

Funding Advice for Community Gardens

There are many available sources of funding for community gardens, but finding those which have straight-forward applications, and quick response rates can make the whole process a lot easier. Below you'll find tips and resources for getting started, as well as potential funding sources.

General tips for writing funding applications

- Check eligibility before applying for grants, and ensure you meet the funder's criteria;
- Avoid technical jargon, keep answers precise;
- Make sure your project plan is in place and start fundraising as soon as possible before the start date – fundraising can take as long as 3 months to see income, depending on the turnaround times of each funder;
- Never be afraid of contacting a funder and talking through your project before you start completing the application.

Grant making organisations

- National Garden Scheme Community Gardens Award – funding for community gardens and gardening projects across the UK. <https://ngs.org.uk/who-we-are/community-gardens-award>
- Magic Little Grants (£500) – for projects which improve biodiversity, access to green space, physical activity, and address the climate emergency. <https://localgiving.org/about/magic-little-grants>
- Warburton's Community Grants (up to £400) – for projects that improve health, places or skills for families in their community. <https://www.warburtons.co.uk/our-company/sustainability/within-the-community/giving-donating/financial-giving>
- Ford Britain Trust (£250 to £3000) – for projects focusing on education, environment, children, supporting people with disabilities, youth activities and projects that provide clear benefits to local communities. Applications accepted from non-profit organisations. <https://www.ford.co.uk/experience-ford/about-ford/ford-britain-trust>
- Persimmon Community Champions (up to £2000) – for projects that support local good causes, with monthly awards. Application process includes a very short online form. <https://www.persimmonhomes.com/community-champions/>
- DPD Ecofund – for environmentally focused projects around DPD Delivery sites. May be temporarily closed but should reopen. <https://green.dpd.co.uk/>
- Veolia Sustainability Fund (NOT Environmental Trust, as this is their much larger grants programme) – for community and environmental projects. <https://www.veolia.co.uk/sustainability-fund>
- Tesco Bags of Help (£500) - from September focusing on supporting children and young people, including access to outdoor/green space, grants up to £1000. <https://www.groundwork.org.uk/tesco-bags-of-help/>
- Alpkit Foundation (around £500) – for projects that support people to get outdoors, Trustees meet every two months to consider applications. <https://alpkit.com/pages/foundation>
- National Lottery - various funding available. <https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/>
- People's Postcode Lottery – various funding available. <https://www.postcodelottery.info/charities/local-funding-opportunities/>

- Heart of England Community Foundation offers various grants in the West Midlands. <https://www.heartofenglandcf.co.uk/>

Are you aiming to work with a disadvantaged group?

If you plan to work with a specific group of people in your community garden, then there will be funding out there to help you achieve this. For example, many organisations are keen to fund projects that support young people, people with disabilities, long-term unemployed, elderly people, refugees and asylum seekers, minority groups and many more.

Trees and Materials

Free Trees from the Woodland Trust: <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/plant-trees/schools-and-communities/> (applications opening April for November delivery).

Tree Council 'Orchards for Schools' Fund: <https://treecouncil.org.uk/schools-and-education/orchards-for-schools/>

What to include in a funding application

- About your organisation – your aims and objectives;
- What you need funding for – your project, make sure you have as many of the details ironed out as possible;
- A 'Unique Value Selling Point' (UVP) – what makes your project different from others;
- Why is your project needed – what problem is it trying to solve within your community;
- Project details – timeline, where will it take place, who will be involved (volunteers, beneficiaries, other organisations);
- Outputs – what will change as a result of your project, how will people benefit from it;
- Many funders are looking for projects which will leave a lasting impact – how will work continue when the funding ends (e.g., through further funding, through volunteers);
- Budget – including any paid staff time for planning, running the project (if this applies to your project – and double check that each specific funder will cover staff costs), any costs for materials needed – e.g., new water butt, seeds, plants, gardening tools, money for marketing and promotion of your project, volunteer travel expenses or refreshments for volunteers;
- Do you need capital costs for structures, fencing, construction? If so, make sure it is covered by the funder and get three quotes for each piece of work or structure required.

How much you include in each section of the funding application really depends on the space you have available – some funders only want 250 words, whereas others request two pages. A funder will often ask for additional documents too. These may include:

- Bank statement
- Financial records
- Trustee details
- Safeguarding Policy
- Land Agreement
- Photos

Check the application form to see what you need to submit. If you do not send all the information, then your application might be delayed or refused.

Birmingham Voluntary Service Council (BVSC) is a great resource for getting your organisation up and running: <https://www.bvsc.org>. If you need help to set up your organisation, either as a Friends of Group, a charity, etc. then look at the information available on NCVO: <https://www.ncvo.org.uk/help-and-guidance/setting-up>