

## Grant-Making Principles

### Our Vision for Cheshire

#### **We want Cheshire to be a place where, regardless of where they live:**

- People can feel fulfilled and reach their full potential
- People can achieve economic, social and physical wellbeing
- Inequalities in life expectancy, health and employment opportunity are reduced
- People share a strong sense of community
- Voluntary and community-based activity can thrive and flourish

#### **To achieve this, we will endeavour to:**

- Understand the needs and aspirations of people in Cheshire, recognising that "disadvantage" can take many forms
- Develop grant making programmes that are responsive and flexible, to take account of changing and emerging needs
- Be responsive to the wishes of donors
- Ensure that our grant making makes a significant difference to people's lives
- Work strategically on a Cheshire-wide basis, making links across sectors and working proactively to bring about change
- Develop ongoing relationships with the voluntary and community organisations we work with and fund
- Create an enduring legacy for Cheshire

#### **We want to fund activities that:**

- Will help us to achieve our Vision for Cheshire
- Demonstrate a clear understanding of existing or impending need and its causes
- Are informed by local consultation and local knowledge
- Encourage community involvement, volunteering and self-help
- Are well-planned, realistic and achievable
- Will make a practical difference to people's lives, in a way that can be clearly demonstrated and evidenced
- Can achieve a great deal with a relatively small amount of money

#### **We want to fund organisations that:**

- Understand clearly the needs of their beneficiaries
- Have a clear vision of what they are trying to achieve
- Involve the local community and value their volunteers
- Are competent, well managed and resourceful
- Are able to deliver value for money / seek to maximise a return for any funding provided
- Are accountable and transparent
- Are able to manage their finances appropriately
- Can demonstrate that they are best placed to meet the needs they have identified
- Prioritise the beneficiaries of their services above the needs of their organisation
- Are willing to share their learning and resources

## Our Commitment to Sustainability

- As part of our Vision to 'Make Cheshire Better', the Foundation is committed to promoting environmental, social and economic sustainability in all its grant making. We are particularly keen to encourage the organisations we fund to consider the environment, make ethical purchases and operate in a way that promotes social co-operation and partnership. Our Sustainability Policy can be viewed here (currently pending approval of policy).

## What we can and cannot fund

### We can only fund organisations:

- Whose work primarily benefits people living within one of the three local authorities of Cheshire East, Warrington and Cheshire West and Chester. Regional or national organisations working in Cheshire **may** be considered if they can demonstrate that they are the best organisation to tackle a particular social issue or address a specific need and there is no local organisation able to do this
- That are "not for profit"; such as charities, community groups and social enterprises, that can demonstrate a clear community benefit in their constitution or governing document. The governing document should state clearly how any profits are to be reinvested for community benefit. **There is no requirement for applicant organisations to be registered charities**
- Where partnership applications are received, we will consider project proposals where some of the partner organisations are based outside Cheshire, but we would expect local organisations to take a lead in that partnership
- Cheshire Community Foundation is unable to fund the core running costs of infrastructure organisations. We give priority to frontline organisations that are working directly with local people "on the ground". Infrastructure organisations, which are able to directly deliver projects serving disadvantaged people are eligible to apply, please contact us if you wish to discuss a project of this nature further, prior to making an application
- Where organisations are "in crisis", we will endeavour to offer our support but this may not necessarily be financial support
- In special circumstances, grants to individuals in need will be considered

### We will NOT fund organisations:

- That are statutory bodies (such as schools, Parish Councils and hospitals) or private businesses, including sole traders.
- Whose work does not support people living within one of the three local authorities of Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Chester or Warrington
- Who do not have a minimum of two unrelated cheque signatories.
- For Community Interest Companies – it is our policy not to consider CICs who do not have a minimum of three unrelated Directors to the company.

### We will NOT fund:

- General appeals i.e. a request for a general contribution to a larger project, where an identifiable aspect has not been defined
- Political promotion, including political party activity
- The support or promotion of a religious doctrine; mission; proselytism or promotion of the beliefs of a particular faith (beyond basic religious/cultural awareness raising)
- Medical research, medical equipment or medical treatment
- Activities that are for the sole relief or benefit of animals or plants. The Foundation is interested in the difference its funding makes to Cheshire's **people**
- Retrospective or deficit funding
- Activities which a statutory body is responsible for

- Organisations requesting funding towards reserves or which have significant financial reserves, except in exceptional circumstances. We accept that it is good practice for organisations to maintain an appropriate level of reserves and this will be looked at on a “case by case” basis
- We can only consider funding capital projects involving land or buildings if the applicant organisation can demonstrate that they either own the premises in question, or have security of tenure for a significant length of time. This will be assessed on a “case by case” basis
- Any application to the Foundation should be for a single project. The Grant Panel can only consider one application per organisation at any one panel meeting. If an application is declined, the organisation can apply for a different project at any time. If a grant is awarded, the Panel may consider further applications from the same organisation but, under normal circumstances, a cheque would not be issued for a second project until the Foundation receives satisfactory monitoring of the first project.
- Applications involving sport will be considered on a “case by case” basis. The Foundation welcomes applications for projects that intend to use sport as a tool to tackle a social issue or bring a community together, but is reluctant to fund sport for sport's sake, as there are other sources of funding for sport in Cheshire

#### **Full Cost Recovery:**

- The Foundation is currently in the position where it can only consider applications for the direct costs associated with delivering a particular project. Whilst it recognises the importance of achieving Full Cost Recovery wherever possible, unfortunately it does not have the financial resources available at the present time to commit to this as a general principle

#### **Year on Year Funding:**

- The Foundation recognises the need for staff posts in the voluntary sector to have some security but it is not currently in a position to routinely guarantee funding for more than one year at a time. The Foundation itself is in its infancy and therefore has limited donor funds at its disposal. As our donor base develops and grows we hope to move to a position where we can offer secured, multi-year funding for staff posts but this will always be conditional on stringent and satisfactory annual monitoring of impact on beneficiaries and service users, as defined by the Foundation and agreed by the applicant organisation, as well as on the availability of funds.

#### **Panel Decisions and Appeals:**

- Grant Panel recommendations are considered by the Foundation's Grants Committee at the earliest opportunity. The only circumstances in which the Grants Committee would veto or alter the recommendations of the Panel are:
  - Where the Grants Committee feels that the Panel's recommendations are in breach of some duty for which they, as Trustees of the Foundation, are responsible or
  - Where the Grants Committee is in possession of significant information relating to the application, to which the Grant Panel was not privy
- Panel recommendations, once endorsed by the Grants Committee, are final. The only grounds for appeal by an applicant organisation are under the following circumstances:
  - Where the organisation feels that the Foundation's representative (including panellists) showed prejudice in considering the request, or
  - The organisation believes that Cheshire Community Foundation (including panellists) did not follow the correct procedure in considering the application