

Year 6 Application Guidance

Read this guidance before submitting an application:

- Incomplete applications or those not meeting the funding criteria will be rejected. In order to ensure that your project meets these guidelines, you must make sure you have fully read and understood the fund guidance, which can be found on our website. If you have any questions surrounding the funding criteria or application guidance, please contact us at funding@va-er.org.uk before applying.
- You can apply for this fund by either completing the Word document version of the application or submitting the online version via Microsoft Forms. Please note that the online application cannot be saved and returned to later, so you must complete and submit it in a single session. Supporting Documents should be sent via email to funding@va-er.org.uk.
- A copy of your completed application will be sent to you in Word format for your own records.
- This fund is set out to benefit adults; if your project is for under 16's please do NOT apply
- The outcome of your application is determined by a panel made up of third sector & public sector groups, as well as those with lived experience. The decision of the panel cannot be overturned by VAER. The panel have the right to privacy and VAER will not release details relating to panel members.
- If your application is rejected due to missing or unclear information, you are able to reapply provided there are still funds available.

Small	£100 to £2,000
Project Grant	£2,001 up to £10,000

In Year 6 of the Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund for Adults bids which seek to focus on the following local issues will be given greater priority:

1. Suicide Prevention
2. One to one Befriending / Group Befriending
3. Addressing Cost of Living (whole family poverty/ mitigating child poverty)
4. Friendship / Social Connections
5. Additional Support Needs activities/services (16+)

In line with the fairer funding pilot launched by the Scottish Government in 2025/2026, a large portion of the amount awarded will already be allocated to grantees who were successful in securing 2-year funding in 2025/26. The remaining amount of £84,043.19 will be distributed as single-year grants to community groups and organisations. With this in mind, applicants may want to consider submitting a collaborative bid.

What is a collaborative bid?

Collaborative approach applications are where two or more organisations work together to secure funds and deliver a project or service while remaining as separate organisations.' The spectrum of collaboration between organisations can range from an informal agreement (such as borrowing equipment or networks that share information) to a legally binding agreement (such as consortium tendering for service delivery or pooling staff). The collaboration can be short or long term.

Why a collaborative approach?

Over the past 5 years of administering this fund we have looked at our learning and believe promoting collaborative bids for our large grants will greatly increase the reach and impact of the fund and will hopefully reduce the amount of unsuccessful applications due to our finite resource.

Here are some reasons why you might want to bid collaboratively:

- To reduce costs or share risks
- To improve service delivery
- To share good practice, information and specialist skills
- To target new groups or access a wider geographical area
- To increase the profile, capacity and reach

What form can collaboration take?

Here are some examples of different types of collaboration:

- Separate organisations come together for a particular bid or project but remain independent
- One organisation can assist another – it may be some form of specialist help
- One organisation takes a 'lead' and others agree on what part they are willing /able to play. There are occasions where the 'lead' organisation can act as a management agency only and subcontract out the service delivery to other organisations

To collaborate on a bid or not?

Things to question and think about:

- Who will you partner with – what do you know about them and what do they know about you?
- What do you hope to achieve by collaborating in a bid?
- Who proposed the idea, is there a conflict of interest?
- What about your trustees and chief officer, are they supportive of the idea?
- How does it fit within your organisation's charitable objects as stated in your governing document and how does it fit with your strategic vision, values and priorities?

Number of Applications

As the Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund for Adults has been oversubscribed in previous years, we want to maximise the number of groups and organisations that can benefit from the fund. Therefore, each group or organisation may submit only one application.

Year 6 Grant Eligibility Questions

Question 1

Before proceeding with the application, please confirm you have read and fully understood the Funding Guidance and Application Guidance which is available to view on the VAER website

YES/NO

The reason this question is included is to ensure that you have read and fully understood both the funding guidance and application guidance before applying. By doing this you are able to understand the aims of the fund as well as gaining knowledge of what can and cannot be funded. To access the funding guidance, please visit: <https://va-er.org.uk/communities-wellbeing-fund/>

Question 2

Do you consent for VAER to hold your details on a database which is fully compliant with data protection and GDPR legislation?

YES/NO

We need you to give permission for us to hold your data. The information that is provided from this application will be held electronically. The information provided will be assessed by a panel featuring representatives from the Health and Social Care Partnership, East Renfrewshire Council and the Wellbeing Network, as well as those who have been selected because of their relevant life experiences. Those on the panel will decide whether application will be approved or not.

You may be contacted, using the information provided in this application, to gather more information about your group in order to promote the services and activities that you offer. The data collected may be used for research purposes. However, we do recognise the need to maintain confidentiality of vulnerable groups and so your details may not be made public in anyway, except for where required by law. Individual recipients of the funding will not be identified but the organisations in receipt of the funding may be. so we are able to share this with Panel Members and potentially the Scottish Government if requested to do so.

Year 6 Application Questions

Question 3

If successful, do you commit to completing an evaluation of your project by April 2028?

YES/NO

We ask this question to ensure that successful applicants can commit to gathering evidence throughout the funding period to demonstrate the impact of their project. This information should be compiled into a final evaluation report and submitted by April 2028. The findings from your evaluation will be shared with the Scottish Government and VAER partners, and may also be featured on the VAER website to showcase the impact of funded projects.

Question 4

If successful, do you commit to contributing and participating in learning hubs relevant to the fund?

YES/NO

We ask this question to ensure that funded organisations are willing to engage with learning and sharing opportunities throughout the funding period. Learning hubs provide a valuable space for groups to exchange experiences, share good practice, discuss challenges, and learn from one another. Your participation will help strengthen the collective impact of funded projects and contribute to a better understanding of what works in supporting adult mental health and wellbeing across the community.

Question 5

If successful, do you commit to adding and maintaining your organisation's/group's activities on the Community Hub Directory?

YES/NO

We ask this question to ensure that funded organisations and groups are willing to promote and keep information about their activities up to date on the Community Hub Directory. This helps local people find and access the support, services, and activities available in their area.

Year 6 Application Questions

Section A – General Information

Question 1

Are you applying as part of a partnership bid?

YES/NO



Question 2

If submitting a collaborative bid, please name the organisation(s) you will be working with:

This is your opportunity to tell us who you will be working with to deliver your proposed project.

Question 3

Please outline how you will work with this/these organisation(s) to deliver the project

In this section, you are invited to provide a brief outline of how you will work with your chosen partners to deliver your proposed project.

For example:

- Will you be sharing staff
- Will you be sharing knowledge and learning
- Will you be using one another resources such as workspaces or equipment
- Does the partner organisation provide something your group/org can't

Question 4, 5 & 6

Name of Applicant/Email/Contact Number

In this section, we are simply asking for the name, email, and contact number of the person we should contact in the event we have any questions about your application or want to let you know the outcome of the application.

Question 7

Name of group or organisation

We are looking for you to provide us with the full name of your organisation which is on your governing documents. For example, Voluntary Action East Renfrewshire SCIO, instead of VAER

Question 8

Location(s) of project

What area within East Renfrewshire will your project be delivered in?



Question 9 - Type of Organisation

In this section, you are asked to choose between the following options:

- Unincorporated club or association
- Registered charity
- Company Limited by Guarantee
- Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO)
- Community Interest Company (CIC)

PLEASE NOTE

- If your group has a constitution, but are not a charity or registered company, then you would fall into the category of unincorporated club or association.
- If you do not fit into any of the categories, please choose Other and let us know your group's structure

Question 10

What is the size of your organisation

- Organisation with income up to £5,000
- Organisation with income up to £10,000
- Organisation with income up to £25,000
- Organisation with income between £25,000 and £100,000
- Organisation with income between £100,000 and £500,000
- Organisation with income between £500,000 and £1 million per annum
- Organisation with income over £1 million per annum



We are asking you to disclose the amount of money your organisation receives per year.

PLEASE NOTE

- As this fund is aimed to support grassroots community groups in tackling mental health inequalities and address priority issues of social isolation and loneliness, suicide prevention and tackling poverty and inequality. With this in mind, organisations with income over £1 million per annum must demonstrate that a grassroots approach is being used and provide evidence that there community engagement has taken place with those in the community expressing a need for the service

Question 11

Please give us a brief description of your group or organisation's main activities

In this section, we are asking you to provide a small breakdown of the main aims and activities that your group currently undertake (separated from the project you are applying for). This will provide the panel a background of your group/organisation.

Question 12 & 13

Is your organisation applying to this fund in any other local authority areas e.g Glasgow, Renfrewshire, Inverclyde. If yes, please provide more information:

We ask for this information to help us understand the overall reach of your organisation's activity, assess delivery capacity across multiple areas, and ensure there is no duplication of funding request.

Section B – About your project

Question 14

What is the name of the project you are applying for?

Please note: this is the name of the project you wish to undertake, not the name of your organisation or the name of the fund you are applying for

Question 15

Type of Project – Select ONE option that best describes your project:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| • Befriending | • Food |
| • Peer Support | • Nature |
| • Counselling | • Social |
| • Therapeutic | • Arts and Crafts |
| • Mentoring | • Maintenance/repair |
| • Financial Inclusion/Cost of Living | • Sports or physical activity |
| • One to one | • Culture |
| • Group Activity | • Other (please explain) |
| • Equipment | |

PLEASE NOTE:

We recognise that your project may cover multiple of these options, however, we ask you to choose the one which best sums up the activity you plan to undertake

Question 16

What group(s) of people does your project seek to support?

- ☐ Women (16+) (including women experiencing gender based violence)
- ☐ People with a long-term health condition or disability
- ☐ People from a minority ethnic background
- ☐ Refugees and those with no recourse to public funds
- ☐ People experiencing severe and multiple disadvantage including social economic disadvantage
- ☐ People with diagnosed mental illness
- ☐ People affected by psychological trauma (including adverse childhood experiences)
- ☐ People who have experienced bereavement or loss
- ☐ Older people (aged 50+)
- ☐ People with learning disabilities/neurodiversity
- ☐ LGBT+ Communities
- ☐ Young people (16 - 24)
- ☐ Other (please explain)

PLEASE NOTE:

For each priority box you tick, we may ask for evidence in your evaluation on how the project was accessible to that chosen priority group. If you have chosen to tick more than one priority group, please let us know how you will evidence you have reached all priority groupings in Q19 to Q22

Question 17

Priority families most at risk of poverty. The following family types are considered to be most at risk of poverty. Please select any (or all) who are highly likely to engage with this project.

- ☐ Lone parents
- ☐ Families with a disabled family member
- ☐ Families with 3+ children
- ☐ Minority ethnic families
- ☐ Families where the youngest children are under 1 years old
- ☐ Mothers under 25
- ☐ Not applicable for my project



If you are likely to engage with any of these groups then tick the relevant box.

Please note, the above groups are not the only groups affected by poverty, however, have been outlined by the Scottish Government. If you tick any of the above, you may be required to provide evidence of your work with these groups in your evaluation.

Question 18

Which of the following local priorities does your project contribute to?

- ☐ Suicide Prevention
- ☐ One to one Befriending / Group Befriending
- ☐ Addressing Cost of Living (whole family poverty/ mitigating child poverty)
- ☐ Friendship / Social Connections
- ☐ Additional Support Needs activities/services (16+)
- ☐ Other

Please tick the box of the priority area that your project will address or choose ' Other' to highlight your own local issue.

Question 19

Project Target Group:

- ☐ General
- ☐ Targeted
- ☐ Restricted



Is your project: for the general population (general), open to all but with a focus on particular target groups (targeted) or aimed directly at particular target groups (restricted)?

Question 20

Is your application for a new project or for a continuation/expansion of an existing project? (Select one)

- ☐ New Project
- ☐ Existing Project (previously funded through the Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund for Adults)
- ☐ Existing Project (New to this fund, but funded previously through another funding source)

We are interested in whether you are continuing a project from previous year of the Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund. Applications to continue projects are eligible this year, however, you must clearly demonstrate how the learning from previous years funding will be used to adapt, develop, improve and expand the project you are apply for. What is the added value?

This funding is not open to replacement funding or intended to replace services previously funded by statutory agencies.

Question 21

Please describe the project, including its key aims and activities and how this supports mental health and wellbeing:

This is your opportunity to provide details of what you intend to deliver, how you plan to implement it. If your proposed project has been influenced by engagement with members of the community who will benefit from this activity, please show evidence of this to support your application. Please describe the project including its key aims and activities and how this supports mental health and wellbeing.

PLEASE NOTE:

If you are using Microsoft Forms for your application, this platform restricts each response box to a maximum of 4,000 characters, you cannot exceed this, however, if you wish to send over further evidence you can do so on one-sided A4 document by email via funding@va-er.org.uk. Again, this must be received by 10am on the day of the deadline for it to be considered alongside your application

Question 22

What is the estimated number of people this project will support?

Please provide an estimate of how many people will benefit from your proposed project. This could be directly or indirectly, however, you may be asked to provide evidence of the need for your project by the Panel.

PLEASE NOTE:

We may ask for evidence on the number of people your project supported as part of the monitoring and evaluation process

Question 23

Please provide one or more outcomes that describe the changes you hope participants will achieve through involvement with your outlined activity:

An outcome is about the change you want to make for participants, so it will usually include active language like 'reducing/decreasing' or 'increasing/improving'. While an output could be: 25 peer support sessions attended by 45 individuals, an outcome is the reason you deliver those sessions, e.g:

- increased resilience and confidence
- improved confidence to make informed decisions about their health
- reduced absence from work due to mental ill health

Please note:

Your outcomes should be measurable within the timeframe of your project. Don't make sweeping statements you can't measure or evidence.

Question 24

How do you intend to measure the impact of your project?

Please describe how you will gather and use evidence to demonstrate the difference your project has made for participants and the wider community. Your response should explain how you will measure the outcomes identified in the previous question and how often this information will be collected and reviewed.

We ask this question to understand how you will assess the effectiveness of your project, demonstrate the impact of the funding, and use evidence to inform future delivery.

Examples of evidence-gathering methods include:

- Surveys and questionnaires
- Interviews or focus groups
- Case studies
- Testimonials and participant feedback
- Attendance and participation records
- Quantitative data (e.g. number of people supported, skills gained, volunteering hours, employment outcomes)
- Before-and-after assessments

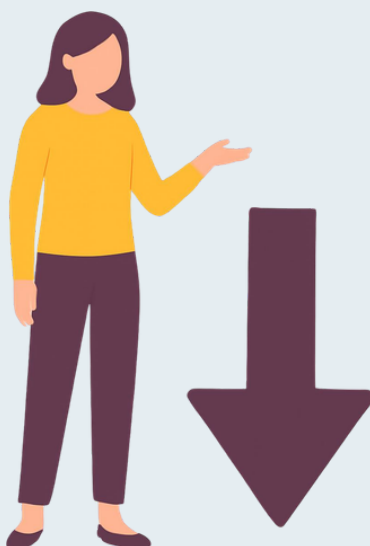


Top Tip: Ensure your measurement methods clearly relate to the outcomes you identified in the previous question. For example, if an outcome is improved wellbeing, explain how you will measure changes in wellbeing among participants.

Question 25

How many volunteers will be involved in delivering the project?

Please provide an estimate of how many volunteers will be involved in delivering your proposed project. We are NOT asking for how many volunteers your organisation has as a whole.



Question 26

What strategies will you implement to ensure the project's long-term sustainability after the funding period ends?

If your application is successful, please describe how you will sustain the project's activities, outcomes, or benefits beyond the funding period. This could include securing alternative funding, developing partnerships, building community capacity, training volunteers, generating income, or embedding activities within existing services.

If the project is intended to be time-limited, please explain this and describe how you will ensure it delivers meaningful and lasting benefits during its lifetime.

If you are applying for funding to continue an existing service or project, please outline:

- Why ongoing funding is required and any plans you have to reduce reliance on grant funding in the future.
- Any challenges or barriers that may affect the project's long-term sustainability and how you intend to address them.

We ask this question to understand how the benefits of the funding will be maintained and how your organisation is planning for the future of the project beyond the grant period.

Top Tip: Sustainability does not always mean continuing the project in exactly the same way. Consider how the skills, knowledge, partnerships, resources, or community benefits developed through the project will continue after the funding has ended.

Question 27

Please outline your current referral pathway and how people can access your service.

Please include:

- Whether people can self-refer or must be referred by a professional.
- Who can make referrals (e.g. GPs, social workers, third-sector organisations, community groups).
- Any eligibility criteria or restrictions.
- How referrals are made (e.g. online form, email, telephone, in person).
- Any waiting lists or capacity considerations.
- Details of the geographical area your service covers.

We ask this question so that we can understand how people access your service and share accurate information with Talking Points to support signposting and referrals, helping individuals connect with appropriate support within their community.

To find out more about Talking Points, please visit:

<https://eastrencommunityhub.org.uk/talking-points/>

Section C – Budget Section

Question 28

Does your organisation/group have their own bank account?

YES/NO

If your group/organisation does not hold its own bank account, you may need to approach another third sector group to ask them whether they would be happy to hold the funds for you.

Question 29

Please input the details of your budget below using similar headlines where relevant

Example of suggested headline(s):

- Equipment
- Staff costs
- Training costs
- Travel Expenses, etc.

Please include a grand total value.

Top tip: Include a full break down of costs e.g

Hall Hire @£20 per hour x 17 hours = £340

Plant Pots @£10 x 40 = £400

Total = £740



Question 30

If you are asking for funding to cover salary costs, can you please confirm whether your employee will be paid at least the real Living Wage which currently stands at £13.45 per hour:

YES/NO

There is a requirement for all grant recipients awarded a public sector grant on or after 1 July 2023 are to pay at least the real Living Wage and provide appropriate channels for effective workers' voice, subject to limits on devolved competence.

With regards to the real Living Wage, the guidance notes that:

All UK-based staff aged 16 and over, including apprentices, whom the grant recipient directly employs, must be paid at least the real Living Wage of £13.45 per hour; and any UK-based workers who are not directly employed but are directly engaged in delivering the grant-funded activity, whether they be sub-contractors or agency staff, must also be paid at least the real Living Wage.

Question 31

Please send a copy of your group or organisation's governing documents and the most up-to-date financial records. Please send these via email to funding@va-er.org.uk.

Type "I understand" before submitting the application.

This section is included in the application to ensure that applicants understand that we require them to send a copy of their group/organisations governing documents, as well as a copy of their most recent accounts.

When we ask for accounts we are NOT asking for a copy of a bank statement.

We would be grateful if you could provide information for the financial year (12 months) ending in March 2024, if possible. Ordinarily, this would be the same period as your latest verified accounts cover, but it's not essential if this is not possible. If your organisation's accounts cover a different 12-month period, please complete the figures for that period, confirm the dates and explain.

This information is usually accessible through your organisations balance sheet, but you may need assistance accessing this.

Please make sure you build in enough time to access this from the person who handles your finances, especially if this is external to the organisation. Failure to include the correct documentation before the fund deadline may result in your application not being assessed.

