

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

We will keep this document up to date with the questions we're asked about the Greener City Fund Community Tree Planting and Community Green Space Grants. FAQs are grouped as follows:

1. Who can apply?
2. What types of project can we fund?
3. What type of costs/activities can be included?
4. What about match funding?
5. Which grant scheme to apply to?
6. Other FAQs

1. WHO CAN APPLY?

I'm an individual with a great idea, can I apply?

An application needs to be from a formally constituted organisation - we can't fund individuals. If you are an individual, why not find an appropriate local organisation and develop your idea together.

What is an appropriate local organisation?

Everyone who applies for a grant must be part of a constituted group and able to enter into legal contracts. We would also ask you to demonstrate clear and representative governance arrangements (your mission statement, who you represent, how you conduct yourselves and your membership, key roles and responsibilities, etc.) and provide details of an organisation bank account. Companies and charities applying for grant funding will need to send in supporting financial information outlined in **Section 2** of the application form.

My organisation is new and does not have previous years' accounts – can I apply?

Newly-formed organisations are not excluded from applying if they do not have two years of audited accounts, but they will be required to have a statement of the organisation's current turnover, profit and loss, and cash flow position.

Can businesses apply for a grant?

If your organisation is a business, you can apply for a grant providing the proposed project can demonstrate community benefit and commitment to community participation, co-design and capacity building.

Can I use another organisation's bank account to receive grant payments?

You may partner with another organisation who will receive grant payments into its bank account. However, as it will receive the grant monies it will therefore be the lead organisation and applicant, so will sign the funding agreement and be primarily responsible for providing monitoring information and ensuring your project is successful. Please ensure any organisation with whom you wish to partner for this purpose is aware of these responsibilities when applying.

2. WHAT TYPE OF PROJECTS CAN WE FUND?

Are these grants only for projects on publicly-owned land?

No, the land doesn't have to be publicly owned, but it should be publicly accessible or provide demonstrable community benefit.

I want to apply but I don't have landowner permission.

It is very important to get landowner permission in writing, as this can cause major delays to projects. There are several rounds of funding available, so you have time to get permission and then apply in a later round.

I want to create a project but I only have short term permission.

We will consider meanwhile spaces, but we would expect a minimum of three years of permission to use, and a design and plan that allows for relocation.

Can I apply for a project that is already underway or does the project have to be completely new?

An application can be for a project that is already in delivery, or part of a larger project, but you will need to be able to identify a distinct element that can be funded by our grant.

Will you consider funding projects at multiple sites?

Generally, we expect to see separate grant applications tailored to each specific site. However, we can consider funding projects across a number of sites in certain circumstances – for example where activities at each individual site are small and for very similar activities, but together they meet the grant funding thresholds. If you would like confirmation of whether your proposed application is eligible, please email greenercity@london.gov.uk or call 0207 239 1292.

3. WHAT TYPE OF COSTS/ACTIVITIES CAN BE INCLUDED?

Only 10% of community grant monies can be used for project support activities – how do I decide whether a specific activity falls within this?

If an activity is necessary for the completion of the physical capital works involved in your project then it will be considered a direct cost. Some examples of this are machine hire, hiring labour and volunteer management. If an activity is complimentary to the physical works, but not necessary for these works to take place, they will be considered project support activities. Examples of this are publicity and promotion costs (flyers, posters etc), celebration events and volunteer expenses. If you are unsure as to whether an activity is a project support activity or not, please email greenercity@london.gov.uk or call 0207 239 1292.

Can we include design fees?

We will review this on a case by case basis. Generally, we will allow up to 10 per cent of the grant to be spent on design works that are necessary to support the direct delivery of tree planting or creating a green space.

Do you allow for staff costs?

We will not cover any staff costs associated with permanent members of staff. But in some instances, we may consider contributing to costs associated with bringing in short term professionals, such as a landscape gardener or workshop facilitators, or the cost of managing volunteers to deliver the project. This should be proportionate to the size of the overall project and as a guide, typically no more than 10% of project costs.

Can I include the cost of ancillary items such as benches or signs?

If these items help meet the overall objectives of the project, such as encouraging people to spend time in a green space or creating space for outdoor education, and form a relatively small part of overall project costs, they can be included in the grant request. They can also be included in the match funded element of the project.

Can I include the cost of cultural events or educational workshops with an environmental focus?

We encourage all projects to consider culture and educational aspects. However, we do want to see change take place on the ground. We will allow up to 10 per cent of total project costs to be attributed to supporting activities.

Can I apply for maintenance costs?

We recognise that maintenance is a challenge. We do not provide budget for maintenance beyond the end of our grant funded activity, but we do encourage your project to build skill and capacity amongst the community to help ensure the project is a long-term success. Demonstrating a commitment and ability to provide long term maintenance is essential in your application.

Should project costs be inclusive or exclusive of VAT?

The grant application should only include costs projects are expecting to incur. If your organisation can recover VAT, then you cannot claim VAT as part of the grant. If your organisation cannot recover VAT, then it can be included as part of the cost for the relevant items in the grant application.

4. WHAT ABOUT MATCH FUNDING?

In the prospectus, you said you expect applicants to match fund, how much match funding do you require?

Applications for small grants of up to £20,000 should demonstrate at least 25 per cent match funding (so if you apply for a £10,000 grant, you will need to have at least £2,500 of match funding). Applications for medium grants should demonstrate at least 50 per cent match funding (so if you apply for a £40,000 grant, you will need to have at least £20,000 of match funding).

What do you consider match funding?

For local councils, we do expect financial match funding. For other organisations, we can accept items such as goods in kind, or staff, or some volunteer hours although we also expect to see some financial match funding. Match funding needs to be genuinely associated with the project and be used towards securing the same outcome as that which you are seeking funding towards. We will discuss on a case by case basis whether other GLA or TfL funding can be accepted as match funding (other GLA or TfL funding should not comprise more than 50 per cent of your project budget, and our Greener City funding should always have distinct project outputs). Should you be awarded a grant, our team will help you calculate what level of match you will need to provide. A project budget including the agreed match funding will be included in your grant funding agreement.

5. WHICH GRANT SCHEME TO APPLY TO?

Can projects apply for both the Community Tree Planting Grants and the Community Green Space Grants?

You can apply to both grant schemes. However, each application must be for a distinct and separate project. We are unlikely to fund a project that is simply an additional element to a project we have previously funded.

Can tree planting grant applications include other planting such as bulbs?

Trees planting grants can cover other planting and greening activities if they contribute to overall project objectives and are a minority of project costs. If tree planting is a smaller part of an overall project you should consider applying to the Community Green Space Grants.

I want to plant a barrier hedge – which fund should I apply to?

If your hedge is a standalone project which involves tree planting, and can be delivered in the timeframe set out in the Greener City Fund prospectus, then we recommend you apply for tree planting grant. However, if it is part of a wider greening project, it may be better suited to the community green space grant scheme.

6. OTHER FAQs

Can I apply for a grant of less than £5,000?

Unfortunately, we are unable to accept applications for very small grants. Other sources of free trees and/or small grants to support environmental improvements are outlined in our **Useful Resources** document.

Can I apply for a grant of over £50,000?

The maximum amount for grant applications through the Community Grant schemes is £50,000, to enable the Mayor to support projects across London. We will be launching a future funding round in the autumn of 2017 to support strategic parks improvements.

Large scale public space projects that include elements of urban greening may wish to apply for the Good Growth Fund or Liveable Neighbourhoods Fund. See the **Useful Resources** document for details.

Is there a limit to how many grant applications one organisation can submit?

There is no limit to the number of applications. We will assess each application on a case by case basis. You will need to ensure that if your organisation was awarded grants for more than one project, you have the capacity to deliver these within the timeframe and terms of the grant delivery period.

What are the timescales for spending the money?

Any projects we award funding to this year should conclude a grant agreement and begin delivery this financial year - by March 2018. We would expect all grants for projects funded by the Community Tree Planting Grants to be claimed by March 2018. We will agree a completion date on a project by project basis for projects funded by the Community Green Spaces Grants, but would expect delivery to be complete within 12-18 months of the grant being awarded.

How much administration and project reporting should we expect?

You will be expected to provide an end of project report for Community Tree Planting Grants and quarterly or half-year reporting for Community Green Spaces Grants (which will be set out in your grant agreement) and document your progress with photos or film. You should save all receipts and complete a claim form at the end of the project.

Can I upload more than 3 images as part of my application?

If you need to provide more than 3 images (e.g. if you are applying for projects on multiple sites, or wish to send plans and sketches as well as photos), you can put them into a document and upload them as part of the 'supporting information' on the application form. We may later ask you to send JPEG or higher resolution photo files if we require them.