

Communities Mental Health & Wellbeing Fund

Year 4 Fund Guidance for Aberdeen City



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Communities Mental Health & Wellbeing Fund

Guidance for Aberdeen City



About the Fund

The Scottish Government announced Year 4 of the Communities Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund for Adults in March 2024. The Fund will continue to support community-based initiatives – new and existing - that promote and improve mental health and wellbeing by addressing social isolation, loneliness, suicide prevention and tackling poverty and inequality.

ACVO TSI is again delighted to be managing the distribution of £565,039.00 for Year 4 that will continue to support projects that develop a culture of mental health prevention and strengthen the resilience of communities in Aberdeen City.

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Communities Mental Health & Wellbeing Fund

Fund Guidance for Aberdeen City

About the Fund

The Scottish Government established the Communities Mental Health & Wellbeing Fund for Adults (hereinafter referred to as the Fund) in 2021 to provide grants to grassroots community groups and organisations across Scotland in response to the mental health need arising from the pandemic. Third Sector Interfaces have now distributed £51 million across Scotland to help grass roots third sector organisations tackle mental health inequalities and address the priority issues of social isolation and loneliness, suicide prevention and poverty within their communities.

The Fund is focused on supporting initiatives that will enable them to drive a shift across mental health to ensure a focus on prevention and early intervention. The fund also seeks to respond to the ongoing cost-of-living crisis.

ACVO TSI is managing the distribution of the grant for Aberdeen City to support 'grass root' community led projects to develop a culture of mental wellbeing and prevention. Initiatives that aim to tackle the social determinants of mental health, support the resilience of communities, and collaborate with other organisations and initiatives to maximise outcomes and impacts.

The fund in Aberdeen City

ACVO TSI has distributed almost £2 million of grant funding across the city. These grants – large and small - have supported 223 community-based initiatives that are promoting and improving mental health and wellbeing by addressing social isolation, loneliness, suicide prevention and tackling poverty and inequality. ACVO has seen and reported on the transformational impact the Fund has had across the City; and alongside TSI colleagues, advocates for the fund to continue for many years to come.

ACVO is again delighted to be managing the distribution of £565,039.00 in Year 4 of the Fund across Aberdeen City.

Please note that the application process has changed for year 4, so it is important that you read all the guidance information provided here prior to completing your application.

Fund outcomes, aims and priorities (defined by the Scottish Government)

The overarching aim of the Fund is to support community-based initiatives that promote and develop good mental health and wellbeing and/or mitigate and protect against the impact of distress and mental ill health within the adult population (aged sixteen or over), with a particular focus on prevention and early intervention.

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And Action 3.3

“We will drive a shift in the balance of care across mental health to ensure a focus on prevention and early intervention in the community, including a focus on providing high quality mental health care in General Practice.”

The intended outcomes of the Fund are to:

- Develop a culture of mental wellbeing and prevention within local communities and across Scotland with improved awareness of how we can all stay well and help ourselves and others.
- Foster a strategic and preventative approach to improving community mental health.
- Support the resilience of communities and investing in their capacity to develop their own solutions, including through strong local partnerships.
- Tackle the social determinants of mental health by targeting resources and collaborating with other initiatives to tackle poverty and inequality.

Who can apply

Applications can only be accepted from voluntary, ‘not for profit’ organisations, associations, groups and clubs or consortiums/partnerships which have a strong community focus for their activities.

Information about the new application and assessment process is included later in this guidance sheet.

The range of organisations eligible to apply are:

- Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisations (SCIO)
- Unincorporated Associations
- Companies Limited by Guarantee
- Trusts
- Not-for-profit company or asset locked company or Community Interest Companies (CIC)
- Cooperative and Community Benefit Societies
- Community Councils
- Unconstituted Groups*

(*Unconstituted Groups have the opportunity to apply for Level 1 grants (up to £3000). If your group doesn’t have its own bank account, an alternative constitute group or third sector organisation (such as a local community centre) would be allowed to hold the grant on your behalf. The group would be expected to seek and manage this arrangement. The organisation ‘hosting’ the grant would simply need to complete the ‘Bank Account Host’ form, and this would be submitted to ACVO along with the application form.)

- Parent Councils**

(**Parent Councils are eligible to apply, subject to the funded activities meeting the aims of the Fund and specifically focusing on supporting young people aged 16 or over or supporting adults rather than their children. Any Parent Council applying to this fund must have a statutory duty to keep proper accounts, for which there may already be legal and regulatory requirements for them to do so depending on the status of the Parent Council, for example, some parent councils are registered with OSCR as a charity.

What can and cannot be funded

ACVO encourages applications that will support one or more of the following groups:

- Women particularly 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.
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI) communities.
- People facing socio-economic disadvantage.
- People experiencing severe and multiple disadvantage.
- People with diagnosed mental illness; people affected by psychological trauma (including adverse childhood experiences).
- People who have experienced bereavement or loss.
- People disadvantaged by geographical location (particularly remote and rural areas).
- Older people (aged 65 and above).
- Unpaid Carers.
- People with Dementia/Alzheimer's disease
- Neurodiverse groups

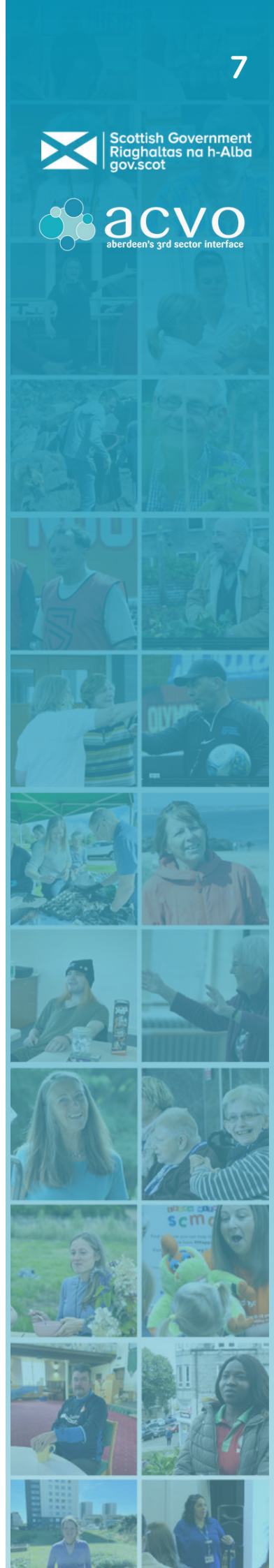
The focus of the Fund is to support the adult population (defined as members of the population aged 16 years and over). Children can be a secondary beneficiary of the Fund; however the primary beneficiary must be adults from the targeted 'at risk' group. The Children and Young People's Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Supports Fund, managed by local authorities, focuses on supporting the 'Fit Like? Family Wellbeing Hubs' in Aberdeen City.

We Can Fund

- Equipment
- One-off events
- Hall hire for community spaces
- Staff costs (these should be one off or fixed term)
- Training costs
- Utilities/running costs
- Volunteer expenses
- Small capital spend up to £5000 – e.g. construction, refurbishment and/or purchase of buildings, amenities or vehicles

We Cannot Fund

- Contingency costs, loans, endowments, or interest
- Electricity generation and feed-in tariff payment
- Political or religious campaigning (please note that faith-based organisations are eligible to apply with the exclusion of any religious campaigning activities or activities restricted only to members of the faith-based organisation. TSIs should undertake due diligence around these matters).
- Profit-making/fundraising activities
- VAT you can reclaim
- Transport
- Statutory activities
- Overseas travel
- Alcohol
- Direct therapeutic interventions, such as counselling or CBT
- Initiatives whose primary beneficiaries are under 16 years old.



Funding of counselling and other therapeutic treatments

The Fund is not intended to support “treatment” focused projects and is not meant to replace funding for direct therapeutic interventions in the community, such as counselling, or CBT. The Fund aims to provide a range of broader community supports that can complement clinical care and is an opportunity to support a wide range of approaches to providing emotional and practical support to individuals and hopefully reduce the escalation and need of clinical care.

There are other funding streams which can support counselling services in various realms (for example, the Scottish Government Survivors of Childhood Abuse Support Fund and Perinatal and Infant Mental Health Fund).

For any proposals that do involve potential for clinically trained staff delivering therapeutic interventions, there should be clear arrangements in place for clinical supervision and governance. Specifically with regards to counselling support, it should conform to agreed professional standards, such as those provided by COSCA and BACP.

If you are not sure whether your project meets the fund criteria, please email claire.shaw@acvo.org.uk. Claire will then arrange an online call to discuss the eligibility of your project/activity.

Funding of counselling and other therapeutic treatments

There is an increased focus this year on encouraging organisations with a shared purpose to work together, combining resources to achieve common goals. Working collaboratively can offer opportunities to deliver new and more integrated services. It can help to create a multi-faceted approach to tackle complex issues - organisations identifying who and what is already available in the community and working together to complement what it is already there. This can help precious resources (funding, time and expertise) go further and help organisations reach new audiences.

It is important that your funding partnership meets the needs of your beneficiaries, and your proposed partners are a good fit with your own values. If the partnership makes sense to you and your partner organisation and the impact of the project or activity you are seeking funding for will be strengthened by the collaboration; it will make sense to the assessment panel too.

The application and assessment process

NEW APPLICATION AND ASSESSMENT PROCESS FOR YEAR 4

In previous years, the Fund opened to Level 1 and 2 application, they were submitted and members of the Fund Partnership Group for Aberdeen City aimed to assess applications within 5-10 working days of submission to ACVO. Grant offers and grant payments were then made following confirmation of grant approval of each eligible application.

However, in Year 3, with the funding landscape being extremely competitive due to the cost-of-living crisis, the increase in the awareness of the Fund and many funded organisations in year 1 and year 2 applying for continuation funding, an overwhelming number of excellent applications were received in just a couple of weeks, resulting in the fund closing very quickly and lots of organisations sadly being disappointed as they were still preparing their applications.

Unfortunately, the funding landscape is equally challenging this year. In response to feedback from organisations and to ensure that those groups less experienced in applying for funding and/or needing time to develop their application, the Fund Partnership Group has agreed to change the application and assessment process for Year 4. This will allow organisations time to access support from ACVO's Funding Officer, plan and submit their applications.

Funding Rounds

There will be two rounds of Funding in Year 4.

Round 1 of the Fund will open to Level 1 (up to £3000) applications on Wednesday 25th September 2024 and to Level 2 (£3001-£15000) applications on Wednesday 2nd October 2024. Round 1 will close to all applications (Level 1 and Level 2) on Thursday 7th November 2024.

Constituted organisations and Unconstituted Groups can submit one or two applications to Round 1 of the Fund. The maximum grant funding that can be awarded to constituted groups is £18000 (two Level 1 applications, one Level 1 and one Level 2 application or two smaller Level 2 applications). The maximum amount of funding an unconstituted group can apply for is £6000 (two Level 1 applications).

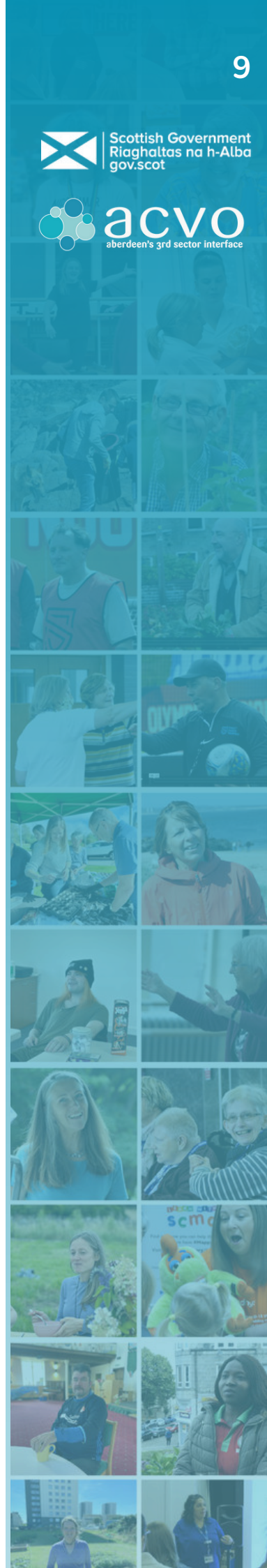
Round 1 of the Fund can support Level 1 and Level 2 applications for the maintenance or expansion of existing activity and innovative new activity that provides additionality.

If you are submitting two applications to the Fund in Round 1, they must be for separate projects / activity as only one of your applications may be successful and be awarded grant funding.

Although there no defined limit on maximum income of groups applying for a Level 2 grant, please note that the Scottish Government has asked the majority of grants to go to small or medium sized groups with incomes less than £1million. Applications from large national organisations must demonstrate that the application aims to provide specific community-based activity within Aberdeen City.

Round 2 of the Fund will open on Monday 13th January 2025 and close on Friday 7th February 2025.

For year 4, the Scottish Government has encouraged TSI's to ringfence and distribute a proportion of funding to 'at risk' groups that have been underrepresented in receiving funding in Round 1. The Partnership Group has agreed that 10% of the Fund will therefore be 'ring fenced' for a second round of funding and will be open to Level 1 (up to £3000) applications only to support new and innovative projects from underrepresented communities or communities of interest. Additional guidance, including information about the underrepresented communities who are eligible to apply will be shared when this second round of funding opens in January.



Small organisations who have not applied or received funding in Round 1 will be given priority in Round 2 to strengthen the ambition of the Fund in Aberdeen City outlined by the Scottish Government.

“The ambition of this Fund is to support initiatives which promote mental health and wellbeing at a small scale, grass roots, community level.”

If you are unsuccessful in receiving funding in Round 1, you will be able to submit a Level 1 (up to £3000) application to support new activity in Round 2.

The assessment process

Assessment of Round 1 applications will take place in November (after the closing date of the 7th November). The Partnership Group will then assess all eligible applications. The constitution of this group includes representatives from the Third Sector, Aberdeen City Council, NHS Grampian and Aberdeen Health and Social Care Partnership. New for year 4 will be the establishment of a Lived Experience Panel who will sit alongside the Partnership Group. Collectively members will score each application using a clear scoring criteria that aligns with the Scottish Governments guidance.

ACVO’s Funding Officer will be responsible for conducting an initial quality assurance check to ensure applications are complete and eligible to be put forward for consideration, due diligence checks, overseeing compliance and management of conflict of interest throughout the assessment process.

The payment process

Notification of Round 1 funding decisions are dependent on the number of applications that have been submitted as this will impact on the amount of time that needs to be dedicated to assessment. ACVO anticipates that demand for funding will be high, however it is hoped that organisations will receive notification of funding decisions and Grant Offer Letters will be issued in late November. Grant payments will then be made before Christmas.

Notification of Round 2 funding decisions will hopefully be in mid-February, with grant payments being made before March.

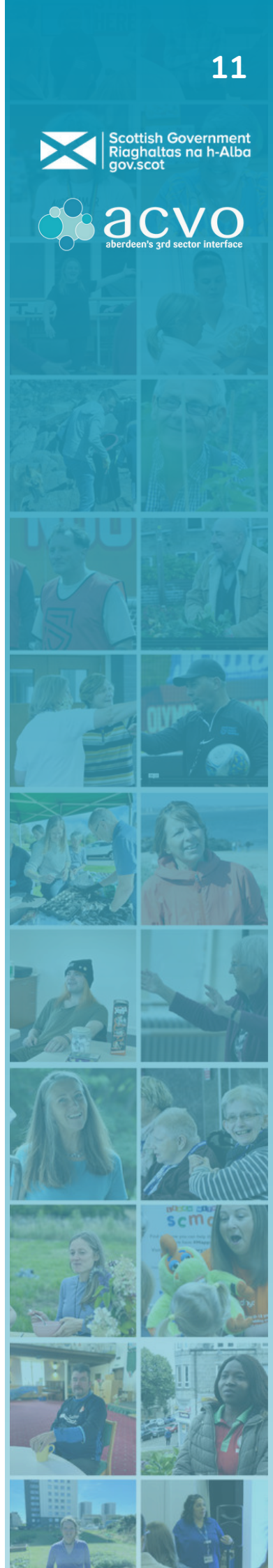
Project evaluation and reporting

The Scottish Government is currently revising its evaluation approach and activity for Year 4. Once this approach has been confirmed with TSI’s, this information will be made available within this guidance.

Accessing support

To access further advice or support relating to the Fund, the application process, or for any other reason, please email ACVO's Funding Officer, Claire Shaw at claire.shaw@acvo.org.uk. Claire will either contact you directly or forward your request onto the appropriate team member to help you with your enquiry.

Find out more and apply now at
acvo.org.uk/cmhwfund





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