

# Equalities Impact Assessment: Full Assessment

Before completing this form you should have completed an Equalities Screening Tool and had sign off from your Head of Service and the Fairness and Equality Team.

This Equality Impact Assessment should be completed where the Screening Tool identifies a potentially negative impact on one or more specific groups but it can also be used to highlight positive impacts.

## Summary of proposal

Name of proposal	Sanctuary Grant Programme
Reference number (if applicable)	
Service Area	NRPF – Homes and Communities
Date assessment completed	24/04/2024

Before completing the EQIA please read the guidance and FAQs. For further help and advice please contact [equalities@islington.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@islington.gov.uk).

## 1. Please provide a summary of the proposal.

Please provide:

- Context on how the service currently operates (if relevant) and the scope of suggested changes
- The intended beneficiaries and outcomes of the proposal
- Reference to any savings or income generation

In late 2023, the Council was awarded a 'Borough of Sanctuary' Award by the UK charity City of Sanctuary. In early 2024, we launched our new [Islington Welcomes](#) strategy – a strategy that sets out various commitments that the Council will work to achieve over 2024 – 2027. One of our commitments is the Sanctuary Grant Programme.

The Sanctuary Grant Programme is a funding pot of up to £500,000 for local projects which support refugees, migrants and residents seeking asylum in the borough. We plan to use a participatory grant making model. Ultimately, this means a panel of residents with lived experience of migration will decide to which groups the funding will be allocated.

Islington Council has a vision that all residents, regardless of how long they have called Islington home, will feel welcomed, included and connected to the borough. One way to help achieve this vision is to increase the number of funded projects and initiatives in the borough that support refugees, migrants and residents seeking asylum.

Due to the number of refugee resettlement schemes and asylum contingency hotels the government has launched, the Council has received various pots of funding. Much of this funding has been utilised, but some remains uncommitted. The majority of the resettlement funding received is spent directly supporting residents who have arrived via the Afghan resettlement schemes and the Homes for Ukraine scheme. Several Council departments (Children's, Community Wealth Building and Housing) have received sums from this funding given the invaluable work they do supporting these residents who have arrived via these routes.

We know that many residents from refugee and migrant backgrounds access local voluntary and charity sector support. VCS groups so often hold the trust of these communities, but they are also facing increasing demands on their services and precarious funding situations. Setting up this additional funding pot will allow for better service provision within the borough and an increase in the activities available.

A key element of this programme is to try to attract new and smaller organisations to apply for this funding, providing that such organisations are Islington-based, constituted and meet the Council's minimum requirements for the proposed Sanctuary Grant Programme. This will be done by mapping the organisations who provide relevant support to the target groups, including smaller more organisations, and keeping a record of who currently receives funding. The project team will undertake outreach work to support and encourage organisations who are smaller and don't currently receive funding to apply for this grant.

Please provide:

- Context on how the service currently operates (if relevant) and the scope of suggested changes
- The intended beneficiaries and outcomes of the proposal
- Reference to any savings or income generation

The Council’s NRPF, Refugee & Migrant Service have set aside up to £500,000 from asylum dispersal and refugee resettlement funding for the Sanctuary Grant Programme, as set out in the table below. Utilising funds from different schemes (as mentioned above) ensures the fund is reflective of the different groups welcomed to Islington. The proposed sums to constitute the total £500,000 amount reflect the relative scale of funding awards made to the Council based on a person’s immigration route, the per person tariff award and the corresponding volume of people assisted.

Afghan resettlement funding	£150,000
Homes for Ukraine funding	£300,000
Asylum Grant	£50,000
Total	£500,000

(The above table highlights the funding sources and does not describe which communities the funding will be allocated to).

Funding will be allocated to groups within the financial year 2024/2025. Groups will be able to spend the funding past the financial year 2024/2025.

This combined pot of £500,000 aims to promote integration and improve outcomes for refugees, including for new communities in Islington. Due to the broad remit of the fund and communality of need between different refugee and migrant groups, awards will be considered on the basis of value added to the whole community, not on the basis of specific group targeted. Therefore we will encourage organisations to demonstrate how a proposed project can promote community cohesion in the borough and bring different communities together.

## 2. What impact will this change have on different groups of people?

Please consider:

- Whether the impact will predominantly be external or internal, or both?
- Who will be impacted – residents, service users, local communities, staff, or others?
- Broadly what will the impact be – reduced access to facilities or disruptions to journeys for example?

This project focuses on benefitting refugees, migrants, and asylum seekers in Islington. Additionally, it aims to support voluntary and community sector (VCS) groups in providing services to these groups. We have considered the impact on those from groups with protected characteristics and concluded there are no negative impacts.

The impact of this grant will be predominantly external in supporting refugees, migrants, and asylum seekers, residing in the borough. It will increase the number of funded projects and initiatives to support these groups, offering an improved quality of life, increased access to services, and decreased social isolation. The project will also contribute to building relationships among these groups, fostering supportive networks and integrated communities.

This project will impact VCS groups by ensuring they are better supported and funded to provide services, thereby increasing the range of activities they can offer. This is particularly significant given the high demand for VCS services. We believe that this will positively impact VCS groups by providing an additional grant source in an area with limited resources, where available grant funding is highly competitive.

We do not consider there to be any negative impacts on any groups within Islington (internal or external).

### 3. What impact will this change have on people with protected characteristics and/or from disadvantaged groups?

This section of the assessment looks in detail at the likely impacts of the proposed changes on different sections of our diverse community.

#### 3A. What data have you used to assess impacts?

Please provide:

- Details of the evidence used to assess impacts on people with protected characteristics and from disadvantaged groups (see guidance for help)
- A breakdown of service user demographics where possible
- Brief interpretation of findings

The exact number of refugees, migrants and residents seeking asylum in the borough is difficult to estimate and there is no central point where this would be recorded. In recent years central government have launched various refugee resettlement routes and set up asylum contingency hotels in the borough and below we have outlined some of the data the Council does hold:

- Around 248,000 people are living in Islington.
- 40% of Islington residents in 2021 were born outside of the UK.
- Among residents born outside of the UK, over half (53%) have been resident in the UK for more than 10 years.
- The most common country of birth among Islington residents, after the UK, is Italy (over 5,000 residents), followed by France, Turkey, United States, and Ireland (all over 4,000 residents).
- 81% of Islington residents aged three and above speak English as their main language. Spanish was the next most spoken language in Islington in 2021, followed by French, Italian, Turkish, and Somali.
- [Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme](#): Between 2015 and 2019, 18 Syrian households were resettled, consisting of 33 adults and 31 children (including 6 babies born in the UK). Most of the residents have now become British citizens and are likely to stay in Islington longer term.
- [Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy](#) and [Afghan Citizens Resettlement schemes](#): Since October 2021, the Council has resettled 50 households (over 250 people) from Afghanistan and is committed to resettling more. Residents have been granted indefinite leave to remain and are likely to stay in Islington for many years.

Please provide:

- Details of the evidence used to assess impacts on people with protected characteristics and from disadvantaged groups (see guidance for help)
- A breakdown of service user demographics where possible
- Brief interpretation of findings

- Homes for Ukraine scheme: Since the outbreak of the war in Ukraine in March 2022, over 500 Ukrainian refugees have arrived in the borough. Residents have been granted limited leave to remain and many stay for only a shorter period of time, whilst others have stayed in Islington for 2+ years.
- Residents seeking asylum: Upwards of 900 asylum seekers are placed in 2 Islington hostels by the Home Office. This accommodation is intended to be for 3-4 weeks whilst applications for asylum support are processed, but residents are staying for upwards of 19 months. Over 60 nationalities live in the hotels and more than 25 different languages are spoken.
- Residents with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF): It is extremely difficult to estimate the number of residents subject to NRPF in the borough, but the Council financially supports approximately 40-50 households per year including destitute families, vulnerable adults and people at risk of rough sleeping.

This data highlights the demand for services that support refugees, migrants, and asylum seekers. It illustrated that Islington is a highly diverse community with a long history of supporting individuals from these backgrounds, which should be celebrated and continued.

3B: Assess the impacts on people with protected characteristics and from disadvantaged groups in the table below.

Please first select whether the potential impact is positive, neutral, or negative and then provide details of the impacts and any mitigations or positive actions you will put in place.

Please use the following definitions as a guide:

Neutral – The proposal has no impact on people with the identified protected characteristics

Positive – The proposal has a beneficial and desirable impact on people with the identified protected characteristics

Negative – The proposal has a negative and undesirable impact on people with the identified protected characteristics

Characteristic or group	Positive/Neutral/Negative	What are the positive and/or negative impacts?	How will potential benefits be enhanced or negative impacts be eliminated or reduced?
Age	Positive	Funded projects will be open to all age groups. Past experience of operating community based projects has demonstrated how elderly service users in particular benefit from participating in structured workshops, with funding available to help support travel costs. Equally, younger residents in the Asylum Hotels will benefit from activities that can help them to use their time more constructively.	The participatory budgeting panel must have representation from different age groups to help ensure that funded projects are varied, that there are options that will appeal to different people so young and old do not feel excluded in any way.



Characteristic or group	Positive/Neutral/Negative	What are the positive and/or negative impacts?	How will potential benefits be enhanced or negative impacts be eliminated or reduced?
Disability (include carers)	Positive	<p>The challenges of those who are new for Islington as refugees and migrants are substantial, and as such frequently take a toll on mental and physical health.</p> <p>This project will enable greater funding to be spent on projects that can support mental health and wellbeing, especially for this demographic who are likely to have experienced trauma.</p> <p>Funding these additional projects will additionally facilitate people with shared experiences to come together to collectively support their mental health</p> <p><i>'This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> year that we are celebrating Nowruz in Islington. Today is one of the best days in my life, since this morning I am feeling physically and mentally strong... I walked to the event without my</i></p>	<p>We will ensure that bids that promote wellbeing and mental health complement existing services. Bid makers must use funding to make reasonable adaptations to ensure that the needs of disabled residents and service users are met.</p>

Characteristic or group	Positive/Neutral/Negative	What are the positive and/or negative impacts?	How will potential benefits be enhanced or negative impacts be eliminated or reduced?
		<p><i>walking aid and enjoyed every moment!</i></p> <p>Mr SN from Afghanistan (an example of a positive impact health impact that can be spread further through additional funding in this area)</p>	

Characteristic or group	Positive/Neutral/Negative	What are the positive and/or negative impacts?	How will potential benefits be enhanced or negative impacts be eliminated or reduced?
Race or ethnicity	Positive	<p>This grant will support new communities being established, particularly those from Ukraine and Afghanistan.</p> <p>It will contribute to a building of social cohesion and understanding, and we hope that it will be an opportunity to retain and celebrate cultural heritage.</p> <p>The communities that this grant will support are often those most susceptible to prejudice and racism. As such, the support that this grant will provide contribute to building a strong community that is resilient and proud, and able to withstand bigotry.</p>	<p>The participatory budgeting panel must have representation from different ethnic backgrounds to help ensure that funded projects are varied, that there are options that will ensure integration and inclusion for all.</p>

Characteristic or group	Positive/Neutral/Negative	What are the positive and/or negative impacts?	How will potential benefits be enhanced or negative impacts be eliminated or reduced?
Religion or belief (include no faith)	Neutral		

Characteristic or group	Positive/Neutral/Negative	What are the positive and/or negative impacts?	How will potential benefits be enhanced or negative impacts be eliminated or reduced?
Gender and gender reassignment (male, female, or non-binary)	Neutral		
Maternity or pregnancy	Neutral		

Characteristic or group	Positive/Neutral/Negative	What are the positive and/or negative impacts?	How will potential benefits be enhanced or negative impacts be eliminated or reduced?
Sex and sexual orientation	Neutral		
Marriage or civil partnership	Neutral		

Characteristic or group	Positive/Neutral/Negative	What are the positive and/or negative impacts?	How will potential benefits be enhanced or negative impacts be eliminated or reduced?
<p>Other Age (e.g. elderly)</p> <p>(e.g. people living in poverty, looked after children, people who are homeless or refugees)</p>	<p>Positive</p>	<p>Positive impact for refugees, migrants and residents who are seeking asylum</p> <p>This will allow for increased activities and improved service provision for these groups.</p> <p>It will contribute to building support networks and creating integrated communities for people who might otherwise find themselves isolated.</p> <p>The following impacts are dependent on the content of the bids. However, it is worth considering that within the overall positive impacts on refugees, this can be broken down into the additional anticipated intersectional benefits:</p>	<p>The benefits of this will be enhanced through the participatory grant model. Through this, those with lived experience decide which groups will be allocated the funding, ensuring that this maximum benefit can be achieved.</p>

Characteristic or group	Positive/Neutral/Negative	What are the positive and/or negative impacts?	How will potential benefits be enhanced or negative impacts be eliminated or reduced?
		<p><b>Religion</b> – this grant will facilitate further social cohesion and integration across religious groups</p> <p><b>Gender</b> – this grant has the potential to facilitate supportive spaces for women who may have experienced discrimination (for instance, lack of access to education due to gender). We will ensure that the panel will be representative to ensure the lived experiences of different genders are actively considered and addressed where targeted support may be required.</p> <p><b>Maternity/pregnancy</b> – there is the potential for an opening up of discussions around sexual health and contraception, as we will be supporting a diverse range of bids. These can be difficult conversations as people adjust to differing cultural</p>	



Characteristic or group	Positive/Neutral/Negative	What are the positive and/or negative impacts?	How will potential benefits be enhanced or negative impacts be eliminated or reduced?
		norms of the UK, and this could be a good opportunity to facilitate this.	

## 4. How do you plan to mitigate negative impacts?

Please provide:

- An outline of actions and the expected outcomes
- Any governance and funding which will support these actions if relevant

N/A. No negative impacts identified.

## 5. Please provide details of your consultation and/or engagement plans.

Please provide:

- Details of what steps you have taken or plan to take to consult or engage the whole community or specific groups affected by the proposal
- Who has been or will be consulted or engaged with
- Methods used or that will be used to engage or consult
- Key findings or feedback (if completed)

The Council conducted a 'Let's Talk' engagement programme, engaging over 6,000 residents. A key finding was that Islington residents desire more opportunities to participate and shape issues affecting them. Therefore, this participatory budgeting model will provide refugees, migrants and asylum seekers, with an opportunity to participate and influence their community.

Moreover, using the participatory budgeting model will ensure that the entire process is consultative and based on the lived experiences of migration. This approach can enhance the Council's understanding of the needs and priorities of these communities supported through grant funding, identity barriers to participation in the grant-making process, broaden the reach and diversity of funded groups, and foster trust between the community with lived experience of migrant and the Council.

## 6. Once the proposal has been implemented, how will impacts be monitored and reviewed?

Please provide details in the table below.

Action	Responsible team or officer	Deadline

Please send the completed EQIA to [equalities@islington.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@islington.gov.uk) for quality checking by the Fairness and Equality Team. All Equality Impact Assessments must be attached with any report to a decision-making board and should be made publicly available on request.

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

Member	Name	Signed	Date
Staff member completing this form	Eloise Hall	E.Hall	24/04/2024
Fairness and Equality Team	Monika Milewska	Monika Milewska	08/05/2024
Director or Head of Service	Henry St Clair Miller		08/05/2024

