



Local Collaborations Programme

This programme will support local collaborations led by small charities seeking to influence and achieve local or regional change.

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Introduction

This programme aims to support impactful collaborations that are led by small and local charities that have the specialist knowledge, compassion, and drive to keep fighting alongside people and communities for long lasting change.

Through flexible funding of £100,000 over two years (with the opportunity to extend for a further year and an additional £50,000) and development support we want to help strengthen collaborations and build capabilities and confidence to achieve change.

We hope this programme will provide a much-needed boost to efforts by charities and their partners to come together to achieve change in communities across England and Wales. This is the second round of funding for this programme. [Here](#) you'll find information about the collaborations that were funded in the first round and a [blog](#) from one of the local collaborations describes their experience of being part of the programme.



Programme Objectives

The three key objectives for this programme are:

- To support work **to influence change** at a local/regional level
- To support **collaborations led by local, small charities**
- To support and enable the **meaningful involvement** of people with **lived experience**

Themes we're funding under this programme:

We would expect your influencing work to align with at one of these themes:

- Making the **social security system work better** for those facing the greatest challenges
- Making sure people facing complex issues have **access to suitable accommodation**
- Improving **support and services for asylum seekers and refugees**

This funding cannot be used to fund direct delivery of services and is exclusively to support partnerships to influence locally and regionally.

Who we aim to benefit

This programme is focused on changes that will **improve support for working-age people aged 18 and older who are facing the greatest challenges**. We will not fund work that is focused on children and young people under 18.

We are **particularly interested in work that addresses inequalities** within the themes outlined above. We recognise the increased impact of poor policies on people experiencing inequalities based on, for example, their race, gender, disability or sexual orientation, or an intersection of these identities.

Work that involves people with lived experience

No one understands the impact of an issue better than those who have experienced it themselves. **That's why we will prioritise applications that show that lived experience is centred in the collaboration's design and delivery.**

It could be that people with lived experience are involved in the leadership, governance and delivery of support in collaboration partner organisations. They may be involved in developing your application to this programme.

This may also be an area of work that you want to develop as a collaboration, for example, people with direct experience playing a central role in developing your influencing plans.



Who can apply for funding

Local collaborations or partnerships that are led by small charities can apply for funding.

We will fund:

- **established collaborations/networks/consortia:** you will need to identify which partners of your collaboration will be involved in this work and develop a collaboration agreement in relation to this funding.
- **new collaborations** where partners have recently come together around a local issue with identified partners.

If you get to the second stage of our application process, we will ask you to start thinking about your collaboration agreement.

You will need to **submit a collaboration agreement signed by all partners before we can release the grant payment.** This must be **within 3 months** of the grant award.

You will also be expected to **develop an influencing plan within 6 months of the grant award.** We will be able to provide support to develop an agreement and the plan if required.

We will not fund:

- the direct delivery of support or services
- **piloting of new services or support**, even if you are seeking to demonstrate a new way of working
- **collaborations made up solely of partners from one federated structure** (a federated charity consists of one central and two or more local organisations that operate under a single identity)
- collaborations that we are currently funding

Eligibility

The charity that would receive the grant (the applicant organisation) **must make the application on behalf of the collaboration and would need to meet the eligibility requirements below.** Please take our eligibility quiz before applying to make sure you



meet these requirements. It could save you and your collaboration partners valuable time if you are not eligible to apply.

Other partners in the collaboration don't need to meet the same eligibility requirements as the applicant organisation, however we ask who else is involved in the application

The applicant organisation must:

- Be registered as a charity or a charitable incorporated organisation (CIO) with the Charity Commission with an annual income between £25,000 and £1million
- Operate mainly in England and Wales
- Have at least one set of annual accounts showing as 'received' on the Charity Commission website, covering a twelve-month operating period
- Have a Board of at least three unrelated trustees in place, with their names appearing on your Charity Commission records
- Have a bank account in the name of the organisation with unrelated signatories. If the application is successful, the grant must be paid into this account
- The majority of people in positions of power (trustees, the CEO and senior managers) must not be related nor live at the same address. Where there are related parties, we will consider the relationship, conflicts of interest and loyalty, the balance of power of the related trustees, and how this is managed
- Have a safeguarding policy and a Designated Safeguarding Lead/Officer (DSL/O) who is trained to Level 3 (England) or Level C (Wales)
- Public Liability Insurance in place
- Be an independent organisation. We will look at any formal associations you have with other organisations, parent bodies, or group structures
- Not incorporate religious activity as part of your work unless your charity was established to support people of a particular faith
- Not be applying for funding to provide frontline/direct support or to pilot new work
- Ensure that there are a minimum of three organisations in the collaboration (including your charity)
- Ensure your collaboration's influencing work aligns with at least one of the influencing priorities: accommodation, social security or support for refugees and asylum seekers

Where we will NOT fund

We funded 15 collaborations in the first round of this programme. In this round **we will not fund collaborations in the same Local Authority/place that are addressing the same key issue, as one we have already funded.**

For example, we funded a collaboration in Gateshead working on improving the appropriateness of support for asylum seekers and refugees. **If you are seeking to collaborate in Gateshead around this issue you would not be able to apply.** We would, however, be happy to connect you so you can find out more about the work already underway.

Please check the table below to see where we are currently funding under specific themes/areas of interest. Where there is a blank below, we will accept applications from anywhere in England and Wales.

Theme and key area of interest	We won't fund in these places
Accommodation	
Improve the appropriateness of accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bristol • Liverpool • London (specifically where focus is on the accommodation needs of women experiencing domestic abuse)
Improve the affordability of accommodation	
Increase the availability of accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater Manchester • Leeds
Social Security	
Ensure benefits are not taken away unfairly	
Increase the availability of support for people facing crisis/destitution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leicester and Leicestershire • Lewes District • Middlesbrough • The Wirral • Wrexham • York
Improve the quality and appropriateness of employment support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • London Borough of Lambeth
Support for refugees and asylum seekers	
Improve the availability of support for asylum seekers and refugees	



Improve the appropriateness of support for asylum seekers and refugees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gateshead • Greater Manchester
Improve access to legal support for asylum seekers and refugees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sheffield

How much money is available and for what?

You can apply for grants of **£100,000 over two years** (£50,000 each year) with the opportunity to extend for a further year and additional £50,000. **We anticipate making grants to 15 collaborations in this round of funding.**

If you are shortlisted, we will ask for a project budget at the second stage of the application.

You will be able to apply for **all costs relating to the proposed influencing work, to support your collaboration and to support people with lived experience to engage in the work.** This includes staff costs, activity and materials costs and core costs where they are overheads clearly related to the proposed project (e.g. CEO/senior management time, premises, management, finance and administration costs etc).

This could include:

- **Additional capacity** for existing or new roles such as to co-ordinate the collaboration; engage with stakeholders and those you are trying to influence; support people with lived experience
- Costs of **bringing the collaboration together**, and meetings with stakeholders
- Backfill of roles or **payments to support smaller organisations** to be involved
- **Support for people with lived experience to be involved** e.g. direct payments, wellbeing support, training and development, activity to engage with your local community and those you're seeking to influence to make a case for change
- **Capacity or expertise to support your influencing activity**, e.g. to conduct research or analyse data, shape influencing or communications plans

We are also happy to consider adding our funding to support you have secured from others, or to build on or extend existing work. However, we would want to understand how our funding adds value to the existing work or support.




Key Dates	
Applications close	30 April 2025
Applicants notified of progress to Stage 2	11 July 2025
Assessment conversations with Stage 2 applicants and an opportunity to submit further information	14 July – 22 Aug 2025
Applicants notified of final decisions and grants awarded	10 October 2025
If successful – deadline for collaboration agreement submitted	9 January 2026
If successful – deadline for influencing plans submitted	10 April 2026

About your collaboration

What we mean by ‘a collaboration’

For the purposes of this programme we are defining a local collaboration as:

 *A collaboration started and led by small and local charities in order to influence, shape and change local or regional practice, policy and/or systems.*

We will support collaborations that:

- are **led by small and local charities**
- include a **minimum of three organisations** (including the applicant organisation)
- want to **influence an issue/challenge locally** that aligns to our influencing themes
- support **people with direct experience of the issue to influence** change
- **challenge discrimination and inequalities**
- are in a **defined local or regional geography** that makes sense for the work (town/city, local authority, across counties, region). This programme will not support work to influence change at a national level

We expect a local collaboration to include a range of partner organisations or at least the desire and ambition to engage a range of other organisations (these do not need to be charities and could be community groups, infrastructure organisations, Community Interest Companies, local agencies, businesses, universities etc.) to be able to influence at a local level. The collaboration should have, or have plans to, develop relationships with local decision-makers.

You should consider the following as you develop your application with collaboration partners:

Things to think about...	
Applicant organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you have the capacity to lead the collaboration and keep momentum in the work? You may be motivated to get involved in influencing work, but do you have the capacity alongside your existing work to take a lead role.



<p>Collaboration partner</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you done your due diligence regarding the applicant organisation (e.g. do they meet our eligibility criteria?) • Do you have capacity to engage with the collaboration? • Have you thought about your role in the collaboration and the strengths your organisation brings to the work?
<p>Everyone in the collaboration</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you clear who should be in the collaboration? Would you include organisations you are trying to influence? • How many organisations can feasibly be involved given the funding available? (the quality of the relationships could be more important than the number of partners) • Can you work together and are you prepared to hold each other accountable? Is there alignment around common goals, core values, what's non-negotiable and managing conflicts of interest? • Do you have the motivation for and commitment to the influencing work? You may work together on service delivery but as leaders, are you motivated to be involved in influencing locally?

What we mean by 'led by a small charity'

To apply for this funding, **the charity leading the local collaboration must have an income between £25,000 and £1m per year.**

We'll want to understand how small charities play a key role in a collaboration. They are likely to be original partners and have taken on a key role for example in convening and chairing partnership/sub-group meetings. We will not fund collaborations or partnerships led by local authorities or statutory agencies.

The applicant organisation does not have to be a charity providing frontline support. For example, it could be a local infrastructure organisation.



What we mean by ‘local’

We’ll fund collaborations **within a defined geography that makes sense for the local/regional change they are seeking to achieve**. This could be at a local authority level, across counties or across a region/combined authority, for example. **We will only fund collaborations based in England and Wales.**

We understand that influencing around social security, housing and accommodation and immigration policy is required at a national level, and we have funded projects through a [programme](#) to support this work. However, there are areas of policy, practice and organisational culture in local systems where change is possible. This is the work we are interested in funding through this programme.

Although we will not support national influencing, we are open to supporting collaborations seeking to influence the practice of relevant national agencies as they operate at a local level. For example, we would not fund work to influence the Department of Work and Pensions, but we would fund work at a local/regional level seeking changes to the policy and practice via work with job centres locally.

Our influencing themes

Through this programme we will support collaborations working towards achieving positive change around at least one of the influencing themes below.

We will ask you to identify the area of interest below that is most relevant to the influencing work you want to undertake. We appreciate that your work may fit across more than one area of interest but we ask you to select one option to ensure you have a clear and realistic focus for your work.

We will only fund work that seeks to address at least one of the key areas of interest:

Theme	Key Areas of Interest		
Making the social security system work better for people facing the greatest challenges	1. Ensure benefits are not taken away unfairly	2. Increase the availability of support for people facing crisis / destitution, including those subject to No Recourse to Public Funds	3. Improve the quality and appropriateness of employment support to those facing complex issues
Making sure people facing complex issues have access to suitable accommodation	1. Improve the affordability of accommodation	2. Improve the appropriateness of accommodation	3. Increase the availability of accommodation
Improving support and services for asylum seekers and refugees	4. Increase the availability of support for asylum seekers and refugees	5. Improve the appropriateness of support for asylum seekers and refugees	6. Improve access to legal support

Across these themes, we are particularly interested in work that is led by or actively developed with user groups and / or those with direct lived experience of these issues, and that addresses inequalities.



What we mean by influencing

We understand that there are different ways to influence change and influencing can include a broad range of activities to engage decision makers including local authorities, metro mayors, regional bodies, statutory agencies, housing associations etc, as well as the media and public.

We will fund projects taking different influencing approaches, acknowledging that building power for change may be at a different pace in different places and communities.

Your collaboration's aim must be to influence other agencies, organisations or people to do things differently – rather than being focused on the work of the organisations within the collaboration. This may include influencing how others fund or provide services or support. Our funding will **NOT** cover the costs of providing support or services by yourselves or others.

Whatever approach you choose, the most important things we'll be looking for are that:

- your approach to influencing makes sense both for the change you want to see and the people/organisation/agencies you want to influence
- your approach demonstrates an understanding of who has the power to make the change happen
- you have started to identify the activities you would undertake to achieve the change you want to see
- you can show how people with direct experience of the issue will be involved
- you are well networked in your local area, seeking to build links and partnerships with other charities, groups and organisations who can work with you to help make the case for change. Or, who can directly deliver the change you are seeking
- you are well placed to influence the change you're seeking. You may have a track record of influencing change, have access to important insights for the work or hold important local relationships
- you have identified why now is the right time to do this work and the opportunities that might mean your influencing work gains traction e.g. new/different relationships with statutory agencies or stakeholders, review points or new plans/strategies, building on local/regional campaigns or existing work

The type of work you might undertake may include:

- supporting people with lived experience of a specific challenge to influence local decision-makers



- identifying local stakeholders to engage with, or strategic groups/forums/networks relevant to the work
- using evidence, case studies and data about a problem gathered from partner organisations' frontline services alongside evidence from elsewhere, to engage local decision-makers, making the case for change and developing solutions
- presenting information in new or different ways to improve engagement and traction with local decision-makers.

You might have previously been working on these issues either collectively or individually, with new work planned to build on the impact to date. Or you might be developing new approaches to influencing change around one of the programme's themes.

We will want to understand your influencing focus – the change you want to see, who you want to influence and how you will do this.

Examples of the type of work we would fund:

Improve the affordability of accommodation

Supporting a partnership of a local infrastructure organisation and housing and advice charities seeking to influence the local authority to have a targeted approach to the delivery of the Household Support Fund and Discretionary Housing Payments to ensure those most in need can afford a place to live.

Increase the availability of support for asylum seekers and refugees

Supporting a collaboration of refugee and mental health organisations to influence local statutory services to develop a trauma-informed approach and increase mental health support for people being accommodated in hotels

Improve the quality and appropriateness of employment support to those facing complex issues

Supporting a network of advice organisations and disabled people's organisations working together to influence how Job Centres in their region support disabled people accessing benefits and employment support and to reduce the use of inappropriate sanctions and assessments.



Our influencing themes in more detail

We are looking to support work that is seeking to secure specific and identifiable change that benefits people and communities in your area against the following themes. We appreciate that the themes are closely linked however we encourage you to **be as specific as possible**, focussing on one of the key areas of interest. It will not support your application to have a proposal which has much broader aims, covering more than one theme.

Making the social security system work better for people facing the greatest challenges

We are looking to support work that influences policy, practice and systems locally to:

1 Ensure benefits are not taken away unfairly

The social security system should provide the safety net we need when facing additional challenges. Yet too often, support is reduced or removed from those who need it most. We want to support work that ensures people can access the support they need and that this support is not taken away unfairly, leaving people without enough to cover the cost of essentials.

2 Increase the availability of support for people facing crisis / destitution, including those subject to No Recourse to Public Funds

We have a social security system with gaps that leaves some people without state support. The system is complex, there is often a lack of a strategic response at local authority level (NRPF) and a lack of awareness of support available (for example Council Tax Support is one of the most unclaimed benefits). On top of that, local welfare schemes operate in different ways depending where you live. We want to ensure that people facing crisis / destitution have access to support that meets their needs support, where stigma and destitution are reduced.

3 Improve the quality and appropriateness of employment support to those facing complex issues

People from minoritised communities, disabled people and those who have more complex issues such as poor mental health or who have been homeless often face discrimination and barriers into employment. We want to ensure that people who have been unemployed can access the appropriate employability support to lead to more secure employment.



Making sure people facing complex issues have access to suitable accommodation

We are looking to support work that influences policy, practice and systems locally to:

4 Improve the affordability of accommodation

A lack of social housing means that many people in receipt of benefits are forced to find accommodation in the private rented sector. Yet the amount of money that can be received through benefits and local welfare assistance is often too low to cover private rents and local regimes for people in arrears or facing council tenancy possession vary. We want to ensure that people receive enough support to cover the real costs of accommodation where they live and that is based on their needs.

5 Improve the appropriateness of accommodation

The housing crisis has left too many people living in accommodation that doesn't suit their needs. We want to support work which helps to ensure that people can live in accommodation that is of a sufficient quality and standard, that meets their needs, and provides appropriate additional support if required.

6 Increase the availability of accommodation

A lack of available housing options means that too many people are stuck in temporary or inappropriate accommodation for too long. We want to ensure more people are able to move on to suitable longer-term accommodation, whether they have experienced homelessness, domestic abuse, the criminal justice system or substance abuse for example.

Improving support and services for asylum seekers and refugees

We are looking to support work that influences policy, practice and systems locally to:

7 Increase the availability of support for asylum seekers and refugees

The support available to those who arrive in the UK has changed as a result of recent legislation and policy decisions. People seeking asylum are dispersed across the country, often moving at short notice and living in accommodation that doesn't meet their needs. We want to ensure that those seeking safety have access to the support they need.

8 Improve the appropriateness of support for asylum seekers and refugees

A key factor in the accessibility of support that is available for asylum seekers and refugees is the appropriateness of the support for people from different countries,



ethnicities and cultures. We want to ensure people have access to appropriate support which helps them to recover from the trauma they have experienced.

9 Improving access to legal advice for asylum seekers and refugees

People seeking asylum and refugees need access to legal advice to be able to understand their rights within the complex UK immigration system. Improving access to immigration and benefits advice ensures people have the support they need to navigate the immigration and benefits systems.

How we will work with your collaboration

We will agree with each collaboration how best to work inclusively, ensuring all partners are communicated with through the lifetime of the funding.

We will work **closely with collaborations we fund as a supportive and engaged partner in their work. Collaborations applying should be willing to work closely with us.** We aim to act as a critical friend, bringing a balance of support and challenge to ensure work is as impactful as possible.

We will bring together collaborations we fund to develop opportunities to share learning with each other, the Foundation and wider audiences and we would expect those we fund to engage in this to amplify their work.

Development support

We can provide **tailored support for both your influencing work and collaborative working.** This could include support to develop your influencing plans, enabling people with lived experience to engage with local decision-makers, or communications planning.

In terms of the collaboration, we will support a wide range of development needs, **bespoke to the stage of development for each collaboration.** This could include governance, data sharing, or leadership in a partnership context.

Learning and Impact

We're keen to **learn together with the collaborations we fund about what works, what doesn't, and how our support helps collaborations to build capacity, capabilities and confidence to influence change.** We have a learning partner for the programme who is supporting the Foundation's learning around the impact of the influencing work, the grant-making process and the development support available. We will ask all funded collaborations to **report annually on challenges and successes of**



the work and we'll hold conversations mid-grant to discuss this in more detail. It is **expected that collaborations we fund will engage with quarterly learning sessions and an annual event to bring collaborations together to share, learn and network.**

Applying for funding

Application process

If you are developing work which meets the programme aims, you can apply by submitting an Expression of Interest:

A Word version of the Expression of Interest form is available so that you can see the questions and draft responses. Please **submit your application via the online form.**

Only the small charity that would hold the grant should make the application and should register via the link on the website: this will allow access to our portal and the online form.

Your Expression of Interest should answer the questions clearly and avoid the use of acronyms. Remember to explain any technical terms and ensure that it can be understood by people coming from a range of different backgrounds and experiences, as we will be working with external partners with lived experience of the themes as part of our assessment process.

Short-listing process

We anticipate that we will receive a significant number of applications for this programme. **We don't expect you to have a detailed influencing plan at this stage.** If you are successful in your application, we will request a plan within 6 months of the grant offer and we can provide support to develop this, if required.

However, **applicants that were successful in the first round of funding were able to demonstrate that their application:**

- was a strong fit with our programme objectives
- demonstrated an understanding of who holds the power to make the change they wanted to see
- demonstrated how they would convince decision-makers to make that change
- demonstrated the strength, or potential, of active collaboration between partners (e.g. partners have thought about how they will work together, respective roles and contributions)



- demonstrated where there was a particular opportunity to influence (e.g. new or developing relationships/review points or development of new strategic plans of local agencies)

Expressions of Interest will be assessed against the programme objectives and criteria.

We anticipate receiving more applications than we can support therefore, to ensure we have a mixed portfolio, **we will prioritise applications for the second stage based on a spread across:**

- different influencing themes
- different influencing approaches
- England and Wales (we funded less applications in the south and Wales in the last round so are particularly interested in applications from these areas)
- established and new collaborations

Online meeting with your collaboration

For applicants invited to this second stage, **we'll have a conversation with you and partners from your collaboration to further explore your expression of interest** and to discuss any questions that arose in the initial assessment.

We will also **arrange a call with the charity that would hold the grant**, if successful, to learn more about your finances and governance.

Following the conversation, you will have **an opportunity to update your Expression of Interest** with further information about your collaboration and influencing work, and **to include a budget.**

Further information about the second stage application and assessment process will be shared with applicants who progress to this stage.

Further information

If you have further questions about the programme, please email collaborations@lloydsbankfoundation.org.uk.

If you would like to speak to one of the team about the programme, please arrange a [call](#) by **25 April 2025**.

If Welsh is your first language and you would like support to participate in this process in Welsh, please let us know.



For more information about how we use your data, please see statement on [Privacy and Data Protection](#).