

## Young Westminster Foundation Brighter Futures Fund 2026-7

### Funding guidelines and priorities

| 1. Applicant Information Summary    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
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| <b>Background</b>                   | <p>This Funding was made available by Westminster City Council and Young Westminster Foundation's corporate and funding partners.</p> <p>The Fund is designed to <b>respond to the changing needs of children and young people in Westminster</b> and to work with other partners, including the <b>Youth and Family Hubs</b>, across Westminster (<a href="#">Early Help Strategy 2026-2029</a>).</p> <p>The overall aim of the funding aims to ensure that all "Children and Young People are happy and healthy, with access to a diverse range of activities and opportunities to support their physical, mental health and emotional wellbeing, addressing environmental challenges, and rising cost of living pressures", and that "All our young people feel listened to, empowered to take action and have opportunities to co-produce/co-design services that affect them" as set out in the <a href="#">Bi-Borough Children and Young People's Plan (westminster.gov.uk)</a></p> |
| <b>Type of funding</b>              | <p>This funding is solely for the provision of new or existing projects / activities / services / programmes (including pilots) for children and young people aged 0-25 in North West and South Westminster.</p> <p>Funding can be used to cover project/activity/programme costs, venue costs or capital equipment where these are directly related to the services.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Geographical Area of Benefit</b> | <p>Projects must benefit children and young people living in the <b>North West and South of the London Borough of Westminster</b>. *</p> <p>Projects delivering in North East Westminster, including the Church Street, Abbey Road, Maida Vale, Regent's Park, Little Venice, Marylebone and Hyde Park wards, are not eligible for the Brighter Futures Fund this year. This is because a separate new funding programme for North East Westminster, <a href="#">Building Safer Futures Fund</a> will open in October 2026, for 2027 delivery.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Eligible organisations</b>       | <p>This fund is open to organisations that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Are current <a href="#">members</a> of the Young Westminster Foundation and who have been a member for at least three months.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |

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|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Have been operating consistently in Westminster for at least six months.</li> <li>- Will deliver activities in Westminster that benefit children and young people in Westminster.</li> <li>- Are not delivering their project in North East Westminster (all NE applicants should apply to the <a href="#">Building Safer Futures Fund</a>).</li> <li>- If previously funded through the Brighter Futures Fund will have completed their project by December 2026.</li> <li>- Have an annual turnover of less than £2 million.</li> <li>- Are not currently receiving a YWF Small Grant - Core Funding 2026 award</li> </ul> <p>Organisations must demonstrate that they meet these criteria through the Eligibility Form before receiving access to the full application.</p> |                                                               |
| <b>Size of available grants</b> | <p>We offer one-year grants of up to £15,000.</p> <p>Brighter Futures Funding has become increasingly competitive. The average amount awarded last year was £10,000. We are trying to make this fund reach as many members as possible so we are not always able to fully fund larger proposals.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                               |
| <b>Timeframe</b>                | Open for Eligible Applications                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Monday 12th October 2026                                      |
|                                 | Online 1:1 Funding surgeries held*                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Between 12 <sup>th</sup> October and 22 <sup>nd</sup> October |
|                                 | Application Deadline                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Monday 2nd November 2026                                      |
|                                 | Panel Meeting                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Thursday 10 <sup>th</sup> December 2026                       |
|                                 | Applicants informed                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | w/c 14 <sup>th</sup> December 2026                            |
| <b>Completion</b>               | All grant funded projects must be completed within 12 months of the award or agreed start date (unless agreed otherwise).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                               |

## 2. We will not support applications for:

- Work that takes place outside of Westminster
- Individuals
- Political activities
- Activities promoting religious beliefs
- National organisations with no track record of delivery in Westminster
- Work that has already taken place
- Applicants that do not meet the eligibility criteria set out above.
- Organisations in financial difficulty.

## 3. Funding Priorities

**The Brighter Futures Fund supports projects, activities and services that offer a diverse range of activities and opportunities to support children and young people's physical, mental health and emotional wellbeing.**

We welcome application for projects which meet our funding priorities. Projects that:

- Support children and young people's physical, mental health and emotional wellbeing.
- Promote new skills and experiences
- Respond to a **local need**
- Are delivered by organisations with **strong connections** to and understanding of the Westminster community.
- Are **wanted and needed** by children & young people
- Are **accessible to all children and young people** including those with additional / special educational needs and groups who may face additional barriers to participation, such as looked after children, young carers, refugees and asylum seekers.

#### 4. What Makes a Strong Application (quality criteria):

We wish to support high quality projects. Strong applications will demonstrate:

- Youth voice: Children and young people will help shape the projects or activity (e.g. through age appropriate consultation, feedback or co design) to ensure the project is accessible, affordable, wanted and valued by children and young people.
- Evaluation: We want to see how
  - (a) the project aligns with your overall aims and objectives
  - (b) you use data from your project to inform and improve your practices
- Working in partnership: we would like to see how the work you are applying for is embedded in the local context. This means we would like you to demonstrate how your organisation works with others, in particular the Family and Youth Hubs, learns from others or shares resources with others to ensure you give young people the best service possible, minimising duplication of services.

#### 5. How Funding Decisions Will Be Made

All eligible applications will be assessed against the **funding priorities** and **quality criteria** above. Where there are more fundable applications than funding, the panel may also take the following factors into account:

- Whether an organisation has received Brighter Futures funding in consecutive years.
- Funding a diverse range of provision for children and young people across Westminster with a balance of activities, themes, locations, geographical spread and target groups.
- Supporting organisations that reach children and young people who may otherwise have limited access to opportunities.

#### 6. Application Process

##### Eligibility Check (New for 2026/27)

To make the application process as straightforward as possible, all organisations must complete a short **Eligibility Check Form** before accessing the full application form. The Eligibility Check Form will take less than 4 minutes to complete.

In the current funding climate, where demand often is greater than the resources available, we want to ensure organisations can quickly determine whether the Brighter Futures Fund is the right fit before investing significant time in an application.

The form will cover key eligibility requirements, including:

- YWF membership and length of membership
- Delivery within Westminster
- Previous Brighter Futures Fund grants
- Safeguarding arrangements
- Organisational turnover
- Current YWF grant funding

Only organisations that meet the eligibility criteria will be able to complete a full application.

### **Application Form**

- Organisations that meet the eligibility requirements will then be able to complete the application form. Please note: the SurveyMonkey form does not allow applicants to save and return to draft responses. Therefore, you will need to complete and submit your application in one sitting. We suggest that you prepare your answers beforehand. You can click back and forth through the form pages to view and check the questions you need to answer or you can view the questions in the form [here](#).

### **Assessment and Panel**

- YWF will undertake due diligence and assessment of applications against the eligibility criteria, funding priorities and quality criteria. Applicants may be asked to provide additional information if required.
- Funding decisions are made by a **Grants Panel** which will include local young people, representatives from Westminster City Council, One Westminster, corporate investors and other local funders.
- Partnership Evidence: Where partnership working is proposed with a youth hub or a school **we expect to see a letter or other evidence of support** for the proposed project from the partner. If this is not provided, then your application will not be shortlisted as this is important to understand the likelihood of success for work in new settings.

### **7. Guidance of Using AI Tools**

You can use AI tools to support your funding application, not write it for you. While it can provide a useful starting point, the content it generates is not always as strong as it may seem.

The strongest applications are authentic and tell the story of your community and how you want to support them. Applications that are too generic may be at a disadvantage.

Funded organisations are responsible for checking the accuracy of information they share in their application.

## **8. Support Available:**

The Brighter Futures Fund is designed to support a diverse range of organisations delivering valuable work for children and young people across Westminster and as a result receives high numbers of applications – each year exceeding the last.

Potential applicants are invited to join a 1:1 funding surgery with one of our team members.

To book a slot, please email Hazel on [hazel@youngwestminster.com](mailto:hazel@youngwestminster.com)

### **\*Locality Areas by Ward**

#### **North West Westminster Wards:**

Bayswater

Harrow Road

Lancaster Gate

Queens Park

Westbourne

#### **South Westminster Wards:**

Knightsbridge & Belgravia Vincent Square

Pimlico North

Pimlico South

St James's

Vincent Square

West End

**North East Westminster Wards** *(If your delivery takes place in one of these wards, please do not apply for Brighter Futures Fund but instead apply to [Building Safer Futures Fund](#))*

Abbey Road

Church Street

Little Venice

Maida Vale

Marylebone Hyde Park

Regent's Park