



# Enabling Leeds-based LGBT+ community organisations to access grant funding

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on behalf of Hamilton Consult

With thanks to all research participants for their  
valuable contributions and insights to this study.

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# 1. Executive Summary

Leeds Community Foundation is focused on creating a fair and inclusive society, aiming to be an equitable and inclusive grant maker that works alongside community groups to address inequalities and create opportunities. It recognises that some communities may face additional barriers and is therefore seeking to develop its understanding of how it can more widely enable and support community organisations and informal groups who wish to access grant funding. As part of this work, the Foundation aims to more widely enable and support community organisations and informal groups who wish to access grants for the benefit of LGBT+ communities in Leeds.

With the support of Hamilton Consulting, the Foundation has undertaken a consultation and engagement project as the first phase of a capacity building and support programme. This report outlines the findings.

The project has focussed on developing an understanding of the experiences of both community groups and of other charitable funders in Yorkshire:

- Charities, organisations or informal groups working with the LGBT+ community to gain insights about their experiences of accessing grant funding in Yorkshire, any barriers and challenges faced and support needs they may have to improve access to funding.
- Charitable organisations that fund community groups in Yorkshire to develop an understanding of what other grant makers in the area have or are doing to address issues of equality in access to funding, with a particular focus on all segments of the LGBT+ community.

In 2018 the government undertook the largest national survey to date of LGBT+ people anywhere in the world (<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-lgbt-survey-2017>), the results of which highlighted that despite progress on legal entitlements, research and evidence have continued to suggest that LGBT+ people face discrimination, bullying and harassment in education, at work and on the streets, hate crime and higher inequalities in health satisfaction and outcomes.

Despite these unique challenges and inequalities experienced by the LGBT+ community data on targeted LGBT+ funding to address them in the UK is very scarce. With societal advances in the visibility of the LGBT+ community and an increase in LGBT+ community engagement, there is a welcome growth in community-led activities that aim to address these inequalities.

However, recent research undertaken by the LGBT+ Consortium (<https://www.consortium.lgbt>) highlights that LGBT+ groups and organisations are chronically underfunded. Key findings included:

- One-third of LGBT+ organisations have no external funding from foundations or the government.
- The majority of community organisations rely on community fundraising – and in many cases, relying on those running community activities using their own money to do so. However, only 11% of income comes from individual donations – compared with the charity sector average of 45.2%
- The majority of targeted funding schemes for LGBT+ communities do not align with the activities that local LGBT+ organisations and groups generally identify as priorities at a local community-based level.
- Whilst much of the community activity within the LGBT+ sector is locally based and community-led there are identifiable gaps in skills and capacity across groups that hinder growth and sustainability.

## The following key issues have been identified:

- The LGBT+ voluntary and community sector is comprised of a diverse range of smaller community groups, often operating in isolation and volunteer-led. They are often not constituted.
- There is no umbrella organisation supporting the LGBT+ VCS, and effective networking opportunities and/or capacity building for LGBT+ community groups in Leeds are very limited, exacerbating the lack of skills and knowledge around fundraising, which results in low success rates.
- There is a perception amongst LGBT+ groups that unless a grant maker specifically identifies LGBT+ communities, that it is unlikely they will be funded – and yet the issues experienced by LGBT+ communities appears to have a lower priority with charitable funders. Very few have LGBT+ specific funding programmes.
- Grant makers have generally done little to better understand the needs and experiences of LGBT+ communities, often relying on more strategic and proactive funders, such as Leeds Community Foundation to do this work.
- A place-based approach to interventions risks continuing the failure to develop an evidence base of, or take into account, the needs of LGBT+ communities. The lack of an evidence base makes it difficult for funders to make informed decisions – and for LGBT+ community groups to demonstrate the needs of their communities. A lack of academic research into inequalities and barriers faced by LGBT+ communities in the UK and public complacency from misconceptions that equality has been achieved, hampers informed decision-making about community needs and inequalities.
- The demand for LGBT+ specific services continues to grow – but against the backdrop of reduced grant availability and increased competition for securing funds, these issues of equity and inclusion also continue to grow.

## The following recommendations are made:

### i. Continue to develop good grant-making including:

- Publishing clear funding priorities and criteria.
- Providing an eligibility checker.
- Ensuring application forms make all questions visible upfront.
- Avoiding repetition.
- Allowing grants to be used to support core costs as well as specific projects.
- Ask about DEI in all grant applications to improve monitoring and evidence collection.
- Continue to support engagement with LGBT+ community organisations:

Equity is about removing structural barriers that prevent the realisation of a fair and just society. It is about looking at the root causes and considering system change. As an organisation LCF is focused on creating a fair and inclusive society, working with partners to create positive change, addressing inequalities and creating opportunities. LCF has a key role to play in bringing awareness to this inequity with all its applicants – and promoting the development of diversity equity and inclusion by all grant holders.

### ii. Remove barriers for small organisations:

- Ensure the application process is appropriate for small groups.
- Provide technical assistance.

- Don't ask for information you don't actually need in the decision-making process.
- Continue to have specific LGBT+ grants initiatives.
- Review reporting requirements for smaller community groups.
- Work with other local funders to adopt a common application form.
- Explore new ways for how applications might be submitted.
- Limit the use of jargon.
- Raise awareness of regular newsletter sign up to improve information sharing with community groups.

iii. **Develop a capacity building and support programme:**

- Many participants were interested in applying for grants, but need additional support, communities of practice, and other ways of continuing to develop their community organisation or group.
- Work with other funders to develop a rolling 'Funder Fair' with a signposting 'triage' service to support LGBT+ community groups to develop conversations and relationships with potential funders and gain knowledge of potential funding.
- Consider giving small grants to local LGBT+ groups to come along to speak at LCF awareness sessions attended by staff and trustees. This is a great way to get to increase awareness of issues affecting the community, but also a way to start building a relationship – and paying a local organisation or group can show that their lived experience is respected.
- Target outreach to marginalised communities.
- Work to identify a key partner who could facilitate the coordination of a micro-grants programme for unconstituted groups.
- Promote membership of the LGBT+ Consortium amongst known LGBT+ community groups to improve information sharing and access to advice and information.
- Develop easily accessible resources [leaflets/webinars/info sessions] using LGBT+ imagery and community examples to demystify the application process.
- Discuss with LGBT+ Consortium existing training and development support they provide for community groups with a view to investigating and supporting locality-based initiatives in Leeds.
- Ensure that applicants have a named contact with whom they can discuss an application, get feedback and seek ongoing support with grant management.

iv. **Review organisational DEI commitments:**

- Develop a People Plan to set out how to further diversity both the Board and staff team, both in terms of demographics and life experience – and ensure training for all staff and board members on LGBT+ issues creates a culture where ongoing learning around cultural competency is not only encouraged but expected and ensures that both staff and board members are up-to-date with issues affecting the local LGBT+ communities.
- Develop and publish a DEI action plan.
- Consider working with an Investment Advisor to address any DEI issues in the LCF investment portfolio.



- Investigate the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Data Standard to track DEI data about who is applying to LCF and who is receiving funding – and who is not.
- Continue collaborating with others to promote and implement DEI practices in grant-making and community activity.



## 2. Introduction

Leeds Community Foundation (LCF) aims to be an equitable and inclusive modern grant maker – and recognises that there is always more to do. They worked with Leeds Older People's Forum on the 2017 Leeds LGBT+ mapping project and, more recently, on a programme providing micro-grants to community organisations and individuals working on reducing loneliness among older members of LGBT+ communities.

Building on this work, they intend to more widely enable and support community organisations and informal groups who wish to access their grants for the benefit of LGBT+ communities in Leeds. They recognise that in order to provide support in ways that work best for a diverse range of groups and organisations, they need to develop a sufficient depth and breadth of understanding of the current situation with accessing funding. They have therefore commissioned Hamilton Consulting to undertake a consultation and engagement project.

This work is being undertaken with the awareness that some groups may want to grow and expand their reach, whereas others may not or are simply unaware of funding opportunities and therefore haven't considered expanding their activities.

This consultation and engagement project is the first phase of a capacity-building and support programme. The second phase in the first half of 2023 will use the information from this project to put in place support that responds to the needs identified.



# 3. Background

## Why did LCF commission this work?

Leeds is a collection of diverse communities that are increasingly tackling the realities of system inequity. As the region's largest independent funder by number of grants distributed, LCF is the only organisation of its kind in Leeds and Bradford, working with hundreds of groups each year. In commissioning this report, LCF is acknowledging its important role in addressing diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). To do this LCF is taking steps to better understand the communities it serves. It is working with those communities to develop programmes which addresses the need in those communities, in ways that empower and are sustainable, and that support more marginalised and minoritized communities.

Whilst there have been many gains made towards equality in the UK there is still considerable work to be done to ensure these advancements are not rolled back and that negative prejudices and discrimination continues to be challenged. Various reports have highlighted continued major inequalities experienced by the LGBT+ community, ranging from continued societal discrimination, hate crime, higher inequalities in health satisfaction and outcomes, above average rates of homelessness, isolation, loneliness, drug and alcohol issues, as well as challenges accessing appropriate health and social care.

Philanthropic organisations have a role to play as grant makers, supporting specific communities such as the LGBT+ community, to address these inequalities - but also in embracing a broader role in challenging other communities to take the needs and experiences of marginalised people into consideration in order to make the biggest social impact.

Community Foundations form a strong and powerful network which has the potential of leveraging collective power and making positive social change and impact across the whole DEI agenda in the UK. The authors of this report applaud LCF for taking these steps to consider their role in this complex environment.

For the purposes of this report diversity, equity and inclusion are defined as follows:

"Diversity" is defined broadly to include various elements of human difference, including gender, race and ethnicity, faith, sexual orientation, disability and class. Nuanced definitions of diversity also recognise the intersectional nature of identity and the complex and cumulative ways in which different forms of discrimination (based upon these attributes) combine, overlap, and intersect.

"Equity" involves the promotion of justice and equality of opportunity and outcomes within the procedures, processes and distribution of resources by institutions or systems.

Tackling inequity requires an understanding of the underlying or root causes of disparities, both at the point of access and in terms of outcomes, within our society.

"Inclusion" refers to the degree to which diverse individuals are able to participate fully in all aspects of activity, including decision-making. While a truly 'inclusive' group is necessarily diverse, a 'diverse' group may or may not be 'inclusive'

These definitions are based on the work of the D5 Coalition, a five-year initiative in the US to advance philanthropy's approach to diversity, equity, and inclusion (adapted from Grantcraft (2018) 'From Words to Action: A practical philanthropic guide to diversity, equity and inclusion').



# 4. National Context

Data on the funding of LGBT+ community activity is, as with many areas, patchy and very much focused on the USA. Despite the unique challenges and inequalities experienced by the LGBT+ community, data on targeted LGBT+ funding to address them in the UK is very scarce. In 2015, the National Institute of Economic and Social Research (NIESR) conducted a wide-ranging, critical assessment of the evidence base regarding inequality experienced by LGBT+ people in the UK (<https://www.niesr.ac.uk/projects/evidence-review-inequality-among-lgbt-groups>). The NIESR review found that “the evidence base for an effective assessment of inequality and relative disadvantage by sexual orientation and gender identity is deficient and has major gaps” and national and administrative datasets tend not to hold LGBT+ related data. Furthermore, recent research undertaken by the LGBT+ Consortium highlights that LGBT+ groups and organisations are chronically underfunded. Key findings included:

- **Lack of funding:** one-third of LGBT+ organisations have no external funding from foundations or the government. There simply isn't enough money coming into the LGBT+ sector to meet the identified needs of the community.
- **Community fundraising:** the majority of community organisations rely on community fundraising – and in many cases, relying on those running community activities using their own money to do so. Only 11% of income comes from individual donations – compared with the charity sector average of 45.2%
- **Supply and Demand:** the activities traditionally most likely to be funded include HIV care/prevention, and documenting human rights violations. These do not align with the activities that local LGBT+ organisations and groups generally identify as priorities at a local community-based level e.g. community organising, marketing and communications (both within LGBT+ communities where many continue to remain hidden out of fear of prejudice and discrimination and across mainstream health, housing and community sectors).
- **Skills and Capacity:** whilst much of the community activity within the LGBT+ sector is locally based and community-led, there are identifiable gaps in skills and capacity across groups that hinder growth and sustainability. In 2019, £2.6 million was allocated to UK LGBT+ groups by The Government Equalities Office (GEO) as part of the Government's LGBT Action Plan – but this went exclusively to the larger organisations.

It is worth noting that the activities most likely to be fully funded (HIV care/prevention, documenting human rights violations, strategic litigation to advance LGBT+ people's rights) do not necessarily align with activities that local LGBT+ community organisations identify as priorities (community organising, providing support to one or more sections of the LGBT+ community, communication to persuade the public of favourable attitudes to LGBT+ people, and legal or policy advocacy).

Many LGBT+ community organisations originally grew as a direct response to the HIV/ AIDs crisis in the 1980's. With societal advances in the visibility of the LGBT+ community and an increase in LGBT+ community engagement, there is a welcome growth in community-led activities that aim to address the health and wellbeing of local LGBT+ people, including groups specifically set up to support particular sections of the community such as older people (Out Together), Trans people (Trans Leeds), Lesbians (LGBT+ Women's Space) or Young People (Mermaids).

In the context of supporting growth in community activities grants are such an important income source for voluntary and community income – not just in financial terms but also by supporting activities that other types of funding often don't or cannot do. This includes enabling growth, innovation and future planning. It can also help unlock other sources of income.

Grant funders include local and national government and independent charitable trusts and foundations. Whilst the independence of charitable grant makers allows them to take risks – the biggest single funder of LGBT+ voluntary and community activity is the National Lottery Charity Fund – a non-departmental government body.

Charitable Foundations have the potential to touch every area of community activity – but often their activities, behaviours and biases are shaped and informed by a number of broad historical, cultural and structural drivers. However, because they have such independence and assets, they are very well-placed to play a role in removing barriers and increasing access for communities that have been historically marginalised or underrepresented. They are well placed to take both a long-term and independent view in relation to responding to new and emerging need within communities.

Conversely, this independence has led to the way that grant funders expect voluntary and community organisations to apply for funding to vary widely – from complex application forms to video applications to accepting applications previously submitted to other funders. Whilst in response to the situation caused by the Covid pandemic we have seen innovation and increased flexibility of grant funders, it remains to be seen whether these changes remain longer term. But more generally, there are issues with how funds are distributed:

- **Short-termism:** the length of grants can contribute to a sense of uncertainty and inefficiency. Many smaller grants tend to be for one year or less. This is great for one-off events but not for developing groups and delivering activities, events or services over time. It also means that groups could be spending a disproportionate amount of their time applying for funding, evaluating a project, reporting on funding, and applying for new funding – rather than meeting the needs of their communities. There are a small number of larger grant makers who do offer grants over a 3-year period. Even this can be limiting as it takes time to embed a project and deliver meaningful results. There have been calls for multi-year, unrestricted grants.
- **New and shiny:** many grant funders still insist on a project being ‘new’ and ‘innovative’. Whilst this might be helpful in some instances, for most community organisations most of the time, having a funder who supports long-term organisational approach and the development of successful and evidence-based interventions would be more meaningful. This has a disproportionate impact on community organisations from more marginalised communities.
- **Processes:** both the application and monitoring processes can also unnecessarily burden community organisations, meaning that a disproportionate amount of any award is spent meeting the needs of the funder rather than the community they are trying to support. This is particularly challenging for small and medium-sized organisations.



# 5. The Local Context

## Leeds Community Foundation:

The Foundation is the most significant independent funder in the region. It generates philanthropic giving and leverages statutory and national funding to deliver grants that address specific local challenges. By doing so it aims to open up opportunities for vulnerable and often marginalised communities.

Embedding Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) is a central tenant of their work and is a lens through which to better analyse their grant giving. LCF was a founder member of the National DEI Coalition, a movement for change within the UK philanthropic sector. They have also set up a Community Advisory Group that meets quarterly. Membership comprises of 10 to 12 representatives of community organisations who work with a range of communities in diverse areas of Leeds.

The aims of the Advisory Group are to:

- Share knowledge and insights on the ‘real time’ needs and issues of both the community organisations themselves and the communities they work with.
- Feed back to LCF about their experience of LCF grant making, test out ideas, forms, approaches, or just give their view on an issue.
- Advise LCF on how best to communicate with community organisations.

The Foundation has also run programmes aimed specifically at particular communities – and this can be particularly helpful to encourage groups from more marginalised communities to consider applying.

Between the period 2019 to 2022, LCF received 38 applications from 11 LGBT+ organisations.

### Applicant staffing levels:

No staff	4
Part-time staff	5
Full-time staff	2

### Application Outcomes:

Successful	13
Fund oversubscribed	10
Rejected	15

### Funding awarded:

No staff	£13,000
Part-time staff	£38,155
Full-time staff	<u>£25,472</u>
Total funding awarded	<u>£76,627</u>

## LGBT+ community sector:

The LGBT+ sector in the UK has been steadily growing and diversifying. Recent research (the LGBT Consortium Insight Survey) found that the majority are volunteer-led and have an income of less than £10,000. 55% operate on less than £20k per year (most operate on less than £5k pa) and over 70% of groups and organisations are reliant on volunteers to deliver their services. The same research found that one-third of LGBT+ organisations have no external funding from foundations or the government, meaning that funds raised from their own communities play a vital role for them. Almost 40% of respondents to the Consortium Insight Survey reported that someone from the group had used their own money to run an activity or event or service at some point in the last year. Organisations focused on trans people or non-binary or bi people are more likely

to have a budget of less than £5k as compared to those that focus on the wider LGBT+ community.

This research was indicative of a vibrant LGBT+ community sector in Leeds. We were able to develop a list of over 100 LGBT+ community groups, LGBT+ organisations and/or organisations with specific LGBT+ subgroups. Most of these are small community groups. However, a number of these do not have a website and contacting the group meant accessing personal email addresses or directly via their social media platform (Facebook, Instagram, MeetUp).





## 6. Our Approach

Taking into account this research and recognising the diversity of the local LGBT+ community sector our approach included desk-based research into and consultation with identified LGBT+ groups representing all sections of the LGBT+ community in Leeds and with potential local funders of their work.

We understand that the diverse intersectionality of the LGBT+ community itself brings different perspectives of different communities and that certain community segments face added disadvantages e.g. BAME, trans/non-binary communities. We therefore sought to take positive steps to identify and engage all sections of the LGBT+ community in order to gain a full picture and understanding of the issues faced in accessing grant funding.

In recognition of the diverse needs and organisational capacity of LGBT+ community groups, many of whom are volunteer-led or have minimal staffing capacity, consultation methods included:

- Easily accessible online questionnaires (Typeform) or hard copies to ensure maximum opportunity to support engagement.
- Offering options for telephone or digital interviews to targeted organisations that are identified as key stakeholders.
- Offering an opportunity for a digital or in-person engagement session/focus group to identify shared experiences.



# 7. Results from Consultation & Engagement

## LGBT+ Community Sector

A total of 100 community groups or networks working with the LGBT+ community were identified. A survey was distributed to 74 LGBT+ community organisations who were identified as potential beneficiaries of grant funding and for whom contact details were obtainable. (Appendix 1).

Taking into account the volunteer-led nature of many community groups and their limited organisational or administrative capacity a minimum of 2 follow-up contacts were made to all groups to encourage participation.

A total of 19 responses were received, representing a response rate of 26%. This is deemed indicative of:

- The limited administrative capacity of many volunteer-led organisations.
- A recognised perception from many unconstituted community groups that they are ineligible for grant funding opportunities.
- That some community groups have no desire to secure additional funding and are sustainable on a self-help model of donations and contributions from members.

### Survey results:

#### Organisation Type

Registered charity, CIO or CIC: 42.1% (8 respondents)



Unconstituted Community Group: 36.8% (7 respondents)



Company Limited by Guarantee: 15.8% (3 respondents)



Charitable Incorporated Organisation: 10.5% (2 respondents)



Community Interest Company: 0% (0 respondents)



Other: 21.1% (4 respondents)



Other categories included a Community Benefit Society hosted and supported by a registered charity and 2 self-employed individuals.

Whilst the diversity of organization type from respondents is indicative of the wider LGBT+ community sector in Leeds, it is noted that many of those organisations who did not respond to the survey were identified as volunteer-led unconstituted groups.

What type of activities do you do?

Community activities and social events: 89.5% (17 respondents)



Information, advice and advocacy: 52.6% (10 respondents)



Health and Wellbeing: 47.4% (9 respondents)



Supporting older people: 47.4% (9 respondents)



Youth Work: 31.6% (6 respondents)



Other: 26.3% (5 respondents)



Other categories included LGBT+ housing, working with people with learning disabilities and autistic people, theatre and training for the health and social care sector.

This is indicative of the diverse nature of activities undertaken by the LGBT+ community sector and of a need within the community for LGBT+ led community activities and social events where members can feel safe and welcomed without fear of prejudice and discrimination.

Significantly, it also indicates a demand for targeted activities that take into account the unique life experiences and challenges faced by LGBT+ people e.g. access to LGBT+ friendly advice and information services, health and wellbeing support that meets individual needs or support for older people that addresses the barriers they may experience to trusting or accessing mainstream activities after a lifetime of prejudice and discrimination.

Which part(s) of the LGBT+ communities do you support or target?

Transgender people: 94.7% (18 respondents)



Non-binary people: 89.5% (17 respondents)



Bisexual people: 84.2% (16 respondents)



Gay Men: 78.9% (15 respondents)



Queer people: 78.9% (15 respondents)



Lesbians: 73.7% (14 respondents)



Other: 21.1% (4 respondents)



### Do you have a Management Committee or Board of Trustees?

Yes: 68.4% (13 respondents)



No: 31.6% (6 respondents)



This is indicative of the collaborative asset-based approach of many volunteer community groups, particularly those that are unconstituted, set up and run by the members on a self-help basis.

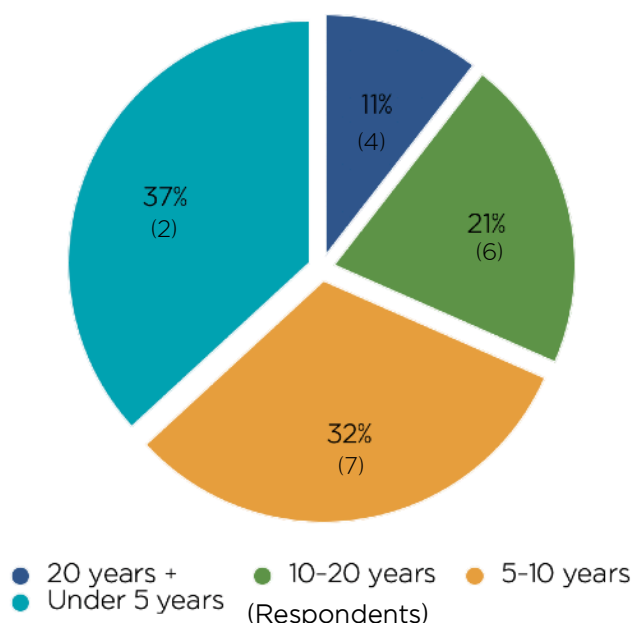
Of those who did have a Management Committee or Board of Trustees membership ranged from 3 to 13, with an average membership of 7 people.

Other forms of governance included:

- Two volunteer coordinators.
- An informal network of women who share tasks between volunteers.
- An individual acting independently with trusted advisors.
- Volunteers with a non-hierarchical structure.

### When was your group set -up?

When comparing the time charities have been in existence, it highlights the relative infancy of many community groups with nearly 70% of respondents being established for less than 10 years.





### Did you get any help in setting up your group from another organisation?

Yes: 31.6% (6 respondents)



No: 68.4% (13 respondents)



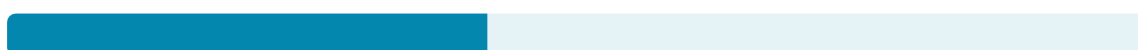
Sources of support that groups accessed when setting up included:

- Health Education Authority Leeds Aids Advice.
- Wrigleys Solicitors & Leeds Community Homes.
- Individual personal contacts at Sage, Mesmac and Health for All Leeds.
- Experience and contacts of members who were involved.
- Corporate and private donors and sponsors.
- Bradford Community Action.

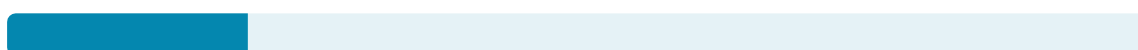
With nearly 70% of groups not accessing support or help when setting up, it is perhaps to be expected that many smaller groups remain unaware of funding opportunities or are reluctant to take on additional responsibilities that grant income may bring and that many may perceive as onerous or for which they don't have the organisational skills and capacity to manage.

### What is your average annual income?

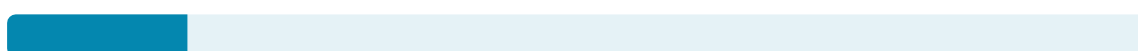
Less than £5,000 (8 respondents) 42.1%



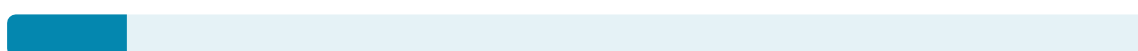
Between £5,000 and £25,000 (4 respondents) 21.1%



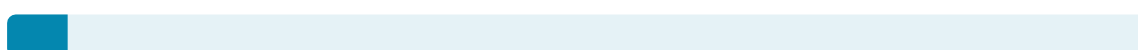
More than £1,000,000 (3 respondents) 15.8%



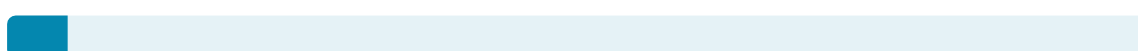
Between £100,000 and £250,000 (2 respondents) 10.5%



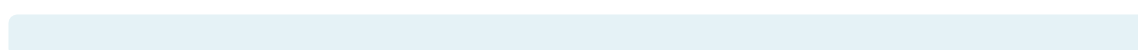
Between £25,000 and £50,000 (1 respondent) 5.3%



Between £50,000 and £100,000 (1 respondent) 5.3%



Between £250,000 and £1,000,000 (0 respondents) 0%



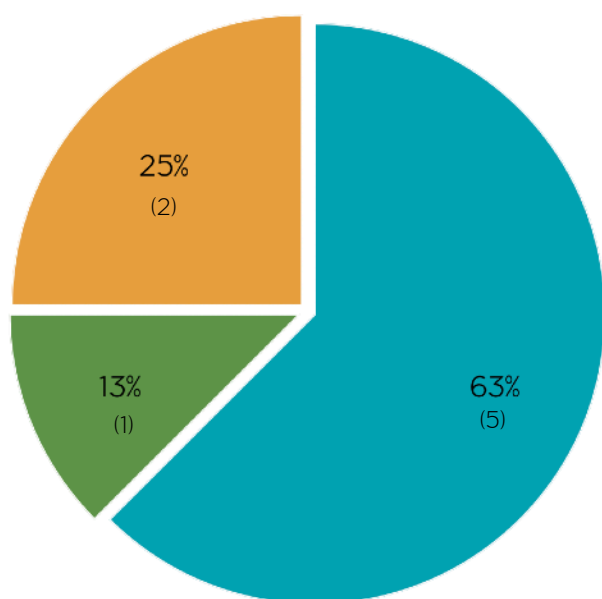
This highlights that the Leeds LGBT+ community sector is comparable to the wider LGBT+ sector findings from the LGBT+ Consortium Insight Survey, with more than 60% of respondents operating on a budget of less than £25,000 per annum, the majority on less than £5,000.

### Do you employ any staff?

Yes: 41.1% (8 respondents)



No: 57.9% (11 respondents)



● Less than 10 employees  
● More than 50  
● 10 to 50  
(Respondents)

It is noted that of the 74 locally based community groups who were initially contacted about the study, those who failed to respond were often smaller volunteer-led groups with limited organisational capacity and unlikely to employ staff. Therefore despite 42% of respondents employing staff, the survey results are not deemed representative of staffing levels within the local LGBT+ community sector.

Of those organisations that did employ staff, the majority had a small staff team.

### Do you have regular volunteers other than Trustees or Management Committee members?

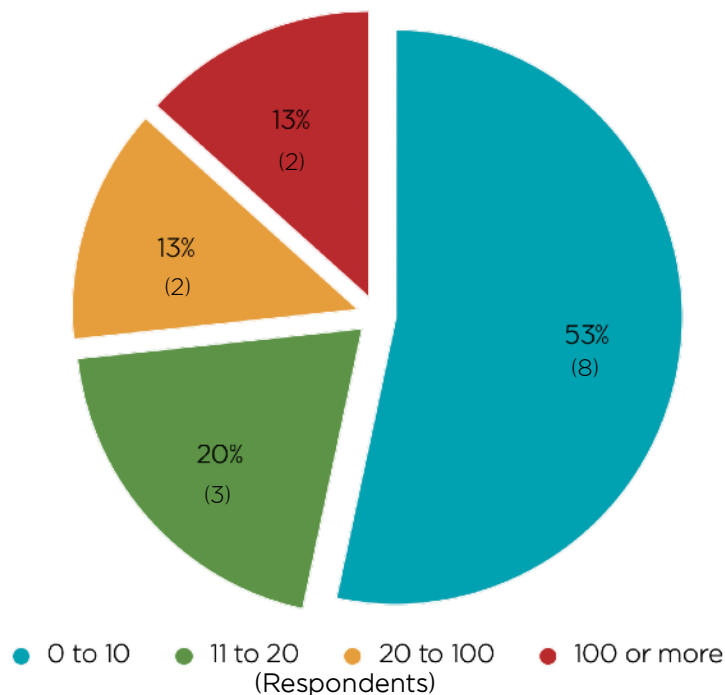
Yes: 78.9% (15 respondents)



No: 21.1% (4 respondents)

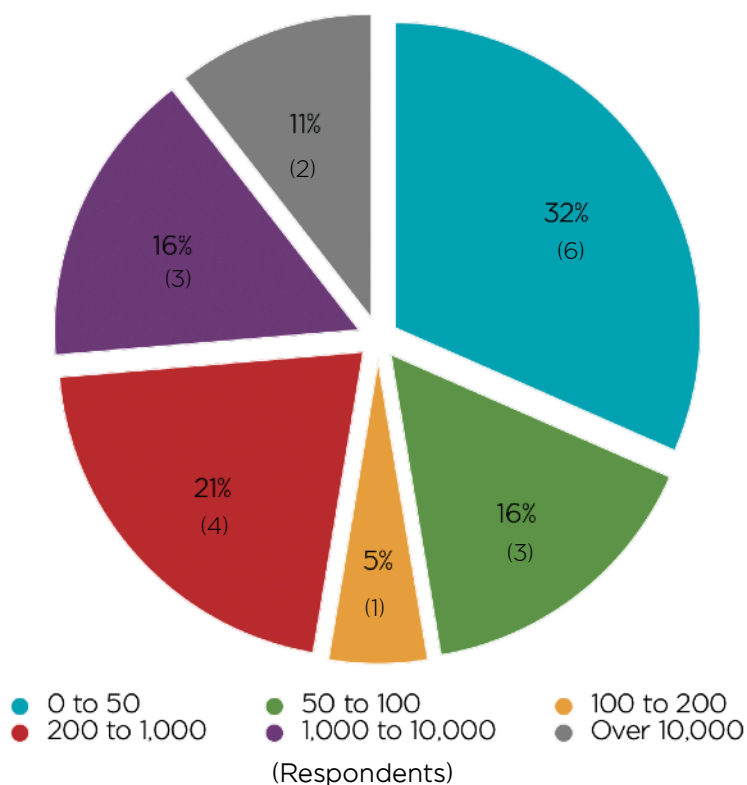


How many regular volunteers do you have?



Despite the volunteer-led delivery or small staff teams of the majority of LGBT+ community groups, it is noted that the number of beneficiaries they served is often substantial, highlighting the value for money and cost-effectiveness of community-led activities.

Approximately how many people do you support or come along to your activities and events?



### Who is responsible for your fundraising?

Management Committee/Board of Trustees: 52.6% (10 respondents)



Staff: 31.6% (6 respondents)



Volunteers: 15.8% (3 respondents)



Other: 15.8% (3 respondents)



Other responses included the wider membership with no particular designated responsibility or being funded solely through annual membership fees.

### How are your activities funded?

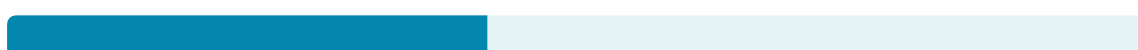
Donations: 68.4% (13 respondents)



Grants: 68.4% (13 respondents)



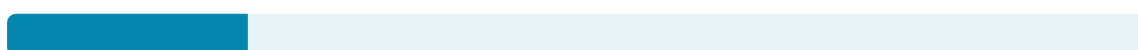
Community fundraising events: 42.1% (8 respondents)



Other: 31.6% (6 respondents)



Membership fees: 21.1% (4 respondents)



Whilst funding from donations and community fundraising amongst survey respondents is significant, it is also noted that those community groups who did not respond to the survey are more likely to be funded by donations and face barriers to accessing grant funding, as indicated by the LGBT Consortium Community Insights Survey.

### Have you ever applied for grant funding in the past?

Yes: 73.7% (14 respondents)

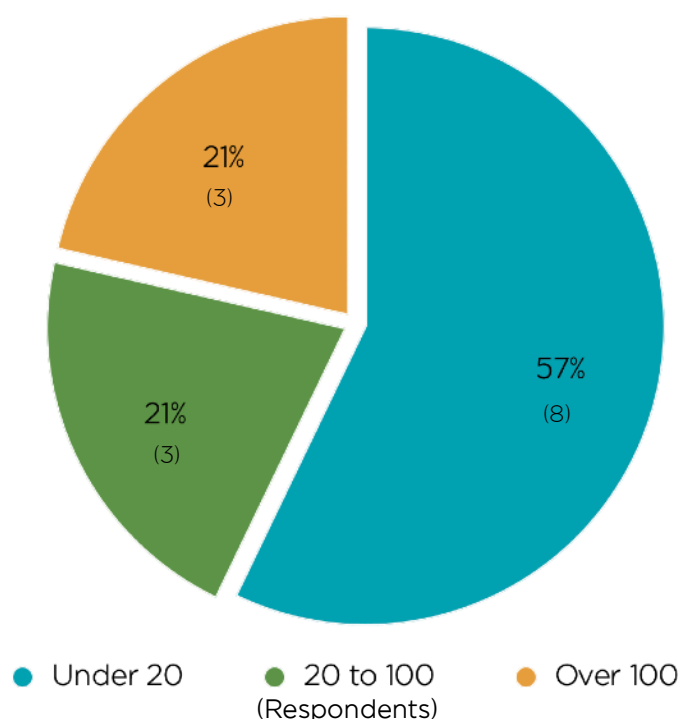


No: 26.3% (5 respondents)





How many grant applications have you made previously?



Significantly, around 70% of survey respondents have broad experience of seeking grant funding and/or are currently funded by grants. The following responses are therefore deemed representative of the grant-seeking experience of LGBT+ community groups who have sought to access this source of funding.

There was a diverse range of grant funding bodies approached by respondents, including:

- National Lottery
- Leeds Community Foundation
- Aviva
- Henry Smith
- Aviva
- Esmée Fairbairn
- Masonic Charitable Foundation
- Paul Hamlyn Foundation
- Lloyds of London Foundation
- Pears Youth Fund
- Tesco
- Arnold Clark
- The Skelton Charity
- Hayes Travel Foundation
- Thames Link
- GSK Impact Award
- Department of Health
- CIN
- Comic Relief
- CNET
- Homes England
- Clarion Futures
- Skipton Building Society
- Leeds City Council
- LGBT Consortium

### Was it for targeted funding to support the LGBT+ community?

Yes: 71.4% (10 respondents)



Sometimes: 21.4% (3 respondents)



No: 7.1% (1 respondent)



Despite the diverse range of grant funding bodies approached by respondents it is significant to note that over 70% of funding sought was from targeted funding schemes for the LGBT+ community. This highlights the increased likelihood that LGBT+ community groups will seek to access targeted funding schemes but may be reluctant to access mainstream funding schemes despite eligibility.

### How did you find the application process in general?

Manageable: 57.1% (8 respondents)



Difficult: 21.4% (3 respondents)



Easy: 21.4% (3 respondents)



When asked what factors made the grant application process easy, manageable or difficult responses included:

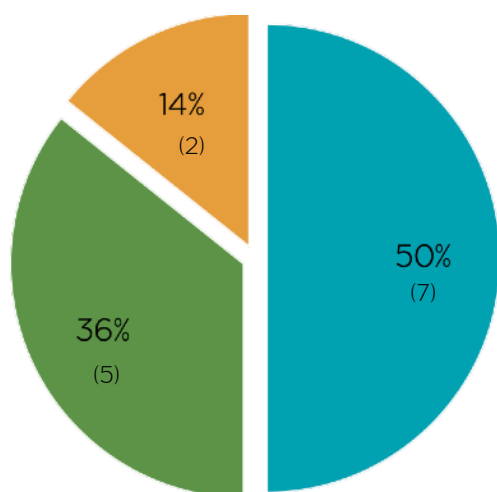
- Forms that are easy to complete with clear questions and examples of previous applications.
- It is helpful when the forms are simple and clear to complete.
- Set questions and easy to understand.
- The application form was easy to complete, and the questions were easy to understand.
- The amount of information required was appropriate for the level of grant that we were applying for.
- Now we are formally constituted and have a bank account it is easier.
- Presenting our story is very manageable, working out all the finances and tailoring the application to the criteria can sometimes be slightly tricky.

- It is easiest when grants provide adequate information about the process, including a Q&A, webinar or video.
- It's great when a named person is available to answer questions and support us through the process.
- LCF's interest in the project and us made it feel like a collaboration rather than just a grant.
- The offer and form wording chimed with and was in line with our ethos and endeavours.
- Individual contact reinforced that LCF 'got' us. We were asked relevant questions and I felt confident to ask questions and clarify points, ensuring full understanding and agreement.
- Lack of understanding of LGBT+ is an issue, we are a male-based group often accused of a lack of inclusion by funders.
- Sometimes a small amount of money does not justify staff time.
- Lack of understanding of LGBT+ needs so having to provide evidence of that.
- National Lottery kept changing the requirements and systems and it was a nightmare and our application failed.
- Hard to get across needs of the client group are different to a non-LGBT+ group.
- The process seemed to be geared toward a professional fundraiser who understands the system and is experienced in filling in the forms. It felt like a full-time job and a HUGE, if VERY frustrating experience.

Most significantly despite the difficulties and challenges that groups identified in the grant application process when asked if they were successful in securing a grant, there was a 100% success rate in securing at least one grant award.

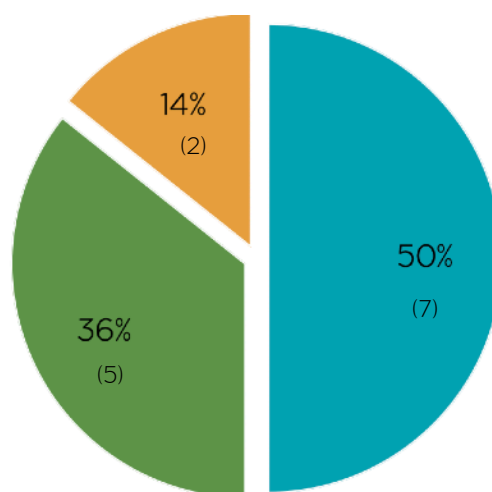
#### Approximately how much did you request and were you awarded?

Awarded (£):



● Under £5,000    ● £5,000 to 50,000  
 ● Over £50,000    (Respondents)

Requested (£):



● Under £5,000    ● £5,000 to 50,000  
 ● Over £50,000    (Respondents)

### What - if any - feedback did you get about not receiving a grant?

- 6 organisations reported getting no feedback other than that others fitted the criteria better.
- Already applied within 12 months.
- Insufficient evidence of need.
- Longevity of organisation and organisational experience.
- They liked the concept but didn't have confidence we would deliver outcomes.
- Not demonstrating enough impact or due to our applications/projects not being specific enough.
- Our biggest barrier in applying for specific LGBT+ funding is due to the eligibility criteria which stops us from applying in the first place: e.g. because our OUT in Leeds Group fits under People In Action as a whole organisation (which is non-LGBT+ specific) we can't apply for any funding that is for LGBT+ organisations,
- They often want 50% of trustees to be from the LGBT+ community.
- Misunderstood criteria and eligibility.
- Gender diversity issue.
- Submitted too late.

This highlights that whilst many community groups may be ineligible for grant funding due to being unconstituted or not having an independent bank account, even those who meet eligibility criteria face challenges, including understanding the application process and not being able to effectively evidence or demonstrate need and organisational capability.

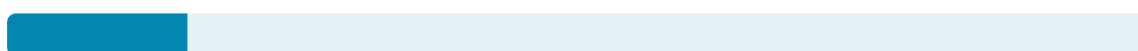
The following section seeks to inform the demand for and design of a package of capacity building and support for LGBT+ community groups.

### If you had increased capacity or skills would you be more likely to apply for grant funding in the future?

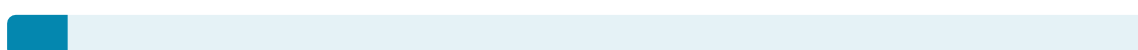
Definitely yes: 73.7% (14 respondents)



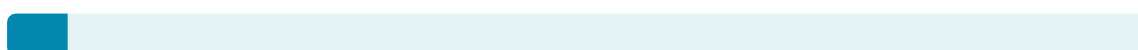
Might or might not: 15.8% (3 respondents)



Probably not: 5.3% (1 respondent)



Probably yes: 5.3% (1 respondent)



Definitely not: 0% (0 respondents)





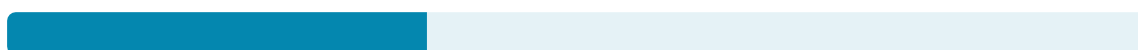
Taking into account that the majority of LGBT+ community organisations identified within Leeds have a turnover of £25,000 or less, when comparing those respondents within this income range, those who said "Definitely" or "Probably yes" to the previous question reduced to 66% (from 79%). This could imply that a significant number of community groups face barriers other than just capacity or skills, or remain reluctant to apply for grant funding.

### What if anything would prevent you in the future from applying for grant funding?

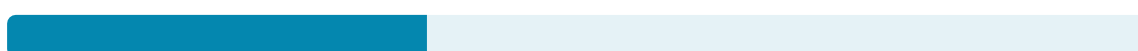
Don't have people with time to write applications: 57.9% (11 respondents)



Confused by the complexity of the application process or language/jargon used e.g. core costs, outputs and outcomes: 36.8% (7 respondents)



Don't have the capacity or skills to manage the grant reporting requirements: 36.8% (7 respon.)



Don't know how to write applications: 26.3% (5 respondents)



Don't know who to apply to: 26.3% (5 respondents)



Expectation of rejection: 26.3% (5 respondents)



There is nothing that prevents us from applying for future grants: 10.5% (2 respondents)



Don't need funding: 0% (0 respondents)



Other: 31.6% (6 respondents)



Other responses included:

- Lack of trust in organisations to understand LGBT+ needs, Sometimes called homo/transphobia.
- Having to properly set up legal things and bank details.
- We have chosen to be an independent group with an informal network of supporters etc.
- Mainly eligibility criteria of being an unconstituted group.
- Lack of funding for our sort of activity.

Regardless of income size, we did not come across a divergence of different views amongst groups in relation to the above.

What would make it easier for you to apply for a grant in the future?

Knowing that the funder explicitly welcomed applications from LGBT+ groups: 84.2% (16 r)



Funding to employ skilled fundraising staff: 63.2% (12 respondents)



Regular news updates on available grant funding: 63.2% (12 respondents)



Support to increase our knowledge and skills in applying for grants through webinars: 63.2% (12 respondents)



Support to increase our knowledge and skills in applying for grants through workshops: 52.5% (10 respondents)



Support to increase our knowledge and skills in applying for grants through information leaflets or how-to guides: 36.8% (7 respondents)



Volunteers with fundraising skills: 31.6% (6 respondents)



Other: 10.5% (2 respondents)



Other responses included: someone doing it for us.

It is clear that the majority of groups would be more likely to apply for funding if they were supported to do so and that any such support should focus on developing an understanding of or simplifying the grant-making process and challenging misconceptions or fears about increased or onerous organisational responsibilities for monitoring and reporting.

When asked about future grant-making to ensure that LGBT+ people are best supported and if there was anything, in particular, they would like funders to offer responses included:

- More unrestricted/core costs funding and multi-year grants.
- Length is important: 3+ years minimum to make it worthwhile to go through the application process and provide security.
- Salary costs and rental space. Focus on those as they are needed for any charity.

- It would be useful if funders didn't exclude us from applying for projects because our overall budget is too large but we have a number of projects under our umbrella e.g. SAGE.
- Reduced reporting and greater trust.
- Funders educating themselves about LGBT+ discrimination, exclusion and need.
- Prepared to fund core costs, not just 'new' short-term projects.
- Many of our women members do not feel that other organisations meet their needs. As groups have grown and organisations have developed the value of informal grassroots community networks seems to have been devalued in favour of bigger, less responsive, often less diverse groupings.
- We would like grants to recognise that small LGBT+ groups would still benefit from additional funding despite being part of a bigger organisation. This is especially important for minority groups such as LGBT+ people with learning disabilities because the group typically need a large amount of support and resources to be delivered and for us, this group needs even more input than other non-LGBT+ groups due to the layered challenges and intersections. Therefore, having special eligibility exceptions for these minority groups or having targeted funding would be beneficial.
- Length of funding beyond one year is always preferable to enable us to plan ahead.
- Information about CSR/pro-bono community support from legal and financial businesses to underpin and support progress.
- Awareness of the social impacts of being different and not heteronormative/mainstream, and the associated issues of e.g. intersectionality, higher levels of neurodiversity and mental ill health experienced by LGBT+ people who are minorities within a minority.
- Encouraging bidders to become more diverse in their thinking and becoming more inclusive of minorities within our tribe.
- It would be enabling if different funders used a shared template for basic information and added their own specific info text boxes to this.
- Close support through the process and regular contact.
- Simplifying the process.
- Rolling application deadlines.
- More flexible micro-funding.
- It's helpful to have a variety of short, project and long-term funding.
- Having LGBT+ focused funding schemes rather than always issue-based. Working with the LGBT+ community is different to working with a defined community as LGBT+ people are in all aspects of the whole community - old, young, families, singles, rich, poor, etc. There are certain areas that will occur for everyone e.g. hate crimes, mental health issues, and medical issues.
- One thing that would be good is for funders to not ask for "innovative/new" ways of working as what works for one community doesn't necessarily work for another!
- Support for campaigns for equality and inclusion.
- Focus of funding, higher admin percentage allocation, and cross-promotion opportunities.

When asked if grants were awarded for multiple years rather than one-year funding would it make you more likely to apply?

Definitely yes: 62.3% (12 respondents)



Probably yes: 15.8% (3 respondents)



Might or might not: 10.5% (2 respondents)



Probably not: 10.5% (2 respondents)



Definitely not: 0% (0 respondents)



What benefits do you think multi-year funding would give you?

- Be able to commit more time to each service user.
- Security and sustainability, more space to secure continuation funding.
- Stability to plan, easier to recruit and enable us to plan and get on with the tasks we want to achieve.
- Longevity and consistency. we have had to move around venues a lot due to only using free venues, funding would allow us to pay for a building and not have to leave.
- More development time to truly support all LGBT+ community.
- Ability to recruit quality staff and volunteers, plan ahead, create and monitor more impact and reach more people.
- Benefit from partnerships with other services and community groups. We could be more present at things like community networks/forums.
- By having multi-year funding, we can plan projects that progress and learn over time to be more established, better quality and more impactful.
- Having multiple years of funding helps us avoid the stop-start nature of short-term funding and build in continuity. This is especially important when recruiting staff.
- Ability to establish infrastructure and scope for planning initiatives and projects to respond to emerging needs.
- Experience in governance and development of good practice.
- Resilience and stability for future planning.

- Time to build relationships with organizations who wanted to utilise our services, but who couldn't fit it into the specific year, or who wanted repeat sessions the following year/s.
- Financial security to guarantee our projects will continue into the future, giving security and stability to service users (and staff if we were able to employ them).
- Sustainability.
- Mainly stability - time to start, deliver and evaluate.
- Time to 'grow' a project and benefit from increased awareness to improve the participation of members of the LGBT+ community who we are not currently supporting.

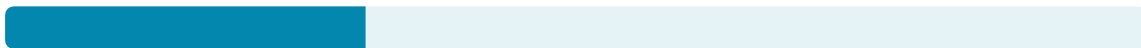
When asked if groups could identify any barriers to them applying for multi-year funding, other than existing barriers such as organisational type, the vast majority of respondents saw no barriers.

Only two respondents identified financial or budgetary concerns and an inability for them to commit to deliver activities when future costs may be unknown.

Conversely when asking about the size of grant opportunities available to community groups:

Does small amounts of funding e.g. less than £2,500 act as a barrier to applying for funding?

Yes: 31.6% (6 respondents)

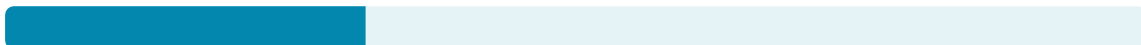


No: 68.4% (13 respondents)



And taking into account your normal expenditure, what level of annual grant funding would support your organisation the best?

Between £20,000 and £50,000 (6 respondents) 31.6%



Less than £5,000 (5 respondents) 26.3%



More than £50,000 (5 respondents) 26.3%



Between £5,000 and £20,000 (3 respondents) 15.8%



Respondents were also asked to give any other details about their experience of grant funding or information on what types of support they thought would benefit their organisation to help secure grant funding in the future.

- The most helpful thing for us in the past has been having webinars during which we can learn more the grant eligibility criteria and ask questions to establish whether the grant opportunity is a good fit for our charity.
- Easily accessible funding for bid writers.
- A pre-read-through to check we've ticked all the boxes and criteria.
- Honorariums for writing the grants, even if we are not successful. Picking people who can apply and paying them all.
- Beneficial to know what is available and what we are eligible for.
- Whilst I have answered that our organisation is experienced in applying for generic funding, we are not experienced in applying for LGBT+ funding specifically. As the only person from our senior management who is from the LGBT+ community, I would benefit from developing my own personal knowledge in applying for funding and LGBT+ grants so I can drive the searches and application process.
- Updates and/or info sessions to understand the findings and progress of this consultation project and discuss with others.
- Knowing what funding is available: having a decent lead in time/reasonable length deadlines: a named Grant Officer to liaise with.
- Small pots more often!

If Leeds Community Foundation or another support organisation were to put on training sessions for community groups, would you attend if the sessions were held?

Virtual e.g. via Zoom/Teams: 78.9% (15 respondents)



In the daytime: 57.9% (11 respondents)



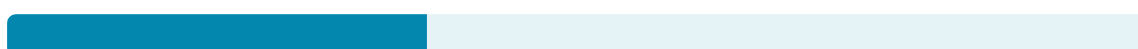
In person: 52.6% (10 respondents)



In the evening: 52.6% (10 respondents)



At the weekend: 36.8% (7 respondents)



Would not attend: 0% (0 respondents)





In addition to survey results, 11 groups were invited to provide further information and insights through one-to-one discussions or involvement in a group discussion.

Feedback from these meetings was consistent with survey findings and included the following specific observations:

- Many members are nervous about revealing their identities to others outside the group. We use Meet-Up as that way only members who join can see who else is involved. It would be great to have funding to enable us to have a website with a secure membership log-in. We would be able to reach out to a lot more people.
- We survive on members' subscriptions but it would be ideal to be able to offer a free trial membership to try events, build trust and relationships.
- We would love to offer a hybrid model with virtual meetings for more isolated members we engaged with during the pandemic but we can't afford a zoom subscription on top of other costs.
- We get really positive feedback from the members despite our small-scale activities. Really helped them, given them confidence and helped them meet people or access information and support.
- We have a monthly welcome meeting – held in a pub. Not the best place to meet for new members – but it's the only place I could think of that we could afford. Some don't like it because they don't drink. Others don't like it because it is a gay pub and they might just be coming out – feel nervous about going to a gay venue. But the non-gay pubs wanted to charge us. We tried Mesmac – but it was too difficult to get access at the weekend.
- We have an increased number of asylum seekers asking for membership. Trying to support them as best we can. But they sometimes ask for a lot of help that we can't provide. I do my best in googling support for them – but not really sure what support is out there for LGBT+ asylum seekers. A networking session would be useful – to find out who is doing what and get to know them.
- We are not a charity but if we had support and a road map to support us we could register e.g. What would we need to do? What would they need from us? Would we need a business plan? Who could we apply to and for what? Who could support us with putting an application in?
- Targeted training sessions for LGBT+ groups that understood our challenges and helped us to better understand the terminology used and how to apply for grants would give us more confidence to apply.
- It's a time-consuming process that we have to rely on volunteers to do, so the easier and simpler an application process is, the more likely we are to be able to get volunteers to help.
- It's hard to keep in the 'loop' and know when funding is available. A regular e-newsletter on opportunities would help us plan. We often hear about funding streams when it is too late for us to apply.
- As a volunteer-led organisation, we don't get a chance to network with other groups or find out what other groups are doing to develop partnerships. Meetups for organisers would be wonderful to share our experiences and knowledge within the community.
- It would be helpful to have a simple help guide to understand terminology e.g. restricted/unrestricted funds, outcomes and outputs.
- If we understood why the information was needed we would be better at explaining ourselves.

- Having a one-to-one relationship with a grants officer where they take the time to know the organisation and provide invaluable impartial advice as part of the process gives us confidence to put the time and effort into applications even if we know we might not be successful.
- An evening or weekend 'Funders Fair' with triage service to signpost us to the most appropriate funders to talk to would be a great opportunity to share our stories.
- If grant schemes or the funder's website does not explicitly invite applications from LGBT+ communities we don't bother applying as it is too much risk to waste time applying.
- We don't need lots of money. We are happy being a volunteer-led community group so even a small amount of money we could use for our administration or marketing would have a big impact and help us reach new members.



## Community Grant Funders

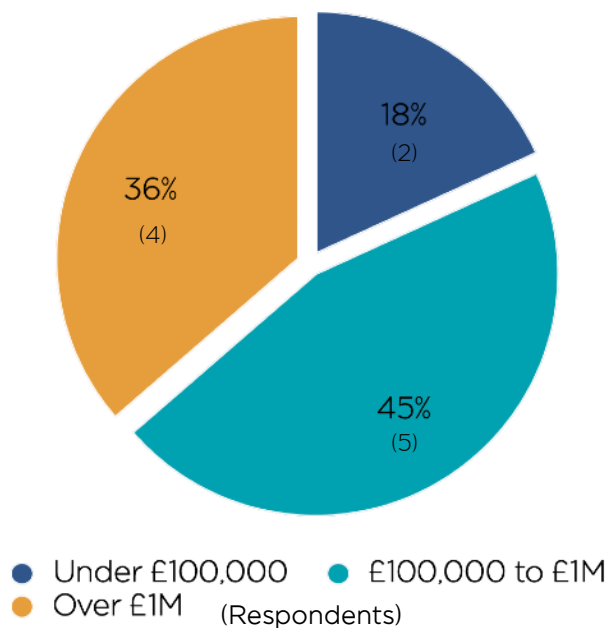
To develop an understanding of what other grant makers in the area have or are doing to address issues of equality in access to funding, with a particular focus on all segments of the LGBT+ community, we identified 46 grant-making bodies who were identified as key organisations funding Leeds community groups. (Appendix 1)

In addition, we spoke to the Heart of England Community Foundation to develop an understanding of the work they had undertaken to improve access to funding by LGBT+ community groups in the Midlands region.

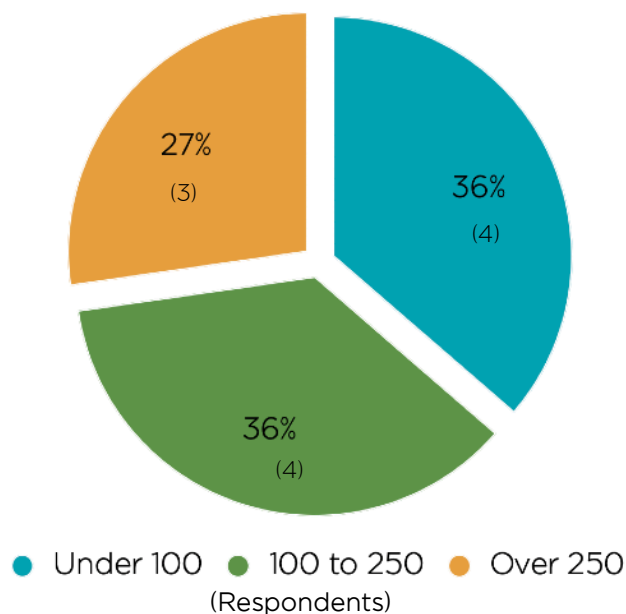
We received 11 responses to our survey, a response rate of 24%.

Survey respondents represented a broad size of organisations.

How much do you normally award in grants in a year?



How many grants do you make annually?



Only one organisation, the LGBT Consortium, had previously undertaken studies or evaluations of the needs of the LGBT+ community with regard to accessing grant funding:

- LGBT+ Fund Feasibility Study
- Equity Fund Research
- Bi Funding Research

When asked to give more details regarding the decision not to look specifically at the LGBT+ community with regard to accessing grant funding responses from other local funders included:

- LGBT+ is considered as part of our overall approach to diversity, equity and inclusion and which supports our efforts to understand and take an intersectional approach to our funding.
- My trustees don't do any research about anyone - they only respond to whoever applies to them.
- Time resource is a barrier to looking specifically at individual communities/groups. We have worked to make our application process more accessible and inclusive in general. We do receive applications from the LGBT+ community as we do many other communities. We survey all applicants (successful and unsuccessful) and have had no specific feedback about barriers to our grants.
- We do not target particular characteristics and all of our grants support work around core subjects (maths, English, science) We do not fund any work on the PHSE curriculum, or around sexuality or identity. In this context, we have not considered that it is an appropriate priority to target the needs of the LGBT+ community.
- We do a generic evaluation of our work but we have not looked into any specific communities not accessing our grant funding.
- We specifically funded the LGBT+ community for over 25 years, but the number of grants each year awarded was relatively small. In part, this was due to the low number of groups and organisations serving the LGBT+ community. That changed in more recent years, which also reflected that change in both legislation and attitude towards the LGBT+ community. A few years ago, the Foundation changed its priorities and ceased an LGBT+ specific programme. We still fund work around the LGBT+ community if it falls within our current priorities, such as asylum seekers and refugees or older people.
- We have not done specific work or surveys but we do have relationships with groups and talk to them about needs. We are also doing a lot of work on our EDI strategy and chunking bits of work up. We would be open to a specific survey or evaluation as we have done this for other communities of interest and we are continuing to learn and develop.
- We fund LGBT+ specific organisations with the freedom to meet community needs. We are a relational funder that works directly with grant holders.
- Our grants are promoted widely through sector newsletters, social media etc and this has prompted applications from the LGBT+ community. We are early on, on our EDI journey to improve accessibility for all sections of our community and the LGBT+ community will be a community we will be looking at.
- We are a generalist funder and give funding to a vast array of members of society in West Yorkshire.

Despite this lack of specific studies or evaluations into the experiences of the LGBT+ community, the majority of respondents felt informed.

As an organisation do you feel you are aware of any specific support needs and barriers to funding for LGBT+ communities?

Yes: 72.7% (8 respondents)



No: 27.3% (3 respondents)



Can you detail what you might think these are?

- One of the most significant, from the perspective of a UK-wide funder, is likely to be the fact that the groups are relatively small, locality-based and primarily focused on the wellbeing of it's membership. In that way, the challenges will have similar features to those faced by all small organisations. There are also likely to be challenges arising from funders (the paid executive, boards and decision-making panels) own lack of knowledge and awareness, prejudices and biases.
- Groups may not wish to formalise and prefer delivering using donations from members, support in kind – e.g free room hire. They think it's not for them, want to remain casually social and not introduce formality. Some groups have experience of funding and don't want to conform to requirements e.g. end of grant monitoring – have concerns about providing details about members.
- There are generic reasons that apply to various sections of society, including the lack of capacity to access to funding advice. For the LGBT+ community, there is still a stigma which can inhibit groups from seeking outside support and still very few funders specifically state they support the LGBT+ community.
- The challenge of funding intersectional work (e.g. funders of mental health work don't see LGBT+ organisations doing mental health as their core purpose as primarily mental health focussed so can pass them over for funding). Groups being smaller can lean organisations towards being less experienced in fundraising and perception of lower quality bids. Groups not knowing the availability of funds due to size or lack of networking and wanting to only access targeted funding, but there are few specialist LGBT+ funders!
- Language around LGBT+, forms that are not inclusive, not enough depth of understanding of lived experience, gender stereotypes, and safe spaces.
- They are what the community have highlighted for us: issues of isolation and rurality, lack of representation and health inequalities that affect LGBT+ communities disproportionately leading to high rates of suicide, self-harm and outward migration. Lack of access to treatment & support in our area.
- Members of the LGBT+ communities are often ostracised and may find there are fewer opportunities to access funding. Particularly Black and people of colour from the LGBT+ community, who may have suffered racism and injustice because they have to battle against cultural and religious abuse. There are many associated problems affecting the LGBT+ community such as homelessness, gender-based violence and mental health issues.
- There aren't any specific LGBT+ images on our website and so this group may not feel our Trust is for them. When we do a website update we will look at this.



Four organisations stated that they were planning future work to identify the specific support needs or barriers faced by the LGBT+ community:

- We are working with Birmingham City Council on developing a fund targeted at the LGBT+ communities - we are in the process of doing a gap analysis and finding out the needs of the community. We are working closely with Birmingham LGBT Centre and they have been funded to provide capacity-building support to LGBT+ groups.
- Part of our ongoing work to invest in LGBT+ communities. Next piece will be the interim evaluation of our LGBT+ Futures: Equity Fund.
- It is part of what our EDI work plans include. We are also keen for staff to have training.
- We have grant-funded an LGBT+ collective to put on a wide range of activities and support for the community. We will be working closely with the grant holders to understand how they are meeting needs, as well as identifying and building on the strengths and assets of the community. We are particularly aware of stigma and discrimination and the impact that has on the experiences of LGBT+ folk in our communities.

### When considering previous grant-making specifically targeting the LGBT+ community:

Has your organisation ever made grants specifically targeted at LGBT+ communities?

Yes: 81.8% (9 respondents)



No: 18.2% (2 respondents)



And what would you say is your experience of grant-making to LGBT+ communities?

We have limited experience: 50% (4 respondents)



We are somewhat experienced: 25% (2 respondents)



We are very experienced: 12.5% (1 respondent)



We have no experience or don't collect this data: 12.5% (1 respondent)



Follow-up interviews were held with 4 organisations to gain a deeper insight into their experience of funding LGBT+ community groups. Key findings included:

- We've benefited from the networks and intelligence of second-tier organisations such as the LGBT Consortium and suspect that they (and other second-tier organisations) would be keen to support funders in their efforts to increase the relevance, reach and impact of their funding to LGBT+ communities.
- We identified that a number of smaller community groups had no bank account, which excluded them from many funding opportunities. We were able to work with a key partner to administer grants on behalf of these groups so that 15 out of 70 grant awards under our Equity Fund were effectively targeted.
- Trust and confidence is everything with LGBT+ communities. As a community, they still face prejudice on a daily basis and need to feel that grant makers understand their experiences and the specific needs of their community or they simply have an expectation of discrimination due to past experiences.
- So much more could be done around diversity equity and inclusion at a national level to support regional community foundations. The UK Community Foundation (UKCF) could play a key role in bringing together their membership to share learning and develop a consistent approach.
- It is only relatively recently that we have monitored grant applications from LGBT+ communities and so it is hard for us to build an accurate picture to know if LGBT+ groups are applying or the success rate of applications.
- We have never specifically listed LGBT+ communities on our website as target groups we wish to support, although we do recognise the added disadvantage and inequalities they face. It is only when seeking feedback from yourselves on our publicity and how we could improve access by LGBT+ community groups that we have seen LGBT+ community groups apply (2 in the first month of implementing your recommendations).
- One-to-one relationships with grants officers have been invaluable in building trust and ensuring grants are spent effectively. Smaller community groups have needed a handheld journey, not just through the application process, but also learning how to manage the grant and fulfil reporting requirements.
- The success of the place-based model of community foundations is very much based on grassroots knowledge of the communities they work with. Unfortunately, community foundations are also known to have a high turnover of staff, it often being an entry point to a career in fundraising. As such, it is easy for the community knowledge of – or relationships that have been built with – harder-to-reach and less established sections of the community, such as LGBT+ community groups, to be lost when staff change.
- We have done funding roadshows and information events to attract more diverse communities to apply for funding, but these have not been targeted at particular sections of the community i.e. LGBT+ community groups.
- Outreach undertaken by local Neighbourhood Networks has highlighted to us that there is often competition and political or personal tension between certain community groups within the LGBT+ community. This can impact on attempts to develop collaboration or identification of an umbrella organisation with whom we can work in partnership.
- It is only when talking to community groups that we get an understanding of their challenges and needs. For example, we had a Trans group ask for security costs for an event to be held in what we deemed a safe venue. Because of their experience of discrimination and hate crime in the area they knew it would be a barrier to attendance and so something that we wouldn't normally consider for funding was an essential element of their budget.

It was noted that the Heart of England Foundation in partnership with Birmingham City Council, building on their studies into improving diversity equity and inclusion and experience of the neighbourhood services model, has developed a programme of support for LGBT+ community groups. It is too early in its delivery to measure the impact of the programme but it provides insight into possible interventions to improve access to funding.

- Micro-grants programme – a £10,000 fund to be distributed via grants of £500 or less – to support the many grassroots groups who just need a little bit of funding to have a significant impact in the community. They are working with a local LGBT+ Network to administer the grants and with the LGBT+ Consortium to do due diligence on applicants. They have developed a light touch reporting mechanism with 'case studies' as opposed to detailed output and outcome reporting requirements.
- Capacity building programme – They have also funded Birmingham LGBT Centre, the city's leading charity advocating for and supporting the LGBT+ community in Birmingham and beyond, to deliver a capacity-building programme for the LGBT+ sector. A £25,000 fund is aimed at supporting community groups to develop knowledge and understanding of grant funding to help improve access to funding for their activities and improve the ability of both voluntary and statutory funders to effectively target funding where it is needed. This will be delivered as both one-to-one support and training/webinars delivered by a part-time development worker.

Discussions with Birmingham City Council also highlighted the following key observations from their work developing the diversity equity and inclusion of their Neighbourhood Services.

- Key communities of interest are often not 'place-based'. The dispersal across a wider area of communities such as the LGBT+ community means that they are often ineligible for funding or excluded by small neighbourhood place-based funding. They have therefore developed a 'communities of interest' model for communities of interest who are spread across more than 3 neighbourhood service areas.
- As is common with many larger urban areas Birmingham has a large volunteer-led LGBT+ sector, with many smaller unconstituted groups supporting specific sections of the LGBT+ community. The diverse nature of these groups means they often operate in isolation with limited networking or intergenerational interaction. They are often organised via MeetUp with no other social media or website to promote inclusion and have limited administrative capacity for fundraising or to meet reporting requirements for grants.
- There is/are often 'key players' within the LGBT+ community who play a significant role in community development and are more connected with key decision-makers. This can give rise to a lack of engagement or collaboration by identified groups if their relationship with the key players is challenging.
- There is a push to enhance evidence-based commissioning decisions through improved collection and analysis of community data sets. It is recognised that whilst academic research into the needs and experiences of the LGBT+ community is still limited there is anecdotal 'grey data' that can help inform community needs and development of appropriate interventions.

# 8. Conclusions

- The LGBT+ community sector is comprised of a diverse range of smaller community groups. The majority often operate in isolation, have limited social media presence and are volunteer-led.
- Effective networking opportunities for LGBT+ community groups in Leeds are limited.
- Research evidence indicates that there is a distinct lack of skills and knowledge around fundraising nationally within the LGBT+ voluntary community sector, and this can act as a barrier to applying for funds. This includes:
  - A lack of awareness of funding opportunities.
  - Lack of networking with other groups to develop partnership models or collaborative bids.
  - Lack of understanding of terminology.
  - Misconceptions about responsibilities and reporting requirements.
  - The processes and work required to access the available funding are too much for many small LGBT+ groups to manage, which lack the appropriate resources to complete applications
- Many community groups delivering impactful interventions supporting the LGBT+ community are excluded from funding opportunities due to their unconstituted status.
- Success rates are low for many funding applications from LGBT+ community groups, and the larger LGBT+ organisations take up much of the funding space. This acts as a barrier to further applications.
- At a national level, it appears that a significant number of LGBT+ community groups are only seeking small pots of funding to enable them to develop and improve their activities, with no desire to grow significantly or employ staff.
- There is no umbrella organisation recognised by the wider LGBT+ community in Leeds as providing a capacity-building, networking or support function.
- There is often a perception that unless a grantmaker specifically identifies LGBT+ communities, either in their publicity and marketing or through dedicated funding schemes, LGBT+ community groups will not be a priority for funding.
- Other grant makers have done very limited work to better understand the experiences of LGBT+ communities' access to grant funds, often relying on the role of more strategic and proactive funders, such as Leeds Community Foundation, to develop a knowledge base around diversity equity and inclusion to inform their own grantmaking strategy.
- The lack of evidence base of the experiences of the wider LGBT community risk being exasperated by the wider development of place-based interventions for statutory delivery of health, housing and social care support services that fail to identify the non-place-based nature of diverse communities such as the LGBT+ community.
- The lack of academic research into inequalities and barriers faced by LGBT+ communities in the UK, and the misconception that equalities legislation has

removed barriers to the LGBT+ community accessing mainstream services hampers informed decision-making about community needs and inequalities and therefore is reflected in an apparent national lack of a priority around LGBT+ issues with charitable funders.

- The demand for LGBT+ specific services is growing as visibility increases and communities are coming together in social action to address the inequalities they face and creating opportunities for networking and connection. Against this backdrop, the inflationary pressures on both organisations and statutory bodies create a more competitive environment for attracting funding for these activities. As a consequence, more developed and connected communities are more likely to secure funding without targeted action by funders to address issues of equity and inclusion.



# 9. Recommendations

## What could LCF do to enable LGBT+ community organisations to access grant funding?

“Never leave an organisation worse off than before you funded them”.  
– Dame Sarah Cadbury Barrow

### Continue to develop good grant-making:

Good grant-making requires a focus on sustainable, stable funding for community organisations. Practices include:

- Publishing clear funding priorities and criteria.
- Providing an eligibility checker.
- Ensuring application forms make all questions visible upfront.
- Avoiding repetition.
- Allowing grants to be used to support core costs as well as specific projects.
- Allow community organisations to submit applications via video.
- Ask about DEI in all grant applications to improve monitoring and evidence collection.
- Continue to support engagement with LGBT+ community organisations:
  - Ensure staff have a good understanding of the issues affecting the LGBT+ communities in Leeds.
  - Ensure LGBT+ community organisations have an awareness of funding programmes designed for smaller community organisations.

Equity is about removing structural barriers that prevent the realisation of a fair and just society. It is about looking at the root causes and considering system change. As an organisation, LCF is focused on creating a fair and inclusive society, working with partners to create positive change, addressing inequalities and creating opportunities. This aim recognises that patterns of inequality, racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia and other forms of discrimination are deeply ingrained in our communities. LCF has a key role to play in bringing awareness to this inequity with all its applicants, prompting them to consider how they are supporting LGBT+ service users, sharing knowledge of the barriers the LGBT+ community may face when accessing services and promoting the development of diversity equity and inclusion by all grant holders.

### Remove barriers for small organisations:

- Simplify the application process. How long does it take to submit an application? If it takes more than 10 hours, consider modifying the requirements.
- Provide technical assistance, including initial review of an application to ensure the applicant is on the right track and are investing their time efficiently in the application process.
- Give smaller / less established organisations more time to submit their applications and/or have a rolling small grants programme.
- Broaden how applications may be submitted eg: online / by post / via video.



- Work with other local funders to adopt a common application form.
- Don't ask for information that you don't actually need in the decision-making process and explain clearly in guidance why information is required.
- Limit the use of jargon.
- Continue to have specific LGBT+ grants initiatives.
- Review reporting requirements for smaller community groups/grant awards e.g. case studies as opposed to detailed outcome monitoring.
- Raise awareness of regular newsletter sign up to improve information sharing with community groups.

## Develop a capacity building and support programme:

Many participants were interested in applying for grants, but need additional support, communities of practice, and other ways of continuing to develop their community organisation or group. Similarly, many frontline groups – despite efforts to disseminate as far and as quickly as possible, may not see notifications about funding for some time or may struggle to complete the application process in a set period of time.

- Work with other funders to develop a rolling 'Funder Fair' with a signposting 'triage' service to support LGBT+ community groups to develop conversations and relationships with potential funders and gain knowledge of potential funding sources.
- Provide a small pre-application grant to support smaller groups with their applications (eg: £250).
- Consider giving small grants to local LGBT+ groups to come along to speak at LCF awareness sessions attended by staff and trustees. This is a great way to get to increase awareness of issues affecting the community, but also a way to start building a relationship – and paying a local organisation or group can show that their lived experience is respected.
- Target outreach to marginalised communities e.g. if the funding programme is about addressing social isolation amongst older people, ensure sessions are held with LGBT+ charities supporting older people in recognition of the barriers they face to accessing mainstream provision.
- Work to identify a key partner who could facilitate the coordination of a micro-grants programme for unconstituted groups.
- Promote membership of the LGBT Consortium amongst known LGBT+ community groups to improve information sharing and access to advice and information.
- Develop easily accessible information leaflets using LGBT+ imagery and community examples to demystify the application process, help understand terminology e.g. outcomes, and restricted/unrestricted funds.
- Develop and deliver a range of webinars and information sessions targeted at the LGBT+ community to 'walk through' an application process and explain the potential responsibilities and reporting requirements of grant holders.
- Discuss with LGBT Consortium existing training and development support they provide for community groups with a view to investigating and supporting locality-based initiatives in Leeds.

- Ensure that applicants have a named contact with whom they can discuss an application, get feedback and seek ongoing support with grant management.

## Review organisational DEI commitments:

- Ensure training for all staff and board members on LGBT+ issues both to create a culture where ongoing learning around cultural competency is not only encouraged by expected and to ensure that both staff and board members are up-to-date with issues affecting the local LGBT+ communities.
- Ensure that HR policies are LGBT+ friendly and cover transition-related support.
- Agree and publish organisational definitions for diversity, equity and inclusion.
- Investigate The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Data Standard to track DEI data about who is applying to LCF and who is receiving funding - <https://www.funderscollaborativehub.org.uk/collaborations/dei-data-standard>
- Develop and publish a DEI action plan with key actions taken so far to make progress on the organisational commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion. These could be listed under the relevant pillar in ACF's Stronger Foundations report on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and underpin the development of the Foundations' next strategy. - <https://www.acf.org.uk/ACF/Research---resources/Resources%20content/Diversity-equity-inclusion.aspx>
- Consider working with an Investment Advisor to address any DEI issues in the LCF investment portfolio.
- Develop a People Plan to set out how to further diversity both the Board and staff team, both in terms of demographics and life experience.
- Continue collaborating with others to promote and implement DEI practices in grant-making and community activity.



# 10. Appendices

## Appendices

### 1. Survey copies

#### Community Questionnaire

#### **Leeds Community Foundation** LGBTQ+ Community Questionnaire

*Leeds Community Foundation is focused on creating a fair and inclusive society, aiming to be an equitable and inclusive grant maker that works alongside community groups to address inequalities and create opportunities. It recognises that some communities may face additional barriers and is therefore seeking to develop its understanding of how it can more widely enable and support community organisations and informal groups who wish to access grant funding.*

*As part of this process, LCF is undertaking a consultation and engagement project as the first phase of a capacity-building and support programme for the local LGBT+ community with the support of Hamilton Consulting. The second phase is in the first half of 2023 and will use the information from this first phase to put in place support that responds to the needs identified.*

*As an organisation or informal group working with the LGBT+ community we are seeking your support – will you please complete the attached survey? It seeks to gain insights into your experiences of accessing grant funding in Yorkshire. This will include the barriers and challenges and any support needs you have identified.*

*Your help in contributing to this project is greatly appreciated and will help Leeds Community Foundation ensure the various segments of the LGBT+ community in Yorkshire gets the support they need to access grant funding.*

*Please return the completed survey no later than the 9th of January 2023 to the following address:*

*C/o Simone Ivatts  
Leeds Community Foundation  
First Floor, 51a St Paul's Street,  
Leeds, LS1 2TE*

*Thank You.*

<b>1. Organisation Name</b>

<b>2. Organisation Type</b>
Choose as many as you want.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Registered charity, CIO or CIC
<input type="checkbox"/>	Charitable Incorporated Organisation
<input type="checkbox"/>	Community Interest Company
<input type="checkbox"/>	Company Limited by Guarantee
<input type="checkbox"/>	Unconstituted Community Group
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other

<b>3. What type of activities do you run?</b>
Choose as many as you want.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Youth Work
<input type="checkbox"/>	Health and Wellbeing
<input type="checkbox"/>	Information, advice and advocacy
<input type="checkbox"/>	Community activities and social events
<input type="checkbox"/>	Supporting older people
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other

<b>4. Which part(s) of the LGBT+ communities do you support or target?</b>
Choose as many as you want.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Bisexual People
<input type="checkbox"/>	Gay Men
<input type="checkbox"/>	Lesbians
<input type="checkbox"/>	Non-binary people
<input type="checkbox"/>	Queer people
<input type="checkbox"/>	Transgender people
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other

<b>5. Do you have a Management Committee or Board of Trustees?</b>
--

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes (Go to Question 6)
<input type="checkbox"/>	No (Go to Question 7)

6. If YES: How many people are on your Committee or Board?	

7. If NO: Who runs your group?	

8. When was your group set up? (Approximately)	

9. Did you get any help in setting up your group from another organisation?	
	Yes (Go to Question 11)
	No (Go to Question 10)

10. If NO: Who supported you?	

11. What is your average annual income?	
	Less than £5,000
	Between £5,000 and £25,000
	Between £25,000 and £50,000
	Between £50,000 and £100,000
	Between £100,000 and £250,000
	Between £250,000 and £1,000,000
	More than £1,000,000

12. Do you have any staff?	
	Yes (Go to Question 13)
	No (Go to Question 14)

13. If YES: How many full time equivalent staff do you employ?	

14. Approximately how many people do you support or come along to your activities and events?	

**15. Do you have regular volunteers other than Trustees or Management Committee members?**

	Yes (Go to Question 16)
	No (Go to Question 17)

**16. If YES: How many regular volunteers do you have?**

--

**17. Who is responsible for your fundraising?**

Choose as many as you want.

	Staff
	Volunteers
	Management Committee/Board of Trustees
	Other

**18. How are your activities funded?**

Choose as many as you want.

	Membership fees
	Donations
	Community fundraising events
	Grants
	Other

**19. Have you ever applied for grant funding in the past?**

	Yes (Go to Question 20)
	No (Go to Question 29)

**20. If YES: How many grant applications have you made previously?  
(Approximately)**

--



21. Which funder(s) did you to apply to?

(Please give as many examples as possible if you have made multiple applications for grants)

22. Was it for targeted funding to support the LGBT+ community?

Yes

No

Sometimes

23. How did you find the application process in general?

Easy

Manageable

Difficult

24. What factors made it easy, manageable or difficult for you?

Please give as much information as possible.

25. Were you successful in securing a grant(s)?	
	Yes (Go to Question 26)
	No (Go to Question 28)

26. If YES: Approximately how much were you awarded?

27. If YES: Approximately how much funding did you request?

28. If NO: What if any feedback did you get about not receiving a grant?

29. If you had increased capacity or skills would you be more likely to apply for grant funding in the future?	
	Definitely yes
	Probably yes
	Might or might not
	Probably not
	Definitely not

30. What if anything would prevent you in the future from applying for grant funding?	
	Don't need funding
	Don't know who to apply to
	Confused by complexity of application process or language/jargon used e.g. core costs, outputs and outcomes
	Don't have people with time to write applications
	Don't know how to write applications
	Expectation of rejection
	Don't have capacity or skills to manage the grant reporting requirements
	There is nothing that prevents us from applying for future grants
	Other

**31. What would make it easier for you to apply for a grant in the future?**

	Knowing that the funder explicitly welcomed applications from LGBT+ groups
	Support to increase our knowledge and skills in applying for grants through workshops
	Support to increase our knowledge and skills in applying for grants through webinars
	Support to increase your knowledge and skills in applying for grants through information leaflets or how to guides
	Regular news updates on available grant funding
	Volunteers with fundraising skills
	Funding to employ skilled fundraising staff
	Other

**32. Thinking about future grant-making to ensure that LGBT+ people are best supported, is there anything in particular you would like funders to offer?**

e.g. focus of funding, length of funding, size of grant, restricted vs unrestricted, changes to application process

**33. If grants were awarded for multiple years rather than one-year funding would it make you more likely to apply?**

	Definitely yes
	Probably yes
	Might or might not
	Probably not
	Definitely not

**34. What benefits do you think multi-year funding would give you?**

35. Are there any barriers to you applying for multi-year funding e.g. unwilling/unable to commit to future delivery?

--	--

36. Many grant opportunities available to community groups are for small amounts of funding e.g. less than £2,500. Does this smaller funding amount act as a barrier to applying for funding?

	Yes
	No

37. And taking into account your normal expenditure what level of annual grant funding would support your organisation the best?

	Less than £5,000
	Between £5,000 and £25,000
	Between £25,000 and £50,000
	More than £50,000

38. If Leeds Community Foundation or another support organisation were to put on training sessions for community groups, would you attend if the sessions were held?

	In person
	Virtual e.g. via Zoom/Teams
	In the daytime
	In the evening
	At the weekend
	Would not attend

39. Any other details about your experience of grant funding or information on what types of support you think would benefit your organisation to help secure grant funding in the future?

--	--

40. In order to be informed about future training opportunities or to receive information on available grant funding would you be willing to provide your contact details?

	Yes (Go to Question 41)
	Prefer not to say (Go to Question 43)

41. If YES: Please give your contact details below

First Name	
Last Name	
Phone Number	
Email	
Organisation / Company	

42. Thanks. Would you be willing to have a follow-up discussion with us about your responses to this survey if required or be willing to be contacted by Leeds Community Foundation about any future funding opportunities or consultations?

	Yes
	No

43. And finally in completing this survey you indicate that you understand and agree to the following statements:

	I confirm that I am a representative from a community organisation or group primarily supporting the LGBT+ community in Leeds
	I confirm that I am over the age of 18
	I confirm that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw the data I provide in this survey
	I understand that members of the research team and Leeds Community Foundation staff may have access to my anonymised responses
	I understand that my organisation will not be linked with the research materials and I will not be identified or identifiable in any documentation or reports that result from the research
	I understand that the data collected from me may be stored and used in relevant future research in an anonymised form.

	Yes
	No

**Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.**

**Leeds Community Foundation**  
**LGBTQ+ Community Grant Questionnaire**

*Leeds Community Foundation is focused on creating a fair and inclusive society, aiming to be an equitable and inclusive grant maker that works alongside community groups to address inequalities and create opportunities. It recognises that some communities may face additional barriers and is therefore seeking to develop its understanding of how it can more widely enable and support community organisations and informal groups who wish to access grant funding.*

*As part of this process, with the support of Hamilton Consulting, it is undertaking a consultation and engagement project as the first phase of a capacity building and support programme.*

*As an organisation that funds community groups in Yorkshire, we seek your support to develop our understanding of what other grantmakers in the area have or are doing to address issues of equality in access to funding, with a particular focus on all segments of the LGBT+ community.*

*This short survey seeks to gain insights into any work you have undertaken to support local LGBT+ community organisations. It should take no more than 15 minutes to complete.*

*Your help in contributing to this project is greatly appreciated. The resulting knowledge gained by the project will be shared by Leeds Community Foundation to help us learn and act together in order to be more effective and boost our collective impact on Yorkshire people and places.*

*Please return the completed survey no later than the 19th of December 2022 to the following address:*

*C/o Simone Ivatts  
Leeds Community Foundation  
First Floor, 51a St Paul's Street,  
Leeds, LS1 2TE*

*Thank You.*





1. Organisation Name	
2. How much do you normally award in grants in a year? (Approximately)	
3. How many grants do you make annually?	
4. Have you undertaken any previous studies or evaluation of the needs of the LGBT+ community with regard accessing your grant funding?	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes (Go to Question 6)
<input type="checkbox"/>	No (Go to Question 5)
5. If NO: Could you give more details regarding the decision not to look specifically at the LGBT+ community with regard to accessing your grant funding?	
6. If YES: Can you give some more details about any studies/evaluations?	
7. As an organisation do you feel you are aware of any specific support needs and barriers to funding for LGBT+ communities?	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes (Go to Question 8)
<input type="checkbox"/>	No (Go to Question 9)

8. Can you detail what you might think these are?

9. Are you planning any future work to identify the specific support needs or barriers faced by the LGBT+ community?

	Yes (Go to Question 10)
	No (Go to Question 11)

10. Can you provide details about what this work might entail?

11. Has your organisation ever made grants specifically targeted at LGBT+ communities?

	Yes
	No

12. What would you say is your experience of grant-making to LGBT+ communities?

	We have no experience or don't collect this data
	We have limited experience
	We are somewhat experienced
	We are very experienced

**13. Is there any further information you would like to give that you think would be useful for Leeds Community Foundation to help develop a capacity-building and support programme for local LGBT+ communities?**

--

**14. In order to be informed about the results of this study would you be willing to provide your contact details?**

	Yes (Go to Question 15)
	Prefer not to say (Go to Question 16)

**15. If YES: Please give your contact details below**

First Name	
Last Name	
Phone Number	
Email	
Organisation / Company	

**16. Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.**

In submitting your responses you confirm the following:

	That you are an authorised representative of your organisation for the purposes of this survey.
	That members of the research team and Leeds Community Foundation staff may have access to your anonymised responses.
	That your organisation will not be linked with the research materials and you will not be identified or identifiable in any documentation or reports that result from the research.
	The data collected from you may be stored and used in relevant future research in an anonymised form.

	Yes
	No

## 2. Survey Respondents

Community group survey respondents included:

- 3 Trans community groups
- 2 Older LGBT+ community groups
- 1 Queer community group
- 2 Gay Men's groups
- 2 Lesbian women groups
- 9 LGBTQ+ wider community groups

Grantmaker survey respondents:

- Esmee Fairbairn Foundation
- Scurrah Wainwright Charity
- The Shears Foundation
- SHINE
- Heart of England Community Foundation
- Allen Lane Foundation
- LGBT+ Consortium
- Two Ridings Community Foundation
- Woodsmith Foundation
- Community Foundation for Calderdale
- Sir George Martin Trust

Groups engaged in further one-to-one or group consultation included 4 groups with employed staff and 7 smaller community organisations

Funders engaged in further one-to-one or group consultation included 2 larger grant makers and 2 grant-making foundations.



# Enabling Leeds-based LGBT+ community organisations to access grant funding

Authors: Rob Hamilton and Alice Wallace  
on behalf of Hamilton Consult

With thanks to all research participants for their  
valuable contributions and insights to this study.