

The Anchor Programme: long-term core funding to catalyse systemic change

Downloadable version: 10 May 2024

The Anchor Programme can provide long-term, core funding to second-tier organisations providing support to London's frontline groups

Grant details

Area: Greater London

Open to: New applicants, including organisations which have received or are currently receiving funding from City Bridge Foundation

Deadline: Initial Expressions of Interest must be submitted by 11pm on Monday, 3 June 2024

Funding length: Between 7 and 10 years

Funding size: The minimum you can apply for is £50,000 per year and the maximum is £150,000 per year

About the Anchor Programme

At City Bridge Foundation we want to provide long-term, core funding to second-tier organisations that provide support to frontline groups.

To receive funding, organisations need to demonstrate a strong ongoing commitment to, and track record of, equitable practice. Organisations must also demonstrate that they are addressing the marginalisation and discrimination experienced by those with intersecting identities.

The Anchor Programme has been co-designed with civil society organisations and aims to fund organisations with a core focus on systems change, in order to make London a fairer city.




Organisations which applied in the first round of the Anchor Programme in 2023 can reapply in 2024. However, we recommend you read our most common [reasons for rejection](#) in 2023 and also consider our [Infrastructure funding for capacity building and representation](#).

For round two of the Anchor Programme, there will be a funding pot of nearly £15m and we estimate that between 13–15 organisations will receive funding.




Timeline

The Anchor Programme will reopen for applications on Monday, 13 May 2024. There will be a two-stage application process.

First stage

-  Expressions of Interest submitted: Monday 13 May to Monday 3 June 2024
-  Expressions of Interest reviewed by a shortlisting panel
-  Outcome emails sent to everyone in the week commencing 10 June 2024

Second stage

-  Successful applicants submit second stage applications: Monday 17 June to Monday 15 July 2024
-  Applications are reviewed by the Anchor Programme team
-  All second stage applicants are notified of our decisions within six months

First stage: Expressions of Interest

In this first stage, applicants can submit a short, online Expression of Interest. This will need to be submitted by 11pm on Monday, 3 June 2024.

All Expressions of Interest will be reviewed by a shortlisting panel composed of civil society organisations.

Outcome emails will be sent to everyone who applies, whether successful or not. We are unable to provide individual feedback to unsuccessful applicants, but we have listed the most common reasons for not advancing first round applications through to the second stage in 2023.

[Round One Expressions of Interest: Reasons for rejection](#)

The reasons for rejection will be updated for Round 2 of the Anchor Programme, as the programme progresses during 2024.

Second stage: Full applications

Applicants who submit a successful Expression of Interest will be invited to submit a full online application. They will be able to do this between 10am on Monday, 17 June and 11pm on Monday, 15 July 2024.

We aim to notify all second stage applicants of our decisions within six-to-seven months.

Applications and supporting documents will first be reviewed by the Anchor Programme team. Those selected for progression will be presented to our Funding Committee for approval in December 2024. Any applications for over £1m will then need to be presented to the City Bridge Foundation Board in February 2025, for approval.

What we will fund

At the heart of this programme is a commitment to achieve change for Londoners at a systemic level. The fund will aim to achieve this by providing long-term core funding, over a period of 7–10 years, to organisations that provide second-tier support.

Organisations applying for the Anchor Programme may also provide some frontline service delivery, but this should be seen as secondary and supportive to the main second-tier focus.

Organisations must demonstrate that they are providing one or more of the following second-tier activities *

- **Policy and Advocacy:** Ensuring different perspectives reach key decision-makers
- **Capacity Building:** Providing operational, strategic or governance advice, through resources or relationships, and hosting events and training opportunities
- **Networking and Relationships:** Holding events, building connections, mentoring programmes across sectors/peers
- **Communications and Influencing:** Researching and reporting the views and opinions across a group with a shared perspective
- **Organisational Hosting:** Providing the key operational functions e.g. financial or legal considerations

- **Research and Thought Leadership:** Providing information and bigger picture context

We want to support organisations that can demonstrate that their work is '[led by and for](#)' the people they work to support. As an indication, this should be at least 75% of the Board of Trustees or Management Committee and at least 50% of senior staff self-identifying as from a specific community or protected characteristic.

The aim is to support organisations that demonstrate a commitment to equitable practice and in addressing the marginalisation and discrimination experienced by those with intersecting identities.

The first round of the Anchor Programme

A first round of the Anchor Programme opened in May 2023. Thirteen successful applications (out of 173) were signed off by the City Bridge Foundation Committee and Board in 2023, sharing a funding pot of £14m.

See press release: [£14m long-term funding boost for charities fighting inequality](#)

Case study of a successful application

An example of how an organisation met the criteria for City Bridge Foundation's Anchor Programme and successfully applied for funding in 2023

[Case study of a successful application](#)

Funding organisations rather than projects

The Anchor Programme will fund organisations rather than projects, providing long-term financial sustainability. Grants will only be made for core costs; we will not review applications for project-related costs. To be eligible for funding, organisations should have a minimum annual income of £100,000.

The funding will allow organisations to problem solve without the restrictions of short-term funding, giving them space to collaborate, take risks and to create systems change.

In addition, the fund aims to achieve the following:

- Capacity building: improving capacity for civil society organisations to engage in positive structural change and to have the space to develop strong partnerships and collaborative work with other organisations in the sector and beyond
- Wider knowledge sharing within civil society
- More equitable outcomes for London's marginalised communities

- A rebalanced relationship between funder and funded organisations, with a deeper focus on funded organisations' learning journeys

Ultimately, we want the Anchor Programme funding to enable organisations to have the space and resource to focus on long-term plans.

What the Anchor Programme could help you do

- Acknowledge areas of historic underinvestment in organisations working with minoritised communities
- Give second-tier organisations the opportunity to take some risks and try something new
- Give long term sustainability to work that has proven to be effective
- Focus on policy and research to contribute to structural change in the sector; this might include hiring research and policy officers
- Resource to increase capacity to allow organisations to work on their long-term business plan/strategy over the next 7–10 years
- Develop key, equal partnerships with organisations and communities that are often excluded, marginalised and minoritised
- Gather insights and knowledge from communities and support them to tell their own stories; building networks based on this
- Be able to succession plan for future leaders/create a pipeline of future leaders
- Help build and/or improve digital platforms
- Plan and look ahead to anticipate challenges and opportunities for the sector in the next decade, and to inform and support groups to be able to respond creatively and effectively
- Create a thriving space for networking, convening groups and supporting them to share their knowledge and insights with a wider audience
- Create an environment that supports movement building and where activism and solidarity is possible

Please note, this is not an exhaustive list and there will be an opportunity for you to expand on your hopes for the funding in your application.

The Anchor Programme is a multi-million-pound fund and we expect to receive a high volume of applications.

Organisations awarded grants under the Anchor Programme will be reviewed every three years. This will be an opportunity to assess progress made and to discuss future plans. If for example your organisation has a grant of 10 years then there will be a review after three years, after six years and after nine years.

We will not usually pay for staff costs beyond one full-time equivalent staff post. For example, we could pay for one full-time staff member, or two part-time staff, both working 17.5 hours a week. We will only fund staff posts that are paid the [London Living Wage](#) or above.

How the Anchor Programme differs from our Infrastructure fund

City Bridge Foundation has another grant programme called [Infrastructure funding: capacity building and representation](#). This fund is also available to second-tier organisations and sets out to provide high-quality support to wider networks of frontline voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations in the capital.

However, only the Anchor Programme focuses on providing long-term funding to catalyse systems change. The Infrastructure funding programme does not focus on systems change.

Other differences:

- The Infrastructure funding programme awards grants for up to five years
- The Infrastructure funding stream has restrictions on core funding, including a taper and a maximum grant amount relative to the applicant's annual turnover. These restrictions do not apply to the Anchor Programme

What the Anchor Programme cannot fund

- Mainstream infrastructure organisations (eg Councils for Voluntary Services (CVSs) unless your organisation can demonstrate that it is led by and for (75% trustees/50% staff have lived experience of the issues your organisation is tackling) AND that it is operating from a [systems-change](#) lens
- Infrastructure organisations that only support volunteers
- Political parties
- Party political campaigning / lobbying
- Non-charitable activities
- Work which does not benefit those who live in Greater London

- Individuals
- Grant-making bodies to make grants on our behalf
- Schools, Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs), universities, or other educational establishments
- Work taking place in schools, except for the delivery of non-statutory mental health services
- Medical or academic research
- Churches or other religious bodies where the monies will be used for religious purposes
- Hospitals or primary healthcare providers
- Community amateur sports clubs
- Projects which have already taken place or building work which has already been completed
- Statutory bodies, such as local authorities
- Profit-making organisations, except social enterprises
- Charities established/registered outside the UK
- Festivals or events which last no longer than a few days
- Activities or projects which incorporate an overnight stay
- Residential care services
- Residential facilities

Guidance for applicants and FAQ

When sending in an Expression of Interest, you will only be eligible if you can demonstrate

- That your organisation is a **second-tier organisation** that provides services and support for frontline organisations, strengthening London's civil society and that you have a track record of providing second-tier support.
- That your organisation has an **intersectional** and **equity** focus, and works with users identifying with one or more of the following characteristics: Age, Disability, Gender / Gender reassignment / Gender identity, Immigration status, Pregnancy and Maternity, Sex, Sexual orientation, Socio-economic status, Race / Ethnicity, Religion / Belief

- That your organisation is **'led by and for'** the people it works to support.

When assessing your application, we will take our usual approach to due diligence. This includes reviewing your application form and publicly available documents, such as your latest published financial accounts. We will also take a view on your funding history.

Applications for funding: what the shortlisting panel will look for

If you submit a successful Expression of Interest and are invited to make a stage two application, the shortlisting panel will look for the following details when assessing your application.

- That you understand the complexity of systems change, and can make a clear case of how you will advance systems change in London's civil society
- That you can show that your organisation is embedded in the community or communities you support. Applicants should be able to demonstrate that they have a track record of engagement with broad-based movements and issues
- That you can demonstrate how you work in partnership with other organisations within your sector to further equity and justice
- That you can demonstrate how you advocate for small frontline organisations
- That you can demonstrate how your organisation has an appetite to pilot new ways of working

Applications for funding: the documents we'll want to see

If you submit a successful Expression of Interest and are invited to make an application, you will need to supply the following documents.

- A copy of your organisation's most recently signed annual accounts
- Copies of your management accounts, or equivalent. Management accounts are the financial updates which your governing advisors (eg committee, trustees or board) use to oversee your organisation's finances and strategic decision making
- Your organisation's financial year-end budget. This document explains your organisation's expected income and planned expenditure
- A draft budget that shows the total funding you are requesting (between 7 and 10 years) using a template which we will supply. We recognise that your organisation may need to respond flexibly to changing priorities and there will be an opportunity to discuss this budget with your Funding Manager during

the assessment stage. You can request a minimum of £50,000 per year, and a maximum of £150,000 per year

- Applicants are encouraged to include costs for evaluation and learning time as part of their budget. We also encourage applicants to include any access need costs, such as expenditure on translation and interpreting services. Please account for inflation but ensure that it does not exceed £150,000 per year
- Your organisation's most recent strategy and/or business plan
- Your organisation's most recent [safeguarding](#) policy
- Your organisation's constitution / governing document
- If you do not hold a current City Bridge Foundation grant and have not held one in the past, you will be expected to share the contact details of a current funder to provide a reference

Frequently Asked Questions

FAQs and the Anchor Programme: [The Anchor Programme: FAQ](#)

If you require our application form or related guidance notes in alternative formats, to make them more accessible, or require any type of adjustment, please contact us at funding@citybridgefoundation.org.uk or on 020 7332 3710 to discuss your needs.

Submit an Expression of Interest

How to submit an Expression of Interest

Round Two of the Anchor Programme opens to new applications on Monday, 13 May 2024.

Before submitting an Expression of Interest, please ensure you have thoroughly read steps one, two and three to check that our Anchor Programme funding is a good fit for you. We only fund organisations that meet our eligibility criteria.

Application steps:

1. Find out about The Anchor Programme (this page)
2. Read [The story of the Anchor Programme](#)
3. [Check your eligibility](#)
4. Apply using our online [Expression of Interest form](#)

Glossary: definition of terms

Co-design

Co-design is about designing with other people, not for them. It uses inclusive practice to share knowledge, and challenges the imbalance of power held by some individuals and organisations.

Co-design happens when an organisation and its stakeholders work together to design or rethink a service. It's all about collaborating with others to create or design something together. Co-design means working as a team, sharing ideas, and combining everyone's skills and perspectives to come up with the best possible solution or product.

Core funding and core costs

The Anchor Programme has been designed to provide core funding to help cover an organisation's core costs. Core costs can also be known as operating costs, overheads or central costs.

Core costs typically describe an organisation's routine running costs, such as governance, salaries and general management, budgeting and accounting, information technology, administration and human resources, rent, insurance, heating and power.

Anchor Programme applicants will need to demonstrate how long-term core funding will be used to support an organisation's core costs, supporting the organisation's long-term strategic aims that will help bring about systems change.

Equity

The terms equity and equality sound similar, but the implementation of both can have different outcomes. Equality means each individual or group of people is given the same resources or opportunities. Equity recognises that each person has different circumstances and allocates the exact resources and opportunities needed to reach an equal outcome.

Equity refers to fairness and justice in the way resources, opportunities, and responsibilities are distributed among people. It's about ensuring that everyone has what they need to thrive and succeed, regardless of their background, identity, or

circumstances. Equity involves addressing and rectifying systemic injustices to create a more level playing field for all individuals.

Intersectional / Intersectionality

Intersectionality is a term coined by civil rights advocate Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989. She initially used the term to explain the specific experiences of African American women, who experience both racism and sexism.

Intersectionality recognises that a Black woman will experience racism differently from a Black man, and that a Black woman will experience sexism differently from a white woman.

The term is now used more widely to talk about a wider range of intersecting identities, including factors such as migration status, disability or age, all of which can affect the different types of discrimination or unfair treatment faced by communities and individuals.

Second-tier organisations

Second-tier organisations deliver capacity building services and/or voice, representation and advocacy support to the voluntary, community and social enterprise sectors. Second-tier organisations do not generally engage directly with those who are the beneficiaries of frontline organisations.

Second-tier organisations may also be known as infrastructure organisations.

Second-tier organisations are typically support or coordinating entities that work alongside primary charitable organisations. These organisations often provide specialised services, resources, or assistance to help charitable organisations fulfil their missions more effectively.

Second-tier organisations play a crucial role in the sector by providing support, resources, and expertise to help charitable organisations maximise their impact and effectiveness.

Systems change

Systems change is about tackling the inbuilt inequalities which privilege some groups in society and disadvantage others. Bringing about systems change is about addressing the causes, rather than just the symptoms, of a societal issue/issues.

An example of systems change would be enabling organisations to identify the root causes of issues such as poverty, and to create strategies, including advocacy, to

change the societal structures which keep the most marginalised communities in poverty.

Such systems change means looking beyond alleviating immediate needs (such as providing food, clothing and shelter) and instead tackling the inequalities which lead to so many communities and individuals experiencing poverty in the first place.

Led by and for

We want to fund organisations that are led by the community or communities that they serve.

As an indication, this might be at least 75% of the Board of Trustees or Management Committee AND at least 50% of senior staff self-identifying as from a specific marginalised community or protected characteristic.

The story of the Anchor Programme

Khadra Aden and Clara Espinosa, Heads of the Anchor Programme, explain why we have co-designed the Anchor Programme with civil society organisations, and how we're committed to learning, to being bold, and to trying something new.

[The story of the Anchor Programme](#)

* Examples of second-tier activities republished with permission from Paul Hamlyn Foundation's [Backbone Fund Report](#) by Yulye Jessica Romo Ramos / Nexus Evaluation