



CITY BRIDGE
FOUNDATION

Instructions for Applicants

For completing the
Access to Justice Programme
application on the Application
Portal (2025/2026)

Please read through the following instructions to support you in completing your application. We encourage you to work through the list below before you create an account and start your application.

- Learn about our programme priorities, funding guidelines and check your eligibility on our [Access to Justice – Round One](#) website page
- Our funding guidelines are also available as a download – [Funding Guidelines](#)
- Attend or watch a recording of our [webinar](#)

Regularly check our updated [FAQs](#). If you have further questions after exploring these resources, please request a 15-minute pre-application call with a member of our funding team. Calls are available between Wednesday 19 November and Friday 12 December 2025 and are subject to availability.

If you need to submit your application in a different format, require any accessibility adjustments, or are otherwise struggling to access our online form, please contact a member of our funding team at funding@citybridgefoundation.org.uk for advice.

Please note that you can only submit one application per organisation.

General Guidance

Web Browser

The Application Portal (available from 12pm noon on Friday, 14 November 2025) works best in Chrome, Edge and Firefox. We try our best to ensure our systems work with a range of technologies, but we can't commit to testing every browser, operating system version or mobile handset type. If you experience any accessibility issues or difficulties while using our application form, please let us know by emailing funding@citybridgefoundation.org.uk. You can also use this email address to let us know if you require content in alternative formats.

Creating an account on our Application Portal

When creating an account, you'll be asked to provide the following information:

- Email address
- First and last name
- Your password – create it and then confirm it in the box underneath, your password must contain letters and numbers.

What happens next:

- Click Sign Up
- You'll receive a welcome email with a link to the portal. Please check your junk mail for the email if it doesn't arrive after a few minutes.
- Log in and you'll arrive at the application portal homepage, where you'll see the following buttons: My Applications (to start your online application), Portal FAQs (listing common application questions and

answers) and Sample Application Form (to see what questions we're asking and print out the application form if that's helpful).

- Use the sidebar on the left-hand side of the screen to navigate and complete the application stages. You do not need to complete all the questions in a section to move on to the next section.
- The sections you'll go through are as follows: Introduction, About Your Organisation, Contact Information, About Your Application, DEI Data Standard, Declaration & Privacy Notice, Review & Submit.

Navigating the form and saving your work

Once you've logged in. You'll arrive at the application homepage, where you can:

- Go to and resume your application by clicking **My Applications**.
- **Save & Continue** – you can save your work in each section by scrolling to the bottom of the page and clicking the Save & Continue button. Please be aware that your responses will not save automatically, and navigating to a different part of the form will not save your answers. So, please make sure you save your answers before you exit each section.
- You can upload your documentation in any file format as you progress through your application.
- **Review & Submit** – when you have finished, review your answers, check that all sections are complete, then click the Submit Application button. In this section, you will be alerted to any mandatory questions that have not been completed.
- **Forward, Back & Refresh** – please do not use the forward, back or refresh buttons on your browser while you are completing your application, as your work may not be saved.

- **Submit Application** – once you have submitted your application, you will receive an email confirmation. You will still be able to view your application and optionally print a copy for your records. You will not be able to change your answers once your application is submitted.

Using AI in your application

As part of our commitment to inclusive, accessible and transparent funding, we recognise the growing role of digital and AI tools in how people work, communicate, and apply for grants alongside the ethical considerations they raise, including privacy, bias, accuracy and copyright. Generative AI tools (such as ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini and others) can support applicants with idea development, language accessibility, and drafting, especially for those who face barriers to participation.

We understand you may wish to use AI tools to help you with your application and that it can be a helpful way to:

- Improve clarity, structure, or grammar.
- Translate content, adapt language, or rephrase for readability.
- Support early-stage drafting, provided that the final content reflects your organisation's voice and that you review, edit and approve it.

However, we do encourage you to use AI ethically and transparently, and what we expect from you is to:

- **Be transparent** – clearly state whether AI was used in your application, what tools were used, and for what purpose.
- **Act with accountability** – you are responsible for the accuracy, suitability, and originality of your application. AI should support, not replace, your thinking, expression, and lived experience.

- **Share authentically** – we value your unique voice and want to hear your story directly from you. Avoid submitting content that is generic or detached from your values. Your lived experience should be at the heart of your submission.
- **Check for accuracy** – AI tools can invent data, produce false or misleading information, and incorrectly reference. You must check and verify any content generated before submission.
- **Protect privacy** – do not share personal, confidential, or sensitive information with open-access AI tools. Use secure platforms with appropriate data protection measures.
- **Comply with the law** – all use of AI must adhere to UK GDPR, the Data Protection Act 2018, copyright and intellectual property law, and relevant safeguarding guidance. If you use AI to generate images or copy, you must have the right to reproduce, adapt, and share this content.
- **Support inclusion** – if you face barriers like capacity or language, or have accessibility needs, you may be able to use AI to overcome these limitations and support your participation in the application process. We encourage the use of AI in this context, provided final outputs are reviewed and tailored to reflect your voice.

We know some applicants use AI tools to help draft or edit text. However, it's often noticeable when AI has been over-relied on.

Using AI does not give you the best chance of success. Such applications can feel generic and may not bring out your organisation's voice, context or uniqueness.

To give yourself the best chance of success, **please do not:**

- Submit fully AI-generated or unedited responses.
- Rely entirely on AI to write your application.
- Use AI to create false data, claims, quotations, or stories.
- Input confidential, personal, or sensitive data into insecure AI platforms.
- Use AI tools that breach copyright, misuse training data, or lack transparency.

Application Step-by-Step

The application form is divided into the following sections:

1. Organisation Details
2. Safeguarding
3. Finance
4. Contact Information
5. Access to Justice
6. About your application
7. DEI Data Standard
8. Declaration & Privacy Notice
9. Review & Submit

1. Organisation Details

Name of your organisation: This should be your organisation's legal name, as it appears on your governing documents, bank account, Charity Commission or any other register. If your organisation is commonly known by a different name, please tell us in the 'additional relevant information' box, at the end of this section.

Address for correspondence: Please enter your organisation's full address and postcode. This should be where your organisation receives legal correspondence or is registered.

If you are unsure of your correct postcode, please check at: [Find an address](#)

Please note that City Bridge Foundation can only fund work which benefits residents of Greater London, as defined by the 32 boroughs and the City.

Is your work delivered in at least one London borough?

Please select yes or no.

Please select a borough: Use the drop-down list to select the borough your organisation is based in. If you are unsure of your correct borough, please check at: [Find your local council](#)

Legal status of organisation: Please select the status which most closely describes your organisation from the drop-down list. If you are registered with the Charity Commission but not Companies House, choose 'Registered Charity'. If you are registered with both the Charity Commission and Companies House, choose 'Charitable Company'.

We can fund the following organisation types:

- A charity that is established and registered in the UK
- A registered charitable incorporated organisation
- A charitable company – an organisation that is both a limited company (usually a private company limited by guarantee) and a registered charity
- A registered charitable industrial and provident society (IPS)
- A charitable community benefit society (BenCom) – a co-operative established by a geographical community or people with common interests
- A Community Interest Company (CIC) limited by guarantee with at least three directors
- A constituted voluntary organisation – with a fiscal host as the named applicant

All charities with an annual income over £5,000 are recommended to register with the Charity Commission

Registration numbers: Please enter all Charity, Company, Charitable Incorporated Company, or BenCom registration numbers which relate to your organisation. This helps us find your organisation on the Charity Commission and/or Companies House and view your accounts. We will also look at the governance structure of your organisation, for example how many trustees or directors you have.

Please enter the number of your:

- **Full-Time Staff:** Enter the number of full-time staff employed by your organisation. Enter 0 if none.
- **Part-Time Staff:** Enter the number of part-time staff employed by your organisation. Enter 0 if none.
- **Board Members/Trustees:** Depending on your legal structure this may also be known as your Board of Trustees or non-executive directors.
- **Active Volunteers other than Trustees/Board:** Enter the number of volunteers who have a regular and frequent commitment with your organisation, not including trustees.

This information helps us to understand the size and capacity of your organisation. We understand that numbers of staff and volunteers could change between the submission of your application and the assessment.

Upload a copy of your governing document or constitution.

This document might differ in name, depending on the legal status of your organisation. It could also be called Memorandum of Association and Articles of Association or Trust Deed. Generally, this document will include your organisation name, purpose, management structure, and rules for governance.

Additional relevant information [200 words]

In this box, we offer you the opportunity to provide any additional information that you think will help us better understand your organisation. This could relate to your governance structure or management, such as your organisation being part of a larger organisation. You are not obliged to answer this question, but the space is there if you feel there is something that would be helpful for us to know.

2. Safeguarding

Please outline the steps you take – or would take – if a safeguarding concern arises at your organisation. [200 words]

We need to understand how your organisation protects people from harm, particularly children and adults at-risk. When answering this question, consider how safeguarding concerns at your organisation are (or would be) escalated, and to whom.

We understand that not all organisations will regularly deal with safeguarding concerns, so you do not need to provide any specific examples.

Upload your current safeguarding policy.

As part of the eligibility criteria for Access to Justice, we require you to have an up-to-date safeguarding policy, a named safeguarding lead and training for your staff. Please ensure that the policy document you upload is the current and most up-to-date version being used by your organisation. You can upload multiple documents if needed, for example if you have separate policies for children and adults at-risk.

3. Finance

Upload a copy of your most recent signed accounts.

We require all applicants to have at least one year of signed accounts to be eligible for this programme.

These should be the accounts you submit to the Charity Commission or other regulatory body.

Upload a copy of your most recent management accounts.

This should be the internal finance report, reviewed by your trustees or directors at their most recent meeting, including your organisation's latest income and expenditure.

Do you pay at least the London Living Wage to all members of staff based in London?

Please select:

- Yes – we currently pay at least the London Living Wage to all staff based in London.
- Not yet – we don't currently pay London Living Wage to all London-based staff, but we will commit to doing so upon receipt of a CBF grant.
- No – we do not pay the London Living Wage to all London-based staff and cannot commit to doing so. If your answer is 'no', you are unlikely to be eligible for funding.

From April 2026, the London Living Wage is £14.80 per hour, and this is calculated by the Living Wage Foundation. See here for more details:

[What is the real Living Wage?](#)

Please note we do not require organisations to hold accreditation from the Living Wage Foundation.

This is an opportunity to tell us any other relevant information that will help us understand your current accounts/financial position. [200 words]

Briefly explain your current financial position, including your reserves policy and whether you are meeting it. Below is a guide to what you may want to cover:

- If applicable, any notable issues you are facing – for example: one-off income or spend, cashflow timing, funding dependencies, or if there are any pressures this year and what you're doing about them.
- If you haven't already provided an explanation in your accounts for anything unusual or new (e.g. a large surplus/deficit, or reserves above/below policy), please take the opportunity to share any details here.
- You can also note your current cash position and how a CBF core grant would support your financial sustainability.
- You may also wish to identify where your organisation has significant income to be used for onward grant-making.

You don't need to cover everything – only what applies to you.

Financial Controls

Think about the organisational financial controls you have in place, and tick all that apply to you:

- ☐ Finance manual or finance processes and procedures – an internal document that explains the financial controls in place at your organisation
- ☐ Dual authorisation required for payments
- ☐ Board/committee reviews management accounts (at least quarterly)
- ☐ Bank reconciliations (completed monthly)
- ☐ Reserves policy in place (and reviewed)
- ☐ Restricted funds (tracked separately)

In answering this question, you may find it useful to consult this guidance from the Charity Commission: [Internal financial controls for charities](#)

4. Contact Information

This is so we can contact you about your application. In this section we ask you to provide the contact details for two people in your organisation; the applying contact, and a secondary contact.

The applying contact will be the primary contact for the application. This is the person in your organisation who intends to manage the application going forward.

The secondary contact does not need to be someone who will have direct involvement with the application going forward, but please ensure they are aware of the application, and that their details are provided.

When filling in this section, please ensure you enter a valid phone number and a valid email address that are checked regularly for each contact. If your contact details change, for example due to a change of staff, please update us at funding@citybridgefoundation.org.uk.

There is also space in this section to add in any accessibility needs that our staff should be mindful of when getting in touch with you. This could be things like English isn't your first language, or that you will need a BSL interpreter.

5. Access to Justice

In this section, we want to hear about the work of your organisation and how it meets the Access to Justice priorities and criteria. Please refer to our website or our downloadable [Funding Guidelines](#) for detailed information about the programme, as well as definitions of some key terms used below.

Which Access to Justice funding stream are you applying for?

Using the drop-down list, tell us whether you are applying for a 3-Year Development Grant or 5-Year Transformation Grant – there is not a better chance of success by selecting a stream with a higher or lower amount of funding.

About your work – What does your organisation do? [500 words]

This question is asking about your organisation's work in relation to the Access to Justice programme. We're interested in what type of free social welfare advice you provide, how you deliver it, and the accreditation that you hold (including the level and date it was obtained). We also want to understand your approach to providing advice, including how you manage cases, maintain the quality of advice, train and support your staff, and respond to demand.

Inclusion, accountability and lived experience – Tell us about how your organisation is accountable to the communities you work with.

For this round of Access to Justice, we are funding 'led by and for' organisations supporting marginalised and disadvantaged communities, placing the voice of lived experience at the forefront of their services. Our definition is **75% of the Board of Trustees or Management Committee and at least 50% of senior staff, self-identify as being from the specific marginalised community or protected characteristic that the organisation serves.** There is some flexibility around this requirement, please refer to our website or our downloadable [Funding Guidelines](#).

Your response must explain how your organisation meets this definition and reflects the direct lived experience of your community in its leadership, management, and services. You can include details of board or senior management representation, steering or user reference groups, or other ways people from your community are able to shape decision-making

Programme priorities – Tell us about your approach to social action and systems change. [500 words]

This question is asking about how your organisation thinks about social action and systems change work (see definitions in our Funding Guidelines [\[link\]](#)). Drawing on your learning and insights from your experience of providing free social welfare advice, please describe the barriers and challenges your communities face and how these inform your understanding and approach to social action and influence your systems change work. We are particularly interested in how you currently (and/or plan to) apply insights and learning from your social welfare advice work to strengthen your social action and systems change approach.

If you are applying for a **3-Year Development Grant**, we don't expect you to have delivered any social action or systems change work yet. We do expect you to have an understanding of social action and systems change work, and some ideas about how you'll approach doing this work in future. When answering this question, consider what your organisation has learned from providing social welfare advice, what trends you are noticing, and what may have changed recently. Try to reflect on the barriers your communities face and how these insights are shaping your early thinking about future social action and systems change work.

If you are applying for a **5-Year Transformation grant**, we expect you will already be delivering social action and/or systems change work and would like to understand your approach to it. We also want to know what social action and systems change activities you have already undertaken, what you have learned from this work, and how you plan to apply this learning going forward. In your response, please highlight any evidence of impact, partnerships, or policy influence that demonstrate how your organisation's social welfare advice is informing your social action and systems change work. You may also wish to outline how you intend to build on these foundations to deepen or scale your work in the future.

Ambition and impact – Tell us about your ambitions and how a core grant from CBF will help you to achieve them. [500 words]

In this section, please reflect on your organisation's ambitions for social action and systems change and how a core grant from CBF could help you move closer to achieving them. Describe the type of change you hope to contribute to, the steps or approaches you would take, and how you will know whether you are making progress. Consider how you could use evidence, learning, and feedback from your work to adapt and refine your approach over the grant period. Think about how the core grant could support or strengthen this work, for example by providing stability, capacity, or resources that allow you to focus on long-term change. It can also be helpful to highlight a small number of systems change goals or indicators that would demonstrate success, while recognising that progress in social action and systems change can look different for each organisation, and may include both qualitative learning and quantitative evidence.

6. About Your Application

Did you attend or watch one of our webinars (online information sessions about the funding programme)?

Please select yes or no. This information will help us to monitor the uptake of our webinars, and if they are supporting our applicants.

Did you have a pre-application call?

Please select yes or no. This information will help us to monitor the uptake of our pre-application call service, and if it is supporting our applicants.

Did you use AI tools anywhere in this application?

Please select yes or no, if yes briefly say what for (e.g. grammar, translation, structure) in the place provided.

This information will help us understand AI use in applications and refine our application materials to better support our applicants.

7. DEI Data Standard

Finally, we would like to ask some questions about your organisation and the people who would be supported by this funding, if you are successful.

The responses you provide in this section may be included in anonymised data published about our grants to support our transparency and accountability. If this could cause any issues, you will have an opportunity to prevent this data from being shared externally by opting out to sharing your data. Please see our full [Privacy Policy](#).

We collect standardised DEI information so we can understand who our funding reaches, identify gaps, and improve our programmes over time.

This helps us be transparent and accountable about the impact of our funding across London. Because this information is essential to how we fund and learn, answering these questions is **mandatory** for all applicants.

Within this section we will ask you for:

- Q1 The geographical area you work in: this will help us understand our reach and give us an idea of the size of the area you work across.
- Q2 The community you serve: this will help us understand whether you target a specific beneficiary group with your work or how you characterise those you support.
- Q3 The make-up of your leadership: this will help us to understand if you are designed to be led by a specific community or experience.
- An opting-out decision: whether you want to opt in or out of sharing this information by selecting yes or no.

8. Declaration & Privacy Notice

The declaration and data protection statement must be agreed by an authorised representative of your organisation. For example, the person completing the form i.e., a staff member, your Chief Executive or a trustee. This must not be a consultant working on behalf of your organisation.

9. Review & Submit

This page will allow you to read over your responses before you submit your application. If there is anything you have missed, you can navigate back to the previous pages using the panel on the left-hand side of the screen.

If you have missed a mandatory question, this will be marked by a red icon at the top of the page. You will only be able to submit your application once all mandatory questions have been completed and your documents have been uploaded.

Please note that once you submit your application, you won't be able to make any further changes to your responses.

If you have any feedback about your experience filling in this application form, you can provide it here: [Standing with Londoners Application Form Feedback](#)

Thank you.