



## **Somerset Health Determinants Research Collaboration (HDRC): The Somerset Community Grants Fund, Round Two**

### **Grant & Application Guidance Notes**

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## 1. About the Somerset Community Grants Fund

The current funding comes from the Somerset HDRC. Our funding calls are open to all community organisations working in Somerset, whether or not they have previous research experience.

You can put forward any project you want to explore, test, or review - as long as it fits the funding themes outlined below, and you are responding to what matters most to your community.

We are not expecting all community organisations to carry out research themselves. However, we do ask that applicants explain why the project is needed and that you share what you learn (what worked and what did not) along with any recommendations for change to benefit Somerset communities.

Community Participation is at the heart of HDRC. We believe in working together so that the voices of Somerset's communities are not just heard but also shape our projects. Our goal is to support action-focused projects that create change, influence local decision-making, and improve conditions for local people.

## 2. Overview of the Fund

We are excited to launch the second round of the Somerset HDRC Community Grants Fund. These grants aim to give local communities a voice in helping Somerset Council improve health and wellbeing across the county.

For this second round, this funding is split across two themed calls. Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) organisations in Somerset can apply for grants of **up to £2500** in response to the **two themed calls below**:

Theme 1
<b>Community-led Projects</b>
<i>Include one or more of the following building blocks of health:</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Education and skills</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>The food we eat</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Our surroundings and communities</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Work</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Housing</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Our friends, family and social connections</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Financial stability</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Transport</b>



Theme 2	
<p><b>HDRC Priority Themes</b> <i>These can be one of the following four themes:</i></p>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Economic Inactivity for working-age adults</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Housing and Place</b> (including the environment)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Children and Young People</b> (focusing on early attachment from 0-2 years old and educational attainment and belonging for 12+)
<p>Your project does not have to align with the HDRC priority themes above.</p> <p>Tell us if you have a new theme you wish to explore. As long as it aligns to at least one of the <b><i>building blocks of health</i></b> in <b>Theme 1</b>, is community-driven, practical, and helps you learn or do something that makes life better for local people.</p>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Emerging community-identified research</b>

### 3. Eligibility

This funding is for voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise (VCFSE) organisations – not academic researchers.

We want to support the people who know Somerset communities best: people and organisations who see what’s happening on the ground, hear what’s needed and want to help make life better for their community.

Whether you are a small charity, grassroots community group, or local organisation, this is a chance to test new ideas and create meaningful change for people and communities across Somerset.

You might use the funding to:

- **Test a new idea or activity** that could improve the health and wellbeing of local communities – this is where it links to the *building blocks of health*.
- **Review something you’re already doing** to learn what’s working (or not) and sharing that learning widely with other VCFSE organisations, the HDRC and the wider council.
- **Explore a local issue** that has been identified by your community.



- **Develop or expand a project or service** to fill a local gap. Please note: Applications can only be considered for an existing service if it is using a new approach, OR a widening of services (as long as impact is demonstrated), and cannot be used for ongoing 'business as usual' service delivery.

We are not expecting all community organisations to carry out research themselves. However, we do ask that applicants explain why the project is needed and that you share what you learn (what worked and what didn't) along with any recommendations for change to benefit Somerset communities.

The HDRC can provide support with training or tools for conducting research and analysis, measuring and evaluating impact.

## Funding Themes

### 1) Community-led Projects

Apply for: **Up to £2,500**

This funding is for **community-led projects** that explore or strengthen the **building blocks of health** in your local area.

Theme 1
<b>Community-led Projects</b>
<i>Include one or more of the following building blocks of health:</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Education and skills</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>The food we eat</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Our surroundings and communities</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Work</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Housing</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Our friends, family and social connections</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Financial stability</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Transport</b>

### 2) Somerset HDRC Priority Themes

Apply for: **Up to £2,500**

This funding is for projects relating to Somerset HDRC's current priorities:

Theme 2
<b>HDRC Priority Themes</b>
<i>These can be one of the following four themes:</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Housing and Place</b> (including the environment)



## Theme 2

### HDRC Priority Themes

*These can be one of the following four themes:*

**Economic Inactivity for working-age adults**

**Children and Young People** (focusing on early attachment from 0-2 years old and educational attainment and belonging for 12+)

Your project does not have to align with the HDRC priority themes above.

Tell us if you have a new theme you wish to explore.

As long as it aligns to at least one of the **building blocks of health** shown in **Theme 1**, is community-driven, practical, and helps you learn or do something that makes life better for local people.

**Emerging community-identified research**

## 4. Key points to note

- You can apply for one or more than one themed call
- If submitting more than one application, please note that only one application per organisation can be funded in each round – you will be asked to select your preferred project for funding if each demonstrates strong potential
- Projects must take place in Somerset and benefit local people
- Grants are offered **up to £2,500 per project** (per organisation)
- We're especially keen to fund ideas that are **community-led, realistic, and open to sharing learning**
- This is the **second round** of a developing programme

## 5. Guidance and outline for writing your application

- Use the prompts outlined in the application questions to guide your answers
- Tell us how you've listened to your community: what have people told you and how does your idea respond to community voices?



- Explain the difference your project will make for your community: what do you want the project to do? What change do you want it to make?
- State clearly what the overall goal is for your project and any objectives or priorities you have identified
- Describe how your project goal links with the funding theme(s) - either Community-led or HDRC Priority theme - and/or building block(s), or another new topic if it does not fit with either of these
- If you are proposing to deliver events and/or training tell us who your audience is, how you plan to reach people, projected numbers you expect to reach, and what the learning outcomes will be
- You may already be working with partners across Somerset, tell us briefly about any work you are currently doing, or have done previously – this will demonstrate collaborative approaches and opportunities for shared learning
- Include in your application, some evidence of impact, or expected impact from data you have gathered in the form of research, surveys, statistics, and digital marketing – web, newsletter, and social media engagement figures; and/or any qualitative data such as feedback given through stories, case studies, testimonials and quotes
- Tell us if you need any help or support with research, data and measuring impact: for example, with data collection methods, conducting research and analysis, evaluating impact
- State clearly in your application if you are applying for funding to pilot or test something new, deliver a service – expanding something you are currently running, or taking a new approach – or if the funding is being used to carry out research
- Consider how your project will have longer-term sustainability e.g. are you looking to extend it more widely in the community, or do you have plans to continue the same project activities after the initial period?

## 6. What we cannot fund

- Projects or activities that are outside the Somerset area - community members are required to be located within the county
- Organisations that are applying to more than one themed call for the same project over the same period



- Companies that can pay profits to directors, shareholders or members (including companies limited by shares)
- Organisations with significant free reserves (please contact us if you're unsure)
- Statutory/public sector organisations (e.g. health authorities, schools, hospitals, parish and town councils etc.)
- Funding being used to keep a service running – 'business as usual' service delivery
- Contributions to an endowment, payment of deficit funding or loan repayment
- Grant making organisations or bodies who fundraise or distribute grants on behalf of other organisations
- Retrospective grants – funding for activities and projects that have already happened
- Clinically based therapeutic health interventions
- Any projects that may be considered as high-risk: for example, projects that could or have the potential to cause physical, emotional, financial, and/or any social harm
- Funding used solely for the purchase of consumables or products
- Organisations or projects intended to influence people's religious choices or to promote a particular belief system
- The promotion of political causes

If in doubt, just ask. If you need any help at all please let us know and we would be happy to arrange a call with you.

Come along to one of our drop-in sessions or email the team at:

[SomersetCommunityGrants@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:SomersetCommunityGrants@somerset.gov.uk)



## 7. Application Timeline

Applications open: **Friday 27 March 2026**

Submit an application to **SomersetCommunityGrants@somerset.gov.uk**

Applications close: **23:59 PM on Sunday 26 April 2026**

Applications will be reviewed by a Panel set up by the Funders

Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application and clear feedback by  
**Tuesday 5 May 2026.**

## 8. Drop-in Sessions

If you'd like to talk through your idea before applying, come along to one of our online drop-in sessions.

They're friendly, informal sessions and a chance to ask questions, check your idea fits, or get guidance on shaping your application. The following dates are scheduled:

### Drop-in sessions for applicants:



Tuesday 31 March at 12:00 PM to 13:00 PM (online)



Wednesday 1 April at 12:00 PM to 13:00 PM (online)



Monday 13 April at 12:00 PM to 13:00 PM (online)

To register, please email: [SomersetCommunityGrants@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:SomersetCommunityGrants@somerset.gov.uk)



## 9. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

### Is there a specific topic of interest to the Somerset HDRC as the funder for the community-led call?

Applications will be assessed on how clearly they address a **building block of health** and/or the **HDRC Priority Themes**, and the positive difference they could make for local people. *We can share more details about the grant assessment criteria with you before you apply.*

### Can individuals apply?

You can apply as an individual if you're linked to a constituted community group, charity, or social enterprise. For example, if you're a volunteer or project lead applying on their behalf.

### Can organisations based outside Somerset apply?

Yes, organisations in other areas of the UK can apply as long as your project works directly with and benefits Somerset communities and helps to build local capacity or connections.

### Can Local Community Network Officers apply?

Yes, if the project is community-led and developed with local people or organisations, rather than on their behalf.

### Is there a preference for new vs existing programs?

We do not have a preference, only that these programs demonstrate clearly how they address the *building blocks of health* and/or the key HDRC priority themes highlighted (or a new emerging topic if applicable).

### How do you want us to report back?

We are keen to learn from your project with the community. You don't need to share any personal information or raw data with us. You can share what you've found out in whatever way works best for you. This could be:

- A short report or summary
- A presentation
- Photos or videos (please ensure you have received written permission from those identifiable)
- Case studies or stories (please ensure written permission is also given from those featured in the case studies/stories)
- Any other way that captures the findings and recommendations from your project.

We will work with you to find the best way to send or share what you have found out.



**Can we reapply if not successful in this round?** Yes of course, and we will give feedback to help you develop your current application if we require further information.

**How do we learn about the *building blocks of health*?** Please find out more information on our website: [The Building Blocks of Health](#)

**Are you looking for small grass-roots organisations or bigger?** We do not have a preference, as long as you feel your project addresses a need, gap in knowledge or a service/initiative that will benefit your community.

**Is there potential to encourage collaboration?** Yes, if we are aware of existing projects with a similar focus we will try to connect you for possible collaboration. Likewise, we will link with specific departments within the council, in which your project is related, to inform their work.

## 10. How to apply

**Applications open: Friday 27 March 2026**

**Applications close: Sunday 26 April 2026 at 23:59 PM**

You can apply using the form on Somerset HDRCs website under the Community Grants section.

If you'd like to discuss your idea before applying, come along to a drop-in session or email [SomersetCommunityGrants@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:SomersetCommunityGrants@somerset.gov.uk)

All applications will be reviewed by a small panel, and you will be given feedback and the outcome of your application by **Tuesday 5 May 2026**.

Projects must be completed within **12 months**. A **progress update** will be requested halfway through the project. All learning and reflections should be shared by **June 2027**.

## 11. Feedback on the application process

We would love to hear how you have found the application process and guidance, and if there is anything we can do to add or improve your experience.

Please can you take a moment to let us know, with any suggestions and ideas on any information, resources and other content that would be helpful.

You can get in touch with us about this by putting '*Feedback*' in the subject title at: [SomersetCommunityGrants@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:SomersetCommunityGrants@somerset.gov.uk)