## **Our Manchester VCS Funding Questions and Answers**

## **Corrections**

P7 Prospectus Under Funding/Very large point 3 should say

“Very Large: over £300,000 over life of the grants (**over** 100,000/yr)”

**Q: How Many liaison officers will there be and how will they be deployed?**

A: This is still being worked out but the present plan is for approximately 10 liaison officers who will liaise with some orgs with large grants and some with small relevant to their area of work

**Q: Will the final funding programme be published?**

A: Yes

**Q: Can a word version of the application form be put on the website?**

A: There is now a section on the website which lists all of the questions on the application form

**Q: This fund offers medium and large grants. Are there small grants?**

A: The Council’s Neighbourhood Investment Fund offers small grants

**Q: Can the form be saved and resumed later?**

A: Yes

**Q: Is there a time limit when working on the form**

A: Only the end date of the application period

**Q: If the individuals around a new organisation are experienced (e.g. chair, CEO) but the** **organisation is not, does this count in terms of showing track record?**

A: No

**Q: Can a housing association make more than one bid?**

A: No

**Q If an organisation was funded at a particular level 10 years ago. Does this count?**

A: No

**Q: We are currently funded and our work has grown, can we apply for more?**

A: Yes, however bear in mind that the total amount available has not increased and there is no intention that this fund acts as the main source of funding for everything that an organisation does

**Q: Can a group apply to fund more than one individual project?**

A: Yes but can only make one application

**Q Would applications that propose other funds as leverage be welcomed?**

A: Yes. It will contribute to the weighting given to organisations that bring in more money to Manchester

**Q If you apply for more than you currently get funded for and it’s a no, is that it or is there room for negotiation?**

A: The intention is that most groups get funded for what they ask for. In exceptional circumstances the panel may return to a group

**Q: Is there more weighting for Manchester based organisation as opposed to nationals delivering in Mcr**

A: No

**Q: How accessible will the grants be to informal, new and smaller groups?**

A: Any group that meets the eligibility criteria set out in the prospectus and guidance can apply.

**Q: Are there opportunities for collaboration between groups?**

A: Both formal partnerships and collaboration will be looked on favourably

**Q: Will all the funding be allocated in this round?**

A: Yes, unless some is allocated to targeted fund, for example if there are particular gaps highlighted by the first round

**Q: How does multiple year applications affect new applications next year?**

A: This is a three year funding round. There aren’t any new applications next year

**Q: Does Neighbourhood Investment funding qualify us to apply for this?**

A: Any group can apply for a medium grant. Only organisations already receiving grants from one of the listed funds can apply for a large grant

**Q: Targeted Fund - is this extra money or does it come out of the £2.5m for this fund?**

A: It comes from this fund

**Q: Which grant size do we apply for if our previous equalities funding went from £28k in year 1 to £12k in year 3.**

A: You can apply for medium or large grant if you are currently in receipt of one of the funding streams described in the prospectus

**Q: For partnership bids are you accepting that funding limits can be aggregated?**

A: No

**Q: Can you clarify how you will score organisations who have less than 20% other than Manchester City Council funding?**

A: This is only one of a number of factors that will have to be balanced against each other and will depend on the work of the organisation

**Q: How will you measure governance issues and how is it scored?**

A: Governance issues will be balanced against a range of other issues and measured by the evidence in the bid

**Q: How can we score extra points?**

A: Read the guidance and the prospectus

**Q: Are joint bids allowed?**

A: Yes but there must be a lead organisation

**Q: Is there a simplified monitoring process and Is the monitoring going to be the same regardless of the size of the grant?**

A: The prospectus explains the new monitoring process, which is simplified and less onerous

**Q: Does the fund apply to older people related projects only?**

A: No

**Q: Will you be giving feedback on rejected applications?**

A: As we are expecting a large number of applications it will only be possible to give limited feedback, on request

**Q: Can you apply for a contribution to a project/service and if so how do we monitor on that?**

A: Yes you can apply for a contribution. You can estimate a proportion of the outcome delivered by the contribution you receive

**Q: Is it for 3 year projects only, or could you apply for an 18 month project**

A: It’s for a 3 year set of activities

**Q: Is it still a medium grant if 6k/yr or 6k over 3 years**

A: The different funding levels are explained in the prospectus

**Q: Is the amount applied for e.g. £15k paid over the 3 year period or as an annual amount?**

A: Grant instalments are paid quarterly

**Q: Are collaborations between not for profit orgs and voluntary sector organisations accepted?**

A: The prospectus and guidance explain what we are looking for. This funding is for voluntary and community sector organisations

**Q: As there appears to be a limited narrative space available in the application form can we attach supporting evidence?**

A: No

**Q: What will be the process for other VCS organisations to be involved in the decision-making panel?**

A: There will be an expert voluntary sector representative from outside Manchester

**Q: Is it possible to use the fund as potential match funding along with other funders?**

A: Yes, if you are allocated a grant

**Q: Do the organisations that we are collaborating with have to be based just in Manchester or can they be across Greater Manchester?**

A: The guidance explains this funding is for organisations who work in Manchester. They do not have to be based in Manchester

**Q: Is there a facility to complete the online form in different languages or where there is a disability barrier?**

A: No

**Q: The question related to faith groups was poorly answered.**

A: Faith groups is not one of the equality priorities, however organisations can apply for work with faith groups

**Q: Are organisations addressing poverty through clothing and food banks based within a place of faith eligible to apply?**

A: Yes if they fulfil the criteria

**Q: Is there an allocation within the fund secured for BME groups?**

A: No

**Q. Can we appeal against a decision?**

A. No – there is no appeals process

**Q. Can we apply if we have not previously had a grant from any of the sources listed?**

A. Yes, but only for a ‘medium’ grant, and only if you meet the other criteria

**Q. Are grants per project or per organisation?**

A. An organisation can only submit one application (but this can cover multiple activities)

**Q. Can faith groups apply?**

A. Yes, but not for activities related to worship or the promotion of a particular faith and only if they fulfil other eligibility criteria described in the prospectus and guidance

**Q. Can we download a copy of the form and work on it offline?**

A. No. We will try and get a word version put on the website for practise purposes, but submission must be by the online form

**Q. Can an applicant be based outside of Manchester?**

A. Yes, but beneficiaries must be mostly city of Manchester residents – Manchester citizens

**Q. Weighting of answers – how will this be done?**

A. The weighting process will not be made public

**Q. What do you mean by strength-based?**

A. it’s a focus on what people and communities can do, not what they can’t do

**Q. Can we apply to Our Manchester Fund (for our non-youth projects) and to the Youth Fund (for the children and young people elements)?**

A. Yes –so long as your organisation and project meet the criteria of the relevant fund but read Pg. 5 of the Prospectus: if your work is primarily a youth service then you should only apply to the Youth Fund

**Q. If our organisation does not receive any MCC funding at the moment, and/or has never received any MCC funding, will this go against us? We do have funding from other sources.**

A. N. MCC want organisations to have a diverse range of income sources. However, you will not be able to apply for more than £20k unless you are currently in receipt of one of the 5 grants and contracts that now make up this one fund

**Q. Which grants and contracts have been merged to create the Our Manchester Fund?**

A. 3 grants and 2 contracts have been put into the same pot. These are: Community Association grants, Health and Wellbeing grants, Equalities Funding grants, Mental Health contracts and Carers contracts

**Q. Can we include projected incomes in our income explanation?**

A. These can be included in the budget and finance but be clear what these projections are based on and that they are realistic. What will you do if you *don’t* get that income?

The income section refers only to funding you have already received

**Q. Can our organisations assist in delivering more than one successful project and can more than one lead organisation give us funding for each of these?**

A. No –each organisation can be in receipt of only one successful funding application. This is true for lead organisations and for organisations ‘sub-contracted’ by the lead organisation

**Q. I can’t fit everything into the Income box on the application form.**

A. The text box on the application form for the income question is very small. The problem is known but can’t be changed

**Q. We only receive a small amount of MCC funding now (e.g. £10k p.a.) but in the past, we have been in receipt of one or more of the 5 funding streams which are now replaced by the Our Manchester Fund (Equalities, Community Association Funding, etc.). Can we apply for a larger amount than we previously received from MCC, e.g. more than £10k p.a.?**

A. Yes – but see pg. 7 of the Prospectus: you must consider carefully because there is no ‘extra’ funding in the pot

**Q. Is it helpful to list applications we have made, even if unsuccessful, to show that we are trying to diversify our income?**

A. No – concentrate on showing your expected and projected income and any pending or successful applications

**Q. Is it OK to show that we get most of our income from non-MCC sources and collaborate with non-VCSE organisations as well as VCSE ones?**

A. Yes. This is a good thing as it demonstrates a wider range of income sources and you are not reliant on the City Council. Do be clear though that any MCC funding will benefit VCSE beneficiaries and VCSE projects and outcomes

**Q. Do trustees (As volunteers in the governance aspects of the organisation) count towards Manchester Citizens involvement?**

Yes

**Q. We have been a constituted group for 3 years but a registered company for only 2 years. Are we eligible for this grant; does it count as a 3 year track record?**

A. Yes –so long as you are constituted and meet pg. 8 of the criteria (and all the other fund criteria) and you have been delivering activities or projects for a minimum of 3 years. You do not have to be incorporated to apply

**Q. Does ‘track record’ mean all of your income has to come from MCC?**

A. No, it means you must have been delivering to Manchester beneficiaries for a minimum of 3 years

**Q. Does Our Manchester Fund include Youth funding?**

A. No. A separate funding stream for youth will open on 1st November

**Q. Can you apply for less than 3 years of funding?**

A. Technically, yes –but why would you want to do this? You are unlikely to be funded because the grants are aimed at sustaining the current good work of the voluntary sector over the next 3 years. There are other non-MCC funds you can apply to for 1-year funding

**Q. Will there be MCC mapping of groups and provision provided?**

A. No. Groups who are eligible and have therefore been around for 3 years or more are expected to know their area/community of interest and the other provision available. However, if it is helpful, groups are free to search the Macc Directory of Manchester groups (groups are responsible for keeping their own information up to date)

**Q. Can we apply for new work for which for we have built up evidence of need and have links in place already to be able to deliver in the near future?**

A. Yes - if you can show that it is connected to your current work and, for example, that your stakeholders feedback shows this. This should mean that you already have the collaborations in place and will be working with the similar beneficiaries and in a similar way. This funding is not aimed at new, experimental or innovative ideas; it is to support current and effective ways of working and developments of this work

**Q. Is it worth asking for funding to cover more than one of the Priority areas?**

A. Yes but make sure it strengthens your application and fits your work and can be evidenced already. Also make sure that it fits your costs and is value for money

**Q. If we have been delivering for 3 years or more but most of our evidence and/or our strongest evidence is from the last 12 months, is it OK to use our most recent evidence?**

A. Yes but only if you can explain the gap and show how your strongest evidence is in place now and the progression to this point. Anything less than 12 months evidence will not be enough

**Q. Are testimonies (case studies and comments) helpful?**

A. Yes, but don’t rely only on one or two individual case studies as the only source of your evidence; they will show the quality and impact of your support but not the value for money (the number of people you have helped). Use a range of evidence sources to corroborate your good work

**Q. Is an Annual Report evidence of what we do?**

A. That depends on how good your Annual Report is! One of the things you are asked for, if successful, is a copy of your latest Annual Report. If it is a strong report which includes facts and figures and evidence of your good work and outcomes achieved then you should make that clear in your answer or allude to the original source of that evidence (e.g. monitoring and evaluation, a survey, etc.)

**Q: Who is on the funding decision panel? Is it objective from heads of organisation that currently funded by MCC?**

A: No organisations currently funded by MCC or intending to make an application to this fund will be involved in making a decision

**Q: Who is the VCS representative on the selection panel?**

A: A member of an infrastructure organisation from outside Manchester

**Q: Why can’t there be more independent people on the selection panel not just Macc?**

A: Macc will take no part in the decision-making itself. Their role is to make sure the assessment process is done robustly. There is a voluntary sector member on the panel

**Q: What gaps do you think you have currently in order to be addressed by the targeted fund?**

A: This will depend entirely on what applications are put forward in the main funding round

**Q: Will there be an Equality Impact Assessment?**

A: An Equality Analysis has already been carried out

**Q: What support has been provided for small groups? The capacity of the 3 workshops is limited.**

A: Macc works with a number of small groups already, there is also some limited capacity for one to ones

**Q: Evaluation: How is it reported to citizens and community that this investment has made a positive change**

A: The current idea is to produce an annual report showing the impact of the programme as a whole

**Q: At what point will liaison officers be in place, to help bid or to support successful groups?**

A: To support successful groups

**Q: Demand is increasing on the VCS due to cuts in health and social care funding. Is this considered in the bidding process to help organisations respond to increased demand?**

A: This programme can only ever meet a small proportion of the demand on VCS organisations

**Q If I don’t apply this year could my group apply next year?**

A: No

**Q: What proportion will be spent on administration?**

A: Funding for the administration of the programme will not be deducted from the programme

**Q: How many groups currently get over £100k?**

A: Two

**Q: In outcomes do you need to say how these will be measured?**

A: No but you need to show that you have mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating your existing work

**Q: We have a track record of success of delivering in another borough and want to bring this to Manchester, will this be funded?**

A: Only organisations that have a track record of delivering in Manchester will be funded

**Q: Can you share the statistical analysis from MCC on how the need was assessed?**

A: The fund is strength-based and focuses on the way that organisations, themselves, assess strengths and needs of their beneficiaries

**Q: If you already have submitted monitoring evidence to MCC will they look at this?**

A: This will be taken into account as part of due diligence.

**Q: What is the Big Lottery’s involvement in the selection panel?**

A: The local office will sit on the panel as an observer and may decide to offer additional funding to groups who are offered a grant

**Q: With the cuts, we’d like to apply for more to enable us to be funded to a sustainable level**

A: You could if it’s not a substantial increase in funding. This funding is only intended to be a contribution to the total running costs of an organisation.

**Q: Do the new processes meet the needs of what people on the ground wants or what Manchester City Council wants?**

A: The process looked at what the people on the ground wants. The Liaison Officers will work with the grant holders to make sure it meets the needs of people on the ground.

**Q: Is the total pot of funding £2.5million per year or in total for the 3 years?**

A: It is £2.5million per year

**Q: Can a new group only apply for £20,000 per year?**

A: Yes

**Q: We have received Equalities funding for 16-25 year olds, can we apply?**

A: Yes, if you have received funding from the funds (Community Associations, Health and Wellbeing, Mental Health, Equalities and Carers) you should apply to this fund

**Q: When evidencing a good track record do you just write about your organisations experience, core services and good practice?**

A: You will need to strengthen the answer to include evidence, i.e. external evaluation, internal monitoring, to back up your statements. You can also show progression of learning from experience

**Q: I’d like to understand more about how you need to show how you’re delivering for the people of Manchester, I can provide evidence of how I have delivered in other boroughs, but Manchester residents access it**

A: MCC wants to know how Manchester citizens will benefit from the activities

**Q: Does the strength based approach remove the need for paying for staff to run services?**

A: The strength based approach is detailed in the Our Manchester Strategy

**Q: How long do you need to show volunteer involvement?**

A: 3 years

**Q: Do testimonies from local Councillors count as good evidence, as they know the local services?**

A: Yes, if you already have the evidence

**Q: You aren’t able to attach evidence to the online form**

A: No you can’t evidence should be quoted in the form, but be mindful of the word count and evidence will be asked for at the due diligence stage

**Q: The process feels more like a two stage process as you need to fill out a form and then you need to provide more evidence at the due diligence stage**

A: You should already have the evidence that will be asked for at the due diligence stage, this shouldn’t be created now

**Q: Is targeting based on ward or theme?**

A: Both, MCC wants to fund a spread of activities

**Q: Do you need all the policies in the checklist?**

A: Yes, you will be asked for them at the due diligence stage

**Q: Can you apply for more than one grant?**

A: No

**Q: It mentions that organisations will be funded that are well run, if you haven’t been running well but have put processes in place to address this, is this ok?**

A: Yes, this is evidence to say how you have progressed

**Q: We don’t collect all the equalities data for all service users**

A: You are asked to provided estimated figures

**Q: Will there be an opportunity to say when you will spend the funding, we may want £50k in year one, or £20k in year two?**

A: Yes, this will be discussed with your Liaison Officer

**Q: If the CCG were involved in the co-design process for the fund – is there any implication for organisations currently in receipt of CCG funding now?**A: No link

**Q: What is meant by the term Citizen?**A: Manchester citizens' is defined as all people normally resident in the 32 electoral wards of Manchester, including people who are temporarily homeless

**Q: Where the application form references a year – what is the funder classing as the year start and end. Is it calendar months (Jan – Dec) or annual account years (April – March)?**A: Last year refers to a 12 month period beginning no sooner than April 2016. Last three years refers to a 36 month period beginning no sooner than April 2104

**Q: If my project started in April 2015 – am I eligible to apply?**A: No

**Q: What is meant by an Annual Report?**A: An annual report is a document produced highlighting an organisations work and its finances. For further guidance refer to [www.gov.uk/guidance/prepare-a-charity-trustees-annual-report](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/prepare-a-charity-trustees-annual-report)

**Q: If there is more than one person working on the application – is there an opportunity to save more than one email address when working on the draft?**A: One email address is required to save draft applications. A link is then generated and sent to the registered email which can then be forwarded

**Q: We have multiple addresses in Manchester for our project – which one should we use?**A: The registered office address

**Q: What is meant by Area in Section 1?**A: The ward your organisation is based in

**Q: In Q25 the question asks about activities and then in Q27 it asks about activities again? Is Q27 where you tie in the activities to the Our Manchester principles and outcomes?**A: Refer to page 4 in the guidance notes

**Q: In Q28 – total number of users of services in Manchester. Clarification needed over what period of time it is referring to and again what is being classed as the year?**A: One year

**Q: Question 29 – 44 – is it ok to estimate and give a rationale to why it is estimated?**A: The estimate must be based on evidence in records. If awarded a grant you will be asked for this evidence. Do not include percentages that are less than 5%. Refer to page 4 and 5 of the guidance

**Q: How relevant are the answers to the statistic questions in terms of scoring / weight. Is the data entered in here going to be used as a measure for success?**

A: The statistics questions will be used to understand the communities that the organisation is working with and in balancing the awards to ensure equitable distribution across the grant programme

**Q: What is meant by ‘use’ on the income sheet?**A: For restricted income (where the money has to be spent on activities agreed with the funder) briefly describe the agreed activities. See page 5 on the guidance notes

**Q: What period of time is needed for the income sheet – is it yearly / three years?**A: Three years

**Q: If the fund covers core costs does the form allow you to include these costs?**A: Yes – Full Cost Recovery should be applied

**Q: Is it the same form for all the sizes of grants?**  
A: No – same questions different word counts

**Q: We will be applying as a Manchester part of a larger organisation – the constitution is for the whole organisation where the head office is in London. Will this be a problem?**  
A: No