackling hate crime and discrimination will be £1,406,000. All the BIF 3 ways of working will apply.

All BIF funded work contributes to community cohesion. BIF 3 will facilitate stronger links between work to prevent and tackle hate crime and discrimination and wider community building work. BIF communities of practice will support organisations to connect and work together.

Applicants will need to address:

- a. Support for people who experience hate crime and discrimination of all ages
- b. How they will work in collaboration with others to develop and nurture approaches which increase community cohesion and the skills, knowledge and capacity of citizens and communities to prevent hate crime.

Bristol City Council wants to be a partner in this process.

Applicants will propose how the funding is allocated to achieve the outcomes.

How to apply

Please refer to the detailed guidance document for more information on how to apply which will be available with the application pack.

¹³ Hate crime in England and Wales 2021-22 – Home office official statistics [Hate crime, England and Wales, 2021 to 2022 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/hate-crime-in-england-and-wales-2021-to-2022)

¹⁴ Bristol JSNA health and wellbeing profile 2024/25 <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/files/documents/1531-jsna-2021-crime-updated-june-2021/file>

¹⁵ The Public Sector Equality Duty is part of the Equalities Act 2010 which requires public authorities such as Councils to meet certain objectives through their work. See: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/public-sector-equality-duty>

The application window for medium and large grants is below. The timetable for small grants will be published in the by September 2025 with the aim of opening round one in later 2025 and round 2 in late 2027.

Applications open for 12 weeks	18 March 2025 at midday
Applications close	10 June 2025 at midday
Grants evaluation	June to August 2025
Bristol City Council Committee decision	November 2025
Grant Decisions communicated to applicants	December 2025
Funding agreements issued	January to March 2026
Commencement of new period of grant funding	1 April 2026

Glossary

Asset	A useful or valuable thing or person – assets can include interests, skills, experience, time, buildings and resources.
Asset-based community development	An approach to developing communities based on their strengths, skills and resources – recognising and making use of what is strong, rather than what is wrong.
Community	A community is a group of people who have common characteristics or interests. Community may arise from a sense of shared identity, affiliation or common bonds or may be linked to a place, neighbourhood or country.
Community hubs	Community hubs are VCSE organisations that help coordinate and connect people in their geographic area or equality community. The role of community hubs is to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increase community action and engagement through an asset-based community development approach. • coordinate VCSE activity across a neighbourhood or equalities community to connect groups to opportunities. • connect and learn from each other and share learning with others.
Communities of place	Communities that organise around a local area or neighbourhood.
Community infrastructure	Basic structures, facilities and organisations that support the lives of people in a community. It can also include the physical spaces and institutions that support civic life, such as community centres, parks, and pubs.
Communities of interest / Equalities communities	Communities that organise around a shared characteristic, experience or interest – in this context, people with shared experience of systemic inequity
Community wealth building	Community wealth building is a people-centred approach to local economic development, which redirects wealth back into the local economy, and places control and benefits into the hands of local people
Civic Participation	Engagement in democratic processes, both in person and online, including signing a petition, contacting a local official or attending a public rally
Decision makers	In this context, those elected to make decisions regarding communities, for example, local councillors. The Bristol Impact Fund aims to ensure city decision-making is influenced by community voices.
VCSE Ecosystem	We describe the VCSE sector as an 'ecosystem' with a complex web of relationships and interdependencies built around a network of organisations representing diverse communities and interests.
Equalities-led groups	Organisations where at least two thirds of trustees, staff or members identify as BME, Disabled, LGBTQ+ or from another equalities group.
Equity	Equity is often related to justice or proportional fairness. Equality differs from equity in that it relates more to sameness or equal distribution. In society, equal treatment does not always produce an equitable result. Equity means recognising that we do not all start from the same place and must acknowledge and make adjustments for imbalances.
Hate crime	Any criminal offence which is perceived by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice based on a person's

	race, religion, sexual orientation, disability or because they are transgender.
Health wealth	Recognising the essential value of health and wellbeing and the role of citizens and communities as producers of health wealth
Indicator	A specific, observable and measurable characteristic that can be used to show changes or progress a programme is making toward achieving a specific outcome
Inequity	A lack of justice or fairness. Inequity in a community means injustice, unfairness, and bias are being perpetuated.
Organisations 'of their communities	Organisations where at least two thirds of trustees, staff or members come from the community they are working with. This could be a geographical or equalities community.
People to people	Connections and relationships between people based on mutual interests and shared concerns
People to power	Connections and relationships between people and decision-making authorities, institutions or others in a position of power which gives people meaningful influence over decisions and services which impact on their lives
Resilience	The ability to survive and thrive for the long term, through challenging times. By putting resources into the hands of communities and supporting them to make connections and harness their skills and knowledge, we believe they will be better able to cope with and bounce back from shocks, stresses and strains.
Sustainable	Refers to the long-term ability to maintain or continue
Social capital	Using relationships at all levels to contribute to collective wellbeing, for example personal relationships, social network support, civic engagement and trust and cooperative norms
Social inclusion	Social inclusion is a process that ensures citizens have the opportunities and resources necessary to participate fully in economic, social and cultural life.
Systemic inequity	The unfair distribution of resources, opportunities, and treatment that results from policies, standards, practices, attitudes, and prejudices that are institutionalized and even structural in the society.
VCSE	Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise

Appendix: Summary of investment in the VCSE sector by Bristol City Council

Other Bristol City Council grant investment

At the time of writing, other Bristol City Council grant investment is as follows:

Cultural Investment Programme (CIP) – Originators fund	
Total annual amount available	£91,584
Duration/term of grant	One-year grants of £500 - £5,000
Purpose of grant	Grants for Bristol-based organisations and individuals to deliver arts and culture activities, events or festivals, making arts and culture accessible for all citizens. Priorities for the fund include arts and culture activity in neighbourhoods in the lower 10 per cent of multiple deprivation, and with Bristol citizens with protected characteristics
Eligibility requirements for organisations	Bristol-based artists and creative practitioners, community groups and organisations
Date of next application round	TBC
Contact email and website address for further information	Arts and culture funding (bristol.gov.uk)

Cultural Investment Programme (CIP) – Imagination fund	
Total annual amount available	£152,640
Duration/term of grant	Two-year grants of £5,000 - £15,000 per year
Purpose of grant	Up to 2 years' funding for innovative and ambitious medium-large scale projects, programmes or events/ festivals with an arts and culture focus; undertake organisational development or support professional development within the arts and culture sector; work with communities that will increase access to arts and culture.
Eligibility requirements for organisations	Bristol-based arts and cultural organisations with at least six months of accounts
Date of next application round	TBC
Contact email and website address for further information	Arts and culture funding (bristol.gov.uk)

Cultural Investment Programme (CIP) – Openness fund
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Total annual amount available	£366,336
Duration/term of grant	Four-year grants of up to £120,000
Purpose of grant	This fund supports established arts and cultural organisations that are best able to achieve our aims and objectives with unrestricted funding for up to four years
Eligibility requirements for organisations	Bristol-based arts and cultural organisations with at least twelve months of accounts
Date of next application round	N/A - Fund now closed
Contact email and website address for further information	Arts and culture funding (bristol.gov.uk)

Bristol City Council: Enabling the VCSE Sector Grant	
Total annual amount available	£tbc
Duration/term of grant	tbc
Purpose of grant	To provide support in developing the voluntary sector
Eligibility requirements for organisations	Charitable or not for profit organisations with a track record of VCSE infrastructure support.
Date of next application round	A further round of funding through this grant is expected to be available in April 2026.
Contact email and website address for further information	investmentandgrants@bristol.gov.uk

Bristol City Council Information Advice and Guidance Grant	
Total annual amount available	£tbc
Duration/term of grant	tbc
Purpose of grant	Provision of a community-based advice network providing generalist and specialist services across the city.
Eligibility requirements for organisations	Bristol based VCSE organisations (charitable or not for profit) who were in possession of the Legal Services Commission Quality Mark who comply with BCC Baseline Standards.
Date of next application round	A further round of funding through this grant is expected to be available in Spring 2026.
Contact email and website address for further information	investmentandgrants@bristol.gov.uk

Community Resilience Fund

Total amount available	£4 million (now allocated)
Purpose of grant	A one-off capital grant fund to support community and voluntary organisations to recover from the pandemic, increase their sustainability and continue the vital work they do for the long term
Eligibility requirements for organisations	Organisations must be based in and working with the most deprived areas of the city and/or city-wide equality groups
Date of next application round	N/A - now closed
Contact email and website address for further information	investmentandgrants@bristol.gov.uk

Youth and Play Grant Fund	
Total annual amount available	£1,225,000
Duration/term of grant	North, East Central and City Centre: Up to 3 years from October 2023 to September 2026 South: up to 18 months from October 2023 to March 2025.
Purpose of grant	Up to three years' funding for projects that deliver youth and play sessions. These can be open access, targeted groups, mobile or detached youth work. These are for children and young people aged 8 to 19 years old or up to 25 with SEND. All activities should support the social, emotional and physical health that children and young people need, want and value.
Eligibility requirements for organisations	<p>Each area (North, East Central, South and City Centre) is run by an Area Partnership who meet on a quarterly basis. Organisations will be expected to engage with this group(s).</p> <p>Organisations should be Bristol based with a background in youth and/or playwork and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be non-governmental • be constituted • have a set of objectives that allows them to undertake the activities they are proposing • be value driven, for the social good • be non-party political • have at least three trustees or directors (who are not related to each other and are not paid shareholders) • not distribute any of their surpluses or assets through share dividends to individuals or shareholders • have a bank account in the organisation's name <p>Organisations should have: Safeguarding Policy, DBS numbers for all staff involved in activity delivery, Data Protection Policy, Equality Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Complaints Policy,</p>

	<p>financial stability, public liability of £5 million minimum, employer liability of £10 million minimum.</p> <p>In addition to this, providers will need to demonstrate their commitment to the following Principles of Practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An offer that is accessible, inclusive and equitable. • An offer where safeguarding is central to all procedures • An offer that is using a trauma informed approach for children and young people and staff • Commitment to include the voice of children and young people in strategic planning, service design, delivery and development of services • Commitment to provide a high-quality provision which will be continually reviewed and improved • Commitment to continued professional development of staff and offering the right support structures to deliver a high-quality service
Date of next application round	See duration of above grants.
Contact email and website address for further information	Mark.lee@bristol.gov.uk

Other sources of VCSE support from Bristol City Council

Community Infrastructure Levy

As part of the planning process, a developer often has to give money to the council to pay for improvements in the area they are developing in. This is usually through a planning charge called the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) but is sometimes through a planning obligation called Section 106 (S106). 15 per cent of CIL funds and relevant local S106 funds are made available for local decision making by councillors through Area Committees. This can be for highways improvements, parks improvements, tree planting and improvements to community buildings. Areas with a Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) receive 25 per cent of CIL funds raised within their area to support the priorities they've identified. Local councillors allocate the funds to support local priority projects, such as improving community centres or parks.

In the 2022/2023 financial year, approximately £1.4 million of CIL income was allocated directly to community groups and VCSE organisations.

Further information on [Funding for local projects 2023 to 2024 can be found on the Bristol City Council website.](#)

Leasing or renting council assets

We lease more than 170 properties to voluntary and community organisations, often at reduced or minimal rents, or preferential terms to the value of approximately £1.3 million. These arrangements range from short-term licences to long leases and this process is known as 'Community Asset Transfer' or CAT.

Local people are often best placed to manage community facilities in their area. They already make extensive use of these assets and their local knowledge and hands-on management often results in lower overheads and better value-for-money. Community organisations also use volunteers and take great pride in their local area.

Managing these facilities helps to empower local communities and can bring opportunities for greater independence and financial sustainability. When done well, CAT can create lasting change in local neighbourhoods.

We are fully committed to using our assets to form long-term partnerships with suitable third sector organisations, in order to create stronger, more cohesive and more sustainable communities.

We have adopted a Community Asset Transfer Policy, which sets out the criteria for organisations wishing to apply for CAT. The policy also contains details of the various stages of the application and decision-making process, together with anticipated time scales. Information about the policy is available [on the Bristol City Council website](#).

Other funding opportunities

For a list of currently available grants, please visit [Quartet Community Foundation's Grants page](#).