

FACTSHEET

Solihull VCFSE Capacity and Development Fund

Purpose

To support Solihull's voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise (VCFSE) sector to invest in their workforce, leadership, and organisational development to improve their sustainability, productivity, and potential for growth.

This fund is designed to enable organisations to develop the knowledge, skills and confidence needed to effectively manage and sustain their services, workforce, volunteers and assets.

The fund does not support service or project delivery.

Strategic Rationale

Many VCFSE organisations, particularly small and medium-sized groups, do not have the capacity or resources to invest in their people, leadership, and organisational development. This can limit their ability to operate efficiently, respond to risks, and sustain or grow their services.

This fund aims to address this by supporting targeted investment in skills, knowledge, and organisational capability.

It aligns with:

- The Solihull [VCFSE Infrastructure Support Model](#)

Who Can Apply

- Any VCFSE organisation operating and active in Solihull
- Funding can support:
 - Individuals
 - Teams
 - Whole organisations
 - Collaboration of training across eligible organisations
- Includes:
 - Staff
 - Volunteers
 - Managers and CEOs
 - Trustees

Budget

A total funding pot of £10,000 is available.

Grant levels:

- Maximum award: £1000
- Typical grants: £250–£500

What the Fund Will Support

Grants may include access to:

- Training courses
- Workshops / conferences
- Coaching / mentoring
- Skills development (e.g. SEND, trauma-informed practice, AI)
- Consultancy

Please see Appendix 1 for expected areas of development.

Expected outcomes:

Funding activity should contribute to one or more of the following:

- Increased confidence and skills of workforce
- Increased sustainability in response to risks and challenges
- Organisations are more productive and work efficiently, make better use of resources
- Organisations demonstrate growth and greater capacity and capability

Provider Selection

Applicants must demonstrate:

- Why this provider is appropriate
- Evidence of quality (accreditation, track record, references)
- That the proposal represents value for money

When selecting a provider, organisations may wish to consider:

- Relevant experience and expertise
- Evidence of high-quality delivery
- Alignment with recognised standards or sector bodies
- Complementarity with the local infrastructure support offer (See below)

Local Infrastructure Offer

The commissioned [VCFSE Infrastructure organisations](#) in Solihull are:

- Colebridge Trust
- Community and Voluntary Action (CAVA)
- Young Opportunities (YO) Solihull
- SMBC Community Development Team (CDT)

These partners provide a coordinated programme of support for the VCFSE sector, including training, advice and development opportunities for both individuals and organisations.

This grant fund is intended to complement and add value to the existing infrastructure offer, not duplicate it.

Applicants should demonstrate that:

- They have considered existing local provision
- The proposed activity fills a gap or meets a specific need not currently addressed
- The request adds value beyond what is already available locally

Additional training and development opportunities are also available through:

- [Solihull Safeguarding Children's Partnership](#) (SSCP)
- [Think Active](#)

Application Process

- Short on-line application form available from (link)
- Rolling application rounds
- Monthly decision-making panels
- First come, first serve

Application Assessment Criteria

Applications will be assessed on:

- 1) **What** - Clear description of what is required
- 2) **Why** - Strong rationale linked to sustainability, productivity or growth
- 3) **How** – Delivery approach, timing and who will benefit
- 4) **Impact** - Expected difference made
- 5) **Provider assessment** - Due diligence on the providers/supplier including value for money, credibility/experience/track record

Monitoring and Evaluation Approach

Individual grants:

- Short individual feedback form:
 - What activity took place
 - What was learned
 - What has changed in practice

Organisational grants:

- Brief end report:
 - Outcomes achieved
 - Impact on staff skills and confidence
 - Impact on service productivity, sustainability or growth
 - Any changes in delivery or approach
 - What difference has been made
- Final evaluation after 3-12 months to understand impact

Appendix 1

Funding is expected to support development across one or more of the following areas:

People

- Leadership and management development
- Workforce and volunteer skills
- Coaching and mentoring

Money and Funding

- Financial management and budgeting
- Fundraising and income generation
- Procurement and commissioning

ICT (Digital & Technology)

- Adoption of new technology
- Improving systems and processes
- Digital and AI skills

Data

- Data management systems
- Using data for performance, outcomes and impact
- Insight and trend analysis

Board / Governance

- Trustee development
- Governance improvement
- Changes to legal structure

Land and Property

- Managing and maintaining assets
- Accessibility improvements
- Acquisitions or disposals

Reputation and Relationships

- Marketing, communications and PR
- Social media and community engagement

Partnerships

- Partnership development
- Collaboration opportunities

Mergers or strategic alignment