

Civic Data Innovation Challenge Brief

Statement quote

We need radical new approaches to measure civic data in London. If you're passionate about tackling some biggest data challenges in the social sector, apply for funding to get your project off the ground.

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1 - Introduction

- How can we measure the strength of relationships, social support, or civic responsibility at a ward level?
- What proxies can be used to measure intangible parts of civic and community strength?

These are some of the questions the Civic Data Innovation Challenge Round 2 hopes to answer. Innovation is key to this and to helping us better understand civic data.

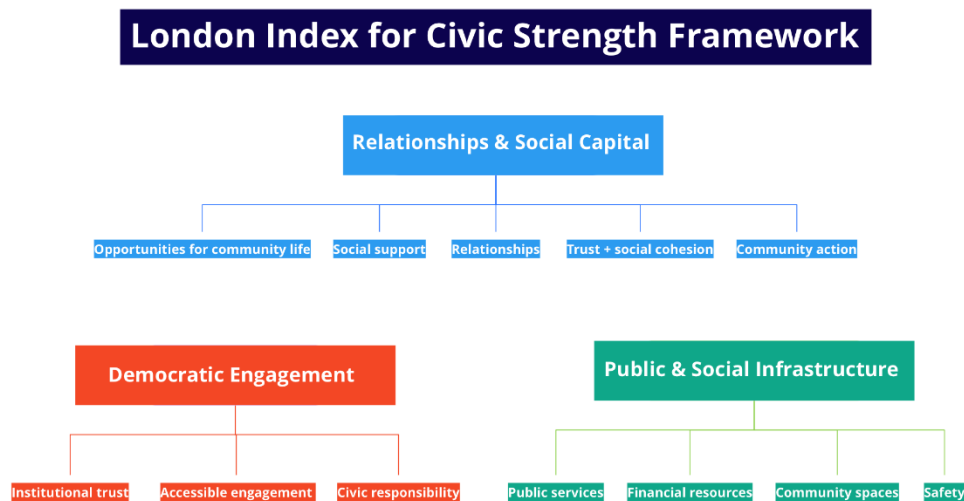
The Greater London Authority and Impact on Urban Health are offering funding and support for individuals and groups to find new ways to measure civic and community strength. The Civic Data Innovation Challenge will help bolster the evidence base that underpins the [Civic Strength Index](#) and strengthen our understanding, methods, and ways of working with Civic data more broadly. The Civic Strength Index is a tool that aggregates datasets to measure the strength of local communities around London.

We now invite organisations and individuals to submit their idea and join us in this effort.

2 - Background – The Civic Strength Index

The [Civic Strength Index](#) was co-produced with Londoners and published in October 2021. It defines what civic strength is, sets out a framework and starts to measure its distribution across London. The index provides a new lens for communities, policymakers, and funders to understand communities' strengths and how best to build on them. Alongside building stronger communities, research shows that high levels of civic strength are linked with better mental and physical health outcomes. As such, the index may also be used to better understand the connection between community and health and help improve health outcomes.

In 2021 we engaged with hundreds of Londoners to define civic strength. Three themes were identified, along with 12 domains, to make up the index below:



Several data gaps exist in this model, due to data being unavailable because it's not:

- Public;
- London-wide*.
- Robust; and/or
- Created yet.

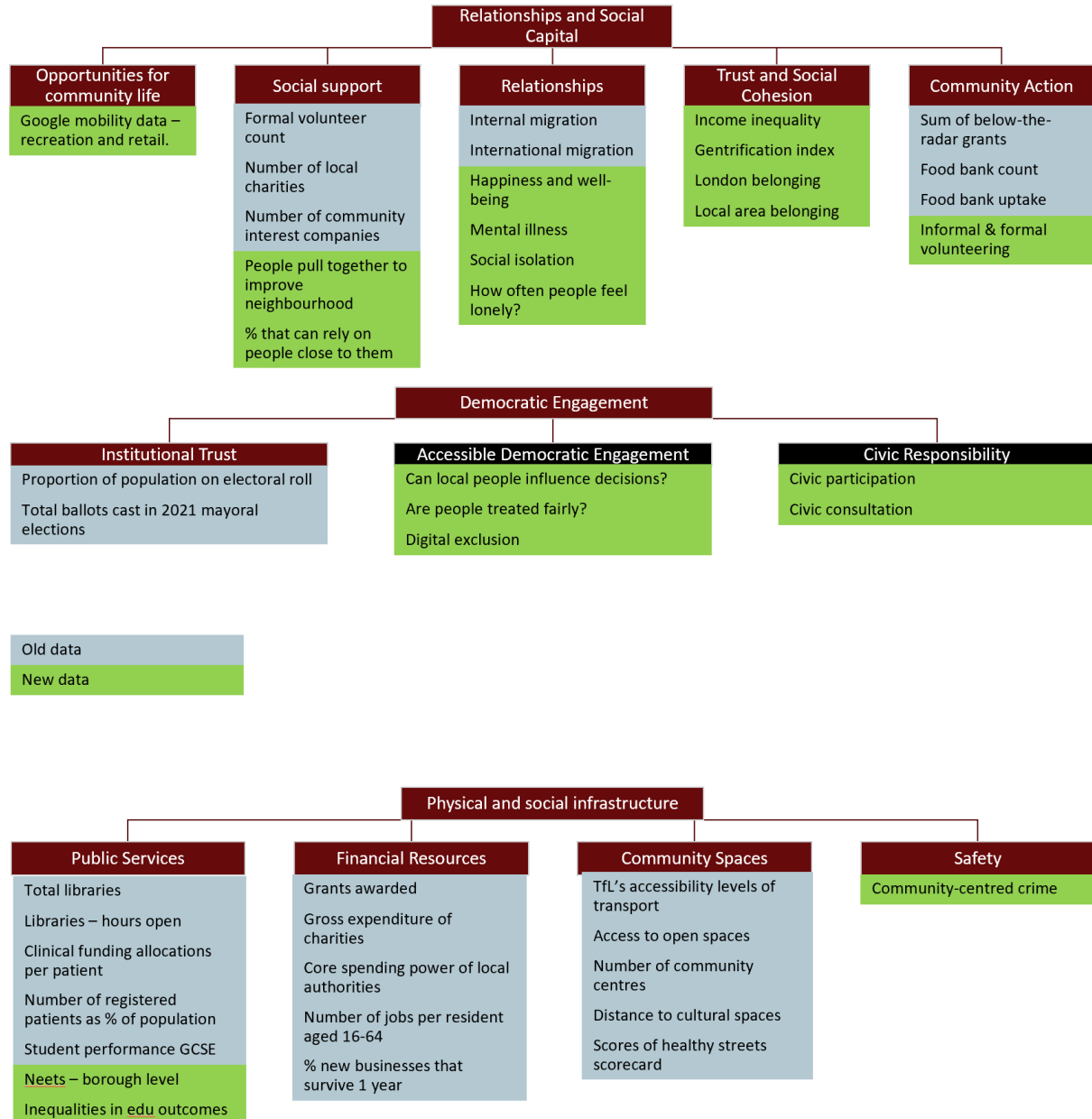
*(Data that is available on a ward level across London is the index's main challenge.)

The index is built at a borough and ward level. The lack of data at ward level is a barrier to getting a full local picture of civic strength. More work is therefore needed to make the index more robust and usable across public, private and third sectors. The table below sets out the precise measures currently within the Civic Strength Index. It also includes potential indicators that we cannot use at present but believe could contribute to the domain. [Find more information about the index and its underlying data here.](#)

A second iteration of the Civic Strength Index will be released in late Summer 2023, responding to some of the inconsistencies and missing datasets. The newer version will also feature a more user-friendly interface so that policymakers and community leaders of all levels of data capacity can incorporate local data into decisions.

Within the second iteration, we have worked in partnership with WPI Economics to address some of the data gaps. See below for where new or improved proxies have been incorporated to strengthen the Index.

This is an important aspect for those looking to apply for the challenge; the below tables show where the Index could benefit from further datasets (eg. Opportunities for community life, Civic responsibility, and Safety). These also are open to improvement- please enter a proposal if you believe your organisation could improve or expand on the below proxies for measuring the sub-domain.



3 – The Challenge brief

Context

The Civic Strength Index identified several data gaps which impact our ability to measure civic strength effectively in London. Where some data solutions have been identified to gaps, these are only available at small scale. The Civic Data Innovation Challenge will help solve these gaps through funding new data innovations or scaling existing ones to London-wide level.

We're most interested in data innovations that help us get better data on:

- Relationships
- Trust and social capital
- Civic responsibility
- Institutional trust
- Accessible engagement

The innovations should also aim to strengthen the evidence base that sits under the index through new data, developing existing data, or improving methodology.

Innovations might explore (but are not limited to):

- New ways of measuring index indicators which uncover new insights.
- Identifying small scale methods for measuring index indicators and exploring how to scale these up.
- Identifying survey sources included within the Index (Community Life Survey etc.) and determine if any proxy measures could be identified.
- Unpicking the challenge of measuring metrics captured in the index which are based on emotions/feelings.
- Developing data standards for civic data and rolling them out across stakeholder groups and geographic areas.
- Improving accuracy of measurement by sampling at a more refined geographic level.

4 - What types of projects will you support?

All projects must respond to the innovation brief set out above.

What are we looking for?

1. **Innovative ideas** – Ideas that are new or a fresh take on addressing data gaps, or else innovative projects already addressing a data gap that can be scaled to London-wide scale. Innovations must be relevant to the Civic Strength Index framework for community strength.
2. **Potential to scale and grow** - We need you to show that you have the commitment, time and permission required to make your idea come to life. You must be able to demonstrate that your idea has potential to develop and support methods that can outlast the programme.

3. **The right skills to make this work** - We will be looking for individuals and teams that can demonstrate the following capabilities:

- The ability to collaborate with stakeholders and actors within the civic data space as well as other innovation teams on the programme.
- The ability to innovate and think creatively about problems and opportunities around measuring civic and community strength effectively in London.
- The ability to test and develop ideas and methods that can produce data that can be collected regularly.
- A passion for this area of work and to really make a difference in this space.

4. **Intellectual Property (IP)** – The IP of the data method produced from the challenge will be open access. That way it can be used by others and for public good. Innovations will not be able to make private gain.

5 – Data guidelines

Please consider these guidelines when developing your idea.

The following guidelines set out what “good data” looks like and the ideas behind these. However, certain trade-offs might be required to obtain the desired information. The main objective is to collect data that can explain a phenomenon as precisely as possible. This may require using proxy measurements or compromise on timeliness wherever necessary.

Professional documentation around the data must seek to abide by the [UK Statistics Authority’s Code of Practice](#) and their framework – Trustworthiness, quality and value. We are particularly focused on quality – methods that produce assured data.

Please also consider:

Transparency - The data outputs should come with explanations around:

- ∄ how judgements were made around the data
- ∄ which methods will be used to collect and produce the data
- ∄ strengths and limitations of the data.

Coherence - How the data relates to the topic explored for the challenge and if /how it combines with other statistics to explain the topic area.

Accountability - Notify users of the data of revisions or errors in a prompt fashion.

Public focus - Communicate clearly what gaps the data addresses, what it shows and why.

1. Representative of people's differentiating experiences

Data that can showcase variation of experiences for certain demographic population groups, and at a geographically detailed level. (Data that is available on a ward level across London is the index's main challenge.)

2. Statistically meaningful sample

Large enough sample size to equally represent each part of the population we're interested in. Data producers should use the appropriate sampling mechanisms, weightings, and adjustments to account for non-response.

3. Protected data

Data should not disclose a respondent's personal information and data producers should follow the guidelines of securely collecting, storing, and processing data.

4. Timeliness

Ensure minimal lag between when data was captured and when it can be used. Data should be as up to date as possible and capture/ reflect the current socioeconomic situation.

5. Repeatability

Data producers should ensure data can be collected at a repeated interval and thus can be used to measure trends over time.

6. Cost effective and efficient

Data collection and production should come with relatively low costs so it can be repeated and have a fast turnaround time.

7. Available to the public

Data should be made available to the public and therefore will be open to scrutiny from the public. Data should be open access. We can work with you to identify appropriate mechanisms to share data through the London Datastore or other platforms.

8. Ethical

The collection, access, use and sharing of statistics and data should be ethical and for the public good. Data producers should be free from conflicts of interest, including political and commercial pressures, that may influence the data.

9. Parsimonious

Only collect data that is relevant to the topic and therefore not including any data that is irrelevant or disclosive.

6 - How much funding is available?

Innovators can apply for up to £60,000 to help develop their idea.

Please note: this includes any money up to £5000 ringfenced for additional training outside of the programme of support. Applicants should also use this ringfenced money to cover their time commitment to presenting learning and development back to policymakers.

7 - Who can apply?

Applicants could include data scientists, policy specialists, academics, third sector organisations and others. We welcome applications from organisations as well as individuals, but all must meet the eligibility criteria.

Eligibility as an organisation:

- An individual or team, with a registered company/charity in the UK
- Applicants may enter as a single individual, organisation or as a partnership.
- However, partnerships must nominate a lead organisation (that is a registered entity).
- Businesses and for-profit organisations (outputs from the grant cannot be for profit)

All organisations that apply including via sponsor organisations must have at least three unrelated Trustees/Directors/Management Committee members. There must also be a dissolution clause within the governing document.

Eligibility as an individual:

- Individuals and unconstituted groups can apply but must work with a constituted sponsor organisation in the application.

We will only make payments to individuals and unconstituted groups via a sponsorship organisation – this is a constituted organisation that agrees to accept the money on behalf of the unconstituted group and will pay out the funds from their own bank

You will need to sign a declaration in your application form confirming that you satisfy the eligibility criteria.

8 - Who can't apply?

- Employees of the delivery partner, Greater London Authority, Impact on Urban Health, and their immediate families, are ineligible to enter.
 - We cannot fund activities which are for profit, partly political in intention, use, or presentation nor to support or promote religious activity.
 - Any organisation that is currently: bankrupt, in liquidation, having their affairs administered by the courts or entering into an arrangement with creditors.
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9 – How can we apply?

To apply, complete the application form ([link](#)).

The deadline for applications is 17:00pm GMT Friday 4 August 2023. We will contact applicants by end of August.

If you receive a conditional offer of funding, we'll need to carry out a few 'due diligence' checks.

9.1. Due diligence guidance

We will run tests to check that you are who you say you are and have all the relevant policies and insurance in place. You must provide this documentation as part of your application:

If applying as a registered company/charity or via a fiscal host/sponsor organisation, you will be asked to:

- Ensure your organisation or sponsor organisation has at least three Trustees/Directors/Management Committee members who are not related.
- A copy of your organisation's or sponsor organisation's most recent signed set of Financial Statements/Accounts
- A statement of your organisation's or sponsor organisation's cash flow for the current year
- Evidence of public liability and employer's liability insurance
- Submission of your organisation's or sponsor organisation's Financial Regulations

Please note that we will be sharing your application form with our partnership of funders.

10 – When can we apply?

Open from 3rd July to 4th August 2023.

11 – What costs will the grant cover?

We will fund a broad range of activities and the costs associated with running them.

It is best practice to offer expenses for people volunteering on your project.

Costs could include (but are not limited to):

- professional fees: the cost of hiring people to help with your project – researchers, consultants, professional advice
- venue hire costs: for example, what it costs you to rent a hall or other type of space for your project
- staff costs: and other costs directly related to the running of your project
- volunteer costs: expenses to support volunteer’s participation in the project including refreshments
- transport: to help you, your staff and volunteers or participants get to your project and back
- overheads: such as administrative and office costs up to 10 per cent of your total grant amount.

If applicants are in need of further support and training, they can ringfence up to £5,000 of their grant funding for this, but will need to outline this clearly in the proposed budget. Please also use this ringfenced part of the budget to cover their time, as it is expected that recipients will help share their process and disseminate findings with the sector.

11.1. Access costs

If you / your participants require extra support for the project (such as British Sign Language interpretation, translators, personal assistance), you can apply for an additional £500.

Note – this is to cover personal access costs rather than the general costs of making your organisation or your work more accessible. Any costs to make the project accessible should be part of the programme budget costs.

You will be asked about these costs separately as part of your application.

12 - What costs will the grant not cover?

We will not fund:

- Activities that have already happened or taken place before we decide on your application
- General overheads not related to the delivery of your project
- Activities outside London
- Profit-making activities or projects
- Overseas travel (in or out bound).

13 - What support will be offered to grantees once they have been awarded funding?

The programme will offer dedicated support through coaching and mentoring to help individuals and innovation teams develop their ideas, but applicants will be expected to fulfil the requirements of their proposal.

Teams will have access to coaching or mentoring support across the course of the programme (between 2.5 – 4 hours per team).

Timeline

Stage	Programme Stage	Programme Support
June – August 2023	Enter an application form for your team.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information sessions

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme team support to help with any queries
August 2023	Applications reviewed and first installment of funding awarded to successful teams	N/A
September 2023– March 2024	Co-creating solutions – carry out work to develop your ideas. Test your ideas, prove your concept, and refine your model. Second installment of funding awarded.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicated expert support for each team • Programme teams liaise with support teams to complete grant agreements and release funding.
March 2024	Showcase – celebrate and showcase the innovations across the system bringing together stakeholders and partners.	Programme team support to help with any queries
March – late 2024	Final phase – after developing a sound data project, teams will be expected to complete and compile datasets to be handed to the GLA. Final funding paid to recipients.	Light touch programme support and check-ins.

14 - How will you decide what to fund?

We will assess your application for either type of funding against a few key criteria, outlined below. For further details on exactly how applications will be assessed, please refer to **Sections 4 & 5 of the Application Guide**.

Criteria	Description
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Your idea	Is the idea truly innovative? Will it help build the evidence base of the Civic Strength Index as outlined in the Innovation brief? In doing so, does the idea meet the data guidelines set out within the Innovation brief? Does the idea propose something that has not been done before? Or is it something that has been undervalued by the current system, but the idea helps shift focus/power dynamic in a new way?
Delivery	Does the application include a plausible project plan and the capabilities to deliver it? Is the solution technically feasible? Can the initial proposed project realistically be delivered within the budget and timescales outlined? Does the application include a measurable plan to demonstrate progress and evaluate outcomes? <i>*We recognise plans may change but we want to see that teams have thought through and are able to deliver their planned activities</i>

15 – Ready to apply?

You can apply with the beginnings of a great idea!

You might be part of a community organisation, local authority, charity, a university, or an entrepreneur. We simply want to find the best people and organisations with the best ideas.

To apply, access the application form. The closing date for applications is 17:00 GMT Friday 4th August 2023.
