

Resident Impact Assessment

Title of policy, procedure, function, service activity or financial decision: **Voluntary and Community Sector Partnership Grants Programme 2021-2024**

1. What are the intended outcomes of this policy, function etc.?

In 2018 the Council launched its 2018-2022 Corporate Plan 'Building a Fairer Islington'. This corporate plan detailed seven clear objectives related to:

- Homes
- Jobs and Money
- Safety
- Children and Young People
- Place and Environment
- Health and Independence
- Well Run Council

The Council's corporate plan provides the over-arching framework for our work and the partnerships that the Council forms with the voluntary and community sector.

Fairer Together

Islington Council is seeking to establish a new systems approach that sees statutory services and the voluntary and community sector collaborating to improve the lives of local people.

We are working across Islington to establish a programme, called Fairer Together that aims to respond to a changing era of public policy, recognising the importance of partnership and collaboration across sectors and across organisational boundaries.

This approach will seek to further develop the way in which Islington as a whole community, responds to the challenges facing local people. It will require us all to unlock the skills, capacities and capabilities of local people and local communities.

Partnerships and collaboration with Islington's VCS are central to this aspiration. The Fairer Together approach will have early intervention and prevention at its heart and we want the borough's voluntary sector to be empowered to support us to drive this ambition forward in order to enable local people to thrive and enjoy a good quality of life.

Islington's VCS are key partners in delivering an interconnected system of preventative services in community settings across the borough.

VCS Grants Programme 2021 - 2024

The Council's VCS Partnership Grants Programme is a corporate undertaking, requiring collaboration across the organisation to ensure that the programme responds to corporate priorities and the aims and objectives of different departments.

The programme is structured around the following strands:

- Community Hubs
- Delivery Partners
- Capacity Building
- Equalities and Cohesion Networks
- Volunteering
- Independent Advice and Navigation

On 6 January 2020 the programme was launched with prospectuses created detailing the specific objectives for each of the strands of the grants programme. The deadline for applications was 15 March 2020 with a total of 91 applications received requesting a total of £4.1 million in funding.

At each stage in the process, officers assessed recommendations in line with the need to establish a balanced and diverse portfolio working with different sections of the community and across the borough's wards.

After consideration, the recommendations have been decided based on the following factors:

- Geographical spread across the borough
- Thematic spread
- Equalities and protected characteristics
- The benefit and impact of core funding to organisations

The Council has a strong partnership with the voluntary, community and not-for-profit sector and values highly the role that local independent organisations play in meeting the needs of some of Islington's most disadvantaged communities.

The VCS Partnership Grants Programme 2021-2024 builds on the overarching aim of the Council's work with the VCS to support the Council priority of making Islington a fairer place and the ambitions we have for our community through the Fairer Together programme.

2. Resident Profile

Who is going to be impacted by this change i.e. residents/service users/tenants? Please complete data for your service users. If your data does not fit into the categories in this table, please copy and paste your own table in the space below. Please refer to **section 3.3** of the guidance for more information.

The VCS Partnership Grants Programme 2021-24 will provide grant funding for 48 organisations working with residents across the borough. Of these, 40 organisations currently receive funding. These organisations deliver an extensive range of services and activities for Islington residents at key geographical locations and across the protected characteristics.

Examination of the profile of beneficiaries that applicants have identified in their respective submissions indicate that the organisations being recommended for funding will represent the diverse communities in Islington, particularly focussing on those that are disadvantaged as a result of their ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation and religion/belief.

		Borough profile
		Total: 206,285
Gender	Female	51%
	Male	49%
Age	Under 16	32,825
	16-24	29,418
	25-44	87,177
	45-64	38,669
	65+	18,036
Disability	Disabled	16%
	Non-disabled	84%
Sexual orientation	LGBT	No data
	Heterosexual/straight	No data
Race	BME	52%
	White	48%
Religion or belief	Christian	40%
	Muslim	10%
	Other	4.5%
	No religion	30%
	Religion not stated	17%

3. Equality impacts

With reference to the [guidance](#), please describe what are the equality and socio-economic impacts for residents and what are the opportunities to challenge prejudice or promote understanding?

Overview

A key aim of the VCS Partnership Grants Programme 2021-2024 is to provide core funding to voluntary and community sector organisations working across Islington's diverse communities in order to improve outcomes for residents and communities with protected characteristics.

The fund seeks, not only to pay due regard to the aims of the Equality Act 2010, but to actively support a portfolio of organisations that can pro-actively address structural inequalities within the borough, in particular where there are voluntary and community organisations that are well-placed to reach communities at risk of exclusion.

In order to be eligible for funding, all organisations are required to have an Equal Opportunities Policy and adhere to the Equality Act 2010.

Through the application process all organisations were required to detail how they would challenge inequality, promote community cohesion and empower residents and communities to be resilient and feel a sense of belonging in the borough.

Application Summary and Equalities Assessment

A total of 91 applications, requesting £4.1 million in funding per annum were received across all six strands of the programme. A total of 48 applications are recommended for funding, meaning that the average success rate across all strands was 54%.

As part of the assessment process and ongoing equalities assessments, all applications received were categorised as being either 'universal' (i.e. open access for the whole community, with protected characteristics covered through their Equal Opportunities policy), or as being 'targeted' in that they work specifically with sections of the community with protected characteristics.

Every application was assessed against the nine protected characteristics and was classified as either:

- **Targeted:** Either working specifically with sections of the community with protected characteristics in a targeted way as part of their core organisational purpose or working pro-actively with sections of the community with protected characteristics
- **Universal:** Being open access, universal services that ensure access through their approach to equal opportunities

27 of the 48 organisations recommended for funding are classified as having a 'targeted' approach and 21 with a 'universal' approach. In comparison to core grant-funding awards in 2016-2020 there has been a 13% increase in the level of funding going to organisations with a 'targeted' approach to working with residents with protected characteristics.

Of the 48 that are recommended for funding:

- 18 organisations provide open access 'universal' services such as legal advice agencies (3) and multi-use community hubs (13), or run services for people who are street homeless (1), capacity building support for community hubs (1) or an open access community garden (1).
- Three organisations provide a 'universal' service, but work specifically to engage young people (2), or people from BAME backgrounds (1).
- 17 organisations have a targeted approach to working with ethnic minority communities, of which 15 of these work with BAME communities.
- Six organisations have a targeted approach to working with young people and three organisations with older people.
- Five organisations have a targeted approach to working with people with disabilities
- Five organisations have a targeted approach to working in areas of religion/belief
- Seven organisations have a targeted approach to working in areas of sex/gender - specifically with women.
- One organisation has a targeted approach to working in the area of gender reassignment and sexual orientation.
- One organisation has a targeted approach to working in the area of marriage and civil partnership, and one within the area of pregnancy and maternity.

In line with the aspirations of the VCS Partnership Grants Programme, funding is being recommended to organisations working across all protected characteristics.

The analysis identifies organisations working with residents with protected characteristics in the areas of race (17 organisations, 15 BAME focussed organisations), religion or belief (5 organisations) and sex (7 organisations) as being proportionately well served in terms of both the number of organisations receiving funding and their relative success in applying – all applications in these areas had a success rate equal to or higher than the average success rate of 54%.

Only one application was received in which the organisation targeted work with people with protected characteristics in the area of sexual orientation and gender reassignment, this application was successful. Two applications were received from organisations working in a targeted way with people with protected characteristics in the areas of pregnancy and maternity. One of these has been recommended for funding.

Nine organisations recommended for funding work in a targeted way with young people or older people, out of a total of 19 applications in this area. This is reflective of the focus that Islington's VCS Grants Programme takes on working with community-based approaches and the Council's commissioning commitments in the areas of children, young people and adult social services.

Five organisations working in the area of disability have been recommended for funding. The success rate for applications working with people with disabilities was lower than the average 54% success rate and proposals to mitigate this are identified below.

Consideration has been given to organisations currently funded who are not being recommended for funding, because other applications working with residents with protected characteristics better demonstrated their ability to meet the assessment criteria. In appraising the impacts of these recommendations, officers have considered organisations' financial viability, the overall equalities profile of the recommendations and the allocation of wider Council funding through commissioned services. Islington council will continue to work with these organisations to support their ongoing development and viability.

Positive Impacts

BAME Representation Across the Portfolio

Applications received from organisations working across ethnicity, and particularly with the BAME community had a higher success rate than the overall average success rate.

All organisations recommended for funding across the new grants programme, work with BAME residents. For example, Community Hubs provide multi-use spaces and often host BAME groups and organisations. Advice services are open to all residents and close monitoring and focus is given to ensure outreach and engagement with BAME groups and organisations.

In the 2016-2020 VCS Partnership Grants Programme, funding totalling £535,000 per annum was awarded to organisations working with the BAME community. The VCS Partnership Grants Programme 2021-2024 recommendations for funding include 16 organisations which specifically work with BAME communities (including 1 consortium of 6 BAME-led organisations) totalling £609,000 of funding per annum, with a further £30,000 per annum ring-fenced for BAME focussed equalities support through a borough-wide equality and cohesion network. In comparison to 2016-2020, there has therefore been a 19% increase in the amount of funding going to BAME-led/focussed organisations.

Equality and Cohesion Networks

The Equality and Cohesion Networks strand is a new strand which will bring together strategic leaders working across a range of protected characteristics, ensuring that the voice and challenge of organisations who represent or work with residents with protected characteristics is elevated. Critical to this will be collaboration and partnership between organisations who work with specific protected characteristics, to reflect the reality that many residents would identify as having more than one protected characteristic.

This particular strand set the following objectives for organisations to:

- Act as a strategic leader in the area of equalities and community cohesion
- Deliver, co-produce or provide sign-posting to services that improve wellbeing and quality of life for people with protected characteristics
- Transform attitudes and behaviours towards people with protected characteristics

- Work collaboratively across the wider equalities agenda to ensure residents facing multiple discrimination are recognised and supported

Five organisations are recommended for funding through this strand, totalling £120,000 with a further £60,000 being ring-fenced pending a review of the offer for residents with disabilities and BAME representation in the borough (further details can be found below under – Negative Impacts and proposed mitigation). These recommendations would see an increase of 20% in the funding provided for borough-wide equalities work in comparison to 2016-2020. This increase in funding is reflective of the Council’s commitments and aspirational work with community partners to tackle structural inequality in the borough. These partners will be integral to the Council’s Challenging Inequalities Programme.

Across the protected characteristics, organisations in this strand have been funded for their targeted work in the following areas:

- **Religion/Belief:** One organisation is being recommended with a 20 per cent increase in funding through the new programme. This organisation promotes positive inter-faith relations and works with key faith leaders and organisations to promote community cohesion and positive inter-faith relations.
- **Sexual Orientation and Gender Reassignment:** One organisation, which is currently funded, is being recommended with a 20 per cent increase in funding through the new programme. This organisation works with Islington residents who face inequality and prejudice due to sexual orientation or gender reassignment and an increase in funding would enable the organisation to develop their work in the borough.
- **Ethnicity:** Two organisations are being funded in this strand for their targeted work in this area:
 - One organisation working in the area of ethnicity is being recommended with a 20 per cent increase in funding in the new grants programme, recognising the organisation’s role as a strategic leader in bringing together BAMER residents and organisations in the borough, with a particular focus on working with refugees and migrants.
 - One organisation is being recommended for funding to work with Islington’s Irish community, recognising that this is one of the largest ethnic groups in the borough. This new addition will ensure that there is now representation from this large resident group in the new programme, with a focus on further developing the work being undertaken to address inequality, and transform attitudes and behaviours towards people across the protected characteristics for this community group.
- **Older People:** One organisation which is currently funded works specifically with older residents in the borough and is being recommended for funding at the same level to ensure that this population group is represented in this strand.

Advice and Navigation Strand

This funding stream aims to establish a whole-community approach to advice which sees outreach and engagement to those most at risk of exclusion, targeted advice for some of our most vulnerable residents, and resilient community organisations able to provide early and responsive help to sections of the community

A total of £1.4 million in funding is recommended to 6 organisations (including a consortium made up of 6 organisations) working to ensure that the offer in the borough is of a high quality and can provide independent advice and navigation to Islington residents.

The three main advice partners; Citizens Advice Islington, Islington People's Rights and Islington Law Centre offer universal services that still address inequalities. Their combined work with residents includes: 42% of clients from BAME communities; 57% of clients are women; and 52 % of clients have a disability.

Community Advice: Through ongoing work with community organisations, the Council recognised that residents with protected characteristics face additional challenges in accessing independent legal advice. In response to this, for the 2021-2024 grants programme, the Council established a 'community advice' strand of the VCS grants programme. Organisations being recommended for funding in the Community Advice strand will be required to:

- Use data and intelligence to understand the advice needs of communities that have unmet advice needs or that face particular barriers to accessing advice services.
- Reach and engage residents that face barriers to accessing independent legal advice, particularly people with protected characteristics.

Two applications are being recommended for a funding total of £110,000 per annum, this includes funding for a consortium of 6 organisations working with the BAME community and funding for an organisation working specifically with women in the borough. These recommendations represents a 46% increase in the level of funding going to advice focussed organisations working with a targeted focus on supporting BAME communities to access independent legal advice and a three-fold increase in the level of funding going to community organisations supporting women to access independent legal advice.

Targeted Specialist Advice: Funding is recommended to one organisation in this strand that can offer specialist legal advice that is targeted towards residents; in particular those experiencing mental health difficulties, disabilities, ex-offenders, and those from BAME backgrounds. This funding is at the same level as through the 2016-2020 grants programme.

Negative Impacts and Proposed Mitigation

Through the Resident Impact Assessment, two gaps in provision have been identified. In order to mitigate these and ensure that the VCS Partnership portfolio is fully able to support

the Council's equality and community cohesion ambitions, the following measures are being proposed:

Equality and Cohesion Networks

- **Disability Network:** No organisation is recommended for funding to lead pan-disability work on equality and cohesion at a borough-wide level. Failing to fund work in this area could have a negative impact on Islington's disabled community and on community relations. It has therefore been recommended that £30,000 is ring-fenced to support the development of a borough-wide pan-disability focussed equalities and cohesion network.
- **BAME Network:** No organisation is recommended for funding to lead BAME work on equality and cohesion at a borough-wide level. In particular, across the programme it has been identified that there is a lack of funding to Black Caribbean focussed community organisations. Failing to fund work in this area could have a negative impact on community relations. Through its challenging inequalities work, Islington has established a race equality forum. It is recommended that £30,000 funding is retained to support the development of a BAME equality and cohesion network with a particular focus on Islington's Black Caribbean community.

4. Safeguarding and Human Rights impacts

a) Safeguarding risks and Human Rights breaches

Please describe any safeguarding risks for children or vulnerable adults AND any potential human rights breaches that may occur as a result of the proposal? Please refer to **section 4.8** of the [guidance](#) for more information.

As part of the application and assessment process of the VCS Partnership Grants Programme 2021-2024 organisations were required to confirm they have key safeguarding documents including up to date Safeguarding and Equalities policies. Organisations were also assessed in the application on how they would ensure they maintain the highest level of commitment to the safeguarding of children, adults, employees and volunteers.

Successful organisations will need to provide up to date Safeguarding and Equality policies for their organisation and demonstrate that they participate in Safeguarding Training. They will also need to submit details of safeguarding alerts and other serious incidents within their service to the Council and other relevant bodies.

If potential safeguarding and human rights risks are identified then **please contact equalities@islington.gov.uk to discuss further:**

5. Action

How will you respond to the impacts that you have identified in sections 3 and 4, or address any gaps in data or information?

For more information on identifying actions that will limit the negative impact of the policy for protected groups see the [guidance](#).

Action	Responsible person or team	Deadline
The development of a borough-wide pan-disability focussed equalities and cohesion network that can assist the Council in delivering its ambitions for a fairer Islington.	VCS Team	Ongoing 2021-2024 (grant programme duration)
To support the development of a BAME equality and cohesion network with a particular focus on Islington's Black Caribbean community.	VCS Team	Ongoing 2021-2024 (grant programme duration)
Engage equality and cohesion networks and key VCS organisations in Islington's Challenging Inequalities Programme.	VCS Team	Ongoing 2021 - 2024 (grant programme duration)

Please send the completed RIA to equalities@islington.gov.uk and also make it publicly available online along with the relevant policy or service change.

This Resident Impact Assessment has been completed in accordance with the guidance and using appropriate evidence.

Staff member completing this form:

Signed: _____

Date: [Click here to enter a date.](#)

Head of Service or higher:

Signed: _____

Date: [Click here to enter a date.](#)

Staff member completing this form:

Shabana Aslam

VCS Funding and Commissioning Partnerships Manager

Date: 21 August 2020