

Macmillan CARE Grants Programme

Culture • Agency • Respect • Equity

Themed Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Updated: 16/12/2025

To ensure all applicants have access to the same information, this FAQs document brings together queries received via the inbox, grants information webinars, and support calls.

Questions have been organised by theme, to make navigation easier.

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Eligibility and Organisation Requirements

We're a small organisation – can we still apply?

Yes. We welcome applications from organisations of all sizes, as long as you meet the eligibility criteria. What matters most is your connection to the community, your idea, and your ability to deliver the project.

We don't currently work on cancer – can we apply?

You don't need to be a cancer-focused organisation, but you do need to show relevant experience – for example, working with marginalised communities on health equity, running dementia services, or improving cultural responsiveness among healthcare professionals. What matters is your ability to address barriers to cancer care.

Can we apply if we're already funded by Macmillan?

Yes, as long as the new project is completely separate from your existing Macmillan-funded work, there's no duplication of costs, you can manage multiple projects, and you're up to date with reporting requirements.

Our organisation is based outside the UK but works in the UK – are we eligible?

No. Lead applicants must be UK-based organisations. However, if you work in partnership with a UK-based lead organisation, you could be a delivery partner.

We're an NHS organisation – can we apply?

NHS trusts and hospitals cannot apply as lead applicants. However, you can be a delivery partner in a project led by a community organisation. We actively encourage NHS-community partnerships.

What does "appropriate governance" mean for different organisation sizes?

At minimum, you need:

- 3 unrelated trustees/directors
- 2 unrelated bank signatories
- Safeguarding policy and procedures
- Basic financial controls, such as:
 - Two signatories for payments over a set amount
 - Regular bank reconciliations
 - Receipts and records kept for all income and spending

Is the funding only available to organisations with at least three years of operation?

No. Newer organisations are welcome to apply. You do not need to have been operating for three years to be eligible, as long as you can meet the programme criteria and demonstrate the capacity to deliver your proposed project.

We are a large, national charity – can we still apply?

Yes. Organisations of any size, including large national charities, are eligible to apply as long as they meet the programme criteria.

Our staff are employed through a university, and legally our organisation operates as part of one of the university's academic departments. Are we eligible?

While universities have charitable status as an exempt charity under the Charities Act 2011, this particular grant programme is designed to support community-based organisations within the Voluntary, Community, Faith, and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) sector. The aim is to direct funding into local communities and grassroots initiatives.

Because of this focus, universities do not fall within the intended scope of the programme, and unfortunately, your organisation would not be eligible to apply.

Is there financial eligibility criteria?

As part of the CARE Grant application process, applicants are required to submit a project budget and information about their organisation's finances. This helps us understand the organisation's financial capacity to deliver the proposed project.

Further details are provided in the Applicant Information Pack, which is available on the CARE Grant website: <https://www.macmillan.org.uk/about-us/what-we-do/macmillan-funding-grants/care-grants>

Budget and Finance

What counts as "core costs" in the 15% allowance?

Core costs are overheads that benefit your whole organisation, not just this project. Examples:

- **Can include in 15%:** rent, utilities, insurance, senior management time, HR/finance support, IT systems and on-going software licensing or subscription costs that support your organisation's overall operations
- **Don't include in 15%:** project staff salaries, project-specific equipment, evaluation costs (These are "direct costs" and should be in your main project budget)

Can we include contingency in the budget?

Yes, including a modest contingency for unexpected costs is a sensible approach, provided you clearly explain what it's for and how it will be used in the Budget Template. For projects taking place over 2 years, we also encourage you to factor in inflation.

Can we pay ourselves to develop the application?

We're unable to cover application preparation costs as grants can only fund future activities. However, we have support available if you need help completing the form:

Use our [application support request form](#) to:

- Request the form in a different format (e.g. large print, Easy Read)
- Arrange translation of the information or guidance
- Book a 30-minute call to get help with understanding any part of the application
- For any other questions, email CommunityGrants@macmillan.org.uk

What if our project costs more than £150,000?

You can apply for up to £150,000 from Macmillan and show other funding sources in your budget.

However, if your project relies on additional funding that isn't yet confirmed, explain your contingency plan when answering the application question: **"What risks do you anticipate in delivery of this project and how are you mitigating those?"** Tell us what you'll do if that funding doesn't come through – for example, whether you'll scale back certain activities, phase the project differently, or find alternative resources.

Can we move money between budget lines once funded?

Small changes (under 10% of any budget category) are fine – just tell us in your progress report. Larger changes need approval from your Macmillan Contact before you make them. We're usually flexible if there's a good reason.

Is the £1.5 million for the whole of the UK or per region?

The £1.5 million is the total funding available for this pilot grant, across the whole of the UK. Individual grants will range from £50,000 to £150,000.

Please could you clarify if the total maximum funding available for 2 years is capped at £150,000 i.e. £75,000/year for 2 years? Or as a minimum, £25,000/year for 2 years totalling £50,000.

The maximum funding is not restricted by a per-year limit. The total amount available is between £50,000 and £150,000, and this can be allocated across one or two years according to the needs and timeline of your project.

This means there is no fixed annual cap (such as £75,000 per year). Instead, applicants should allocate the funding in a way that best supports their project delivery and budget plan.

If funds can't be redistributed to other organisations, does this mean we can't use an independent external evaluator?

No, you can still use an independent external evaluator. The Applicant Information Pack confirms that evaluation and learning costs are eligible for funding, including support provided by either internal or external evaluators. We recommend allocating between 3–10% of your total grant budget to evaluation.

Further details are available in the Applicant Information Pack on the CARE Grant website: <https://www.macmillan.org.uk/about-us/what-we-do/macmillan-funding-grants/care-grants>

Project Scope and Themes

Can we apply under more than one theme?

Yes, many issues overlap. For example, a project on shared decision-making for people from ethnic minority communities addresses both cultural responsiveness and shared decision-making. Please note that addressing more than one theme won't make your application stronger than one focused on a single theme. What matters is the quality and clarity of your approach, not the number of themes you cover. Just be clear how you'll address each theme.

Can this grant be used to support prevention work for under-represented groups?

Pre-diagnosis activities (screening, early detection) are outside the scope of this programme as the focus is on post-diagnosis care.

Can projects include an element of early detection/screening if it's not the sole aim?

Projects may include elements of early detection or screening as long as these are part of a broader programme and not the primary focus.

The majority of the grant must support activities that benefit people after a cancer diagnosis. In your application, please clearly outline why early-detection components are relevant to your project aims and how they support the themes and priorities of the fund.

Is the CARE grants programme exclusively for projects supporting adults/young adults, or would you also consider applications that benefit children, young people and young adults?

The CARE Grants programme does not fund projects for children. Macmillan recognises that there are other charities better placed to support children. However, if your project focuses on young adults and aligns with our funding priorities, we encourage you to apply to the Macmillan CARE Grants programme.

When you say 'community-led approaches' are you looking to fund physical communities i.e. local/place based organisations? Or will you fund communities with shared experiences who might be geographically dispersed? Or digital communities?

We're open to all of those approaches. By community-led, we simply mean that the people the project is designed to support should have a meaningful role in shaping, leading, or guiding the work. This can be a place-based community, a community connected by shared experiences, or a digital community, all are eligible as long as the project is genuinely led by the community it serves.

I understand Macmillan already run a Deaf Cancer Support Project. Would support/training for healthcare services to be able to meet the needs of deaf people be eligible, or is this something Macmillan already does?

Each project will be assessed on its own merits, regardless of any previous work in this area carried out by Macmillan.

If you're already funded by Macmillan, you can still apply, as long as the new project is completely separate from your existing Macmillan-funded work, there's no duplication of costs, you're confident you can manage multiple projects, and you're up to date with all reporting requirements. Please note that we're also unable to fund any retrospective costs.

Is the grant open to community research initiatives, or is it intended solely for developing new services or care pathways? Are collaborations with universities or research centres allowed?

The CARE Grants programme is primarily intended to support the delivery of new or improved services and care pathways, rather than to fund academic research projects.

While action research is within scope, this refers to practical, project-based approaches that are embedded within service delivery. Examples include engaging communities to co-design new services, testing new ways of working, and using learning from those activities to improve practice. The primary focus must be on delivery and tangible improvements for people affected by cancer.

Organisations may collaborate with universities, research centres, NHS bodies, or other partners, provided that the lead applicant meets the programme's eligibility criteria. Any research-related activity within a partnership must be clearly linked to service delivery and improvement, rather than standalone academic research.

Can this funding be used to support academic research?

No. The programme is not designed to fund formal academic research. Funding academic research would require a robust peer-review process, in line with sector best practice, to ensure it addresses gaps in the evidence base and delivers meaningful impact. As this programme does not include such a process, traditional academic research projects are not eligible.

We are seeking community-led projects that address unfairness in cancer care across one of our three themes, with a strong emphasis on activities that create real change for people affected by cancer.

Funding Duration and Timeline

Does the funding cover one year or more?

Grants can be for up to one year or up to two years. You'll be asked to select your project duration when completing the application form. If applying for a two-year grant, please show Year 1 and Year 2 costs separately in your budget template.

What is the expected start date for projects?

We hope to confirm successful awards in the week beginning 9th March. Following this, projects would be expected to start shortly afterwards, typically within 4–6 weeks, to allow time for final agreements and any initial setup.

Is there an expectation that the project will be sustained by another funding source once the Macmillan funding ends and should this be addressed in the application?

This depends on the project itself. Some projects may be designed as standalone initiatives for the full 1 or 2 years of funding, while others might aim to create changes that can be integrated into existing services. You can address sustainability in your application if it's relevant, but it isn't a mandatory requirement for all projects.

Partnerships and Collaboration

Do we need NHS partnerships in place before we apply?

No. However, if partnerships are essential to your project, you should show that you've made contact and there's interest. A letter of support from potential partners strengthens applications.

Partnerships are mentioned frequently, please confirm what a partnership is?

Partnership refers to working collaboratively with another organisation or group to deliver your project.

Delivery partnerships are encouraged, and if they are essential to your proposal, you should demonstrate that you have made contact and that there is genuine interest in working together. Including a letter of support from potential partners will help strengthen your application.

Please note that there must be one lead community-organisation applicant for the CARE Grants. Additionally, CARE Grant funding cannot be used to redistribute money to individuals or other organisations.

Are consortium applications eligible?

Consortium applications are **not eligible**. However, delivery partnerships are encouraged. If your proposal relies on collaboration with other organisations, you should demonstrate that you have made contact and that there is genuine interest in working together. Including letters of support from potential partners can strengthen your application. Please note: there must be one lead community organisation applying for the CARE Grant, and grant funding cannot be used to redistribute money to individuals or other organisations.

Can partnerships of community organisations apply with a lead partner?

Yes. Delivery partnerships between community organisations are encouraged, provided there is one lead community organisation that submits the application and takes overall responsibility for the grant.

If your proposal relies on collaboration with other organisations, you should demonstrate that you have made contact and that there is genuine interest in working together. Including letters of support from partner organisations can help strengthen your application.

Please note that CARE Grant funding cannot be used to redistribute money to individuals or other organisations.

Will you consider a model with a lead organisation and delivery partners who invoice the lead?

Yes, we will accept applications from organisations that meet our eligibility criteria and who choose to partner with other organisations to deliver the project's activities. However, we would expect that the application clearly sets out:

- The role and responsibilities of the lead organisation
- The delivery partners involved, with details of their specific contributions
- A full budget breakdown, indicating where partners are providing a service or providing match funding

This information should be provided at the application stage to ensure transparency. Delivery partners may invoice the lead organisation for the services they deliver as part of the project, but the overall accountability for the grant will remain with the lead organisation.

We also encourage applications where delivery partners contribute financially to the proposed programme, as this demonstrates shared commitment and the potential for increased impact.

Do I need a data sharing agreement with NHS or other delivery partners?

It depends on your project. If you will be sharing data with NHS or other delivery partner organisations, you may need a formal data sharing agreement in place. It's a good idea to think about this when planning your project and explain in your application how you would manage data securely. If your project is funded, we are open to exploring ways we can support you in putting these agreements in place.

What if our project partners pull out after we're funded?

Get in touch with your Macmillan Contact as soon as possible. We'll want to understand

the situation and hear your thoughts on how to move forward, whether that's adapting the project, finding alternative partners, or another solution. This is why we ask about risks in the application – showing you've thought about plan B is helpful.

Geographic Scope and Delivery

Can our project be delivered nationally or does it need to be local?

Both are fine. We want a mix of local projects that go deep into one community and national projects that reach more people or influence policy. What matters is that your scale matches your capacity and resources.

Can we apply for a project across England and Wales with tailored approaches for each country?

Absolutely – this is exactly what the CARE grants are designed for!

Can the project involve work in hospitals or GP surgeries?

Yes, if the healthcare provider agrees. You'll need their permission and appropriate insurance. We're interested in projects delivered in the settings that work best for the communities you serve – whether that's healthcare premises, community spaces, or both.

Application Process

Can we apply for more than one project?

Yes, you can submit multiple applications for different projects. Each will be assessed on its own merits. However, think carefully about your capacity to deliver if both are funded.

How long should our application be?

The form has word limits for each question. You don't need to use every word – clear, concise answers are better than long ones.

Can we apply for both grants (Macmillan Support and CARE grants) for two different projects?

Yes, you can apply for both grants as long as they are for separate projects.

Can we submit the application form in Welsh, Gaelic or another language?

Applications must be submitted in English.

However, we have translated this Information Pack into Welsh and can also translate it into other community languages on request.

Contact us at least **3 weeks** before the deadline to arrange language support:

Complete our support request form: <https://forms.office.com/e/712FeP2Skn> or email: CommunityGrants@macmillan.org.uk

Please note: If your application is successful, reporting and learning events will also be in English (with interpretation support where possible).

What if we miss the deadline?

To be fair to all applicants, we can only consider applications received by the deadline.

How do we know if our application has been received?

You'll get an automatic email confirmation when you submit. If you don't receive this within 24 hours, contact CommunityGrants@macmillan.org.uk to check.

I've completed the application using the Word document version of the form and have sent it over - will this count as my official submission, or do I still need to complete the Microsoft Form?

The Word document is a planning tool only, provided because the Microsoft Form doesn't allow applicants to save progress. It's designed to help you prepare and refine your answers in advance, but the official submission must be made through the Microsoft Form so that your application can be properly recorded and assessed within our review processes.

Please copy and paste your answers into the Microsoft Form here:

<https://forms.office.com/e/2FhEnGS9Pe>

This will ensure your application flows through our assessment system correctly.

Is it possible to arrange a one-to-one call to discuss my proposal before I submit?

Please note that to manage capacity and to offer a completely fair application process, we're unable to offer individual calls to organisations at this stage, however we are running Grants Information Webinars. Please see the [Macmillan CARE Grants webpage](#) for more information and to register.

These are opportunities to hear more about the CARE Grant and other Macmillan grants currently available for applicants and should include time to answer general questions.

If you have any specific questions in the meantime please do feel free to send them through via email and we'll do our best to assist.

Support Available

What support is available to help us apply?

Before you start:

- Eligibility checker – A quick online quiz to check if your organisation and project meet the criteria: [Check eligibility](#)
- Grants information webinars – Join us online to learn about the CARE Grant and other Macmillan grants. You can ask questions and hear from the team.
 - Tuesday 2nd December 2025 at 11:00am – 12:00pm. [Click here to register](#)
 - Thursday 11th December 2025 at 6:00pm – 7:00pm. [Click here to register](#)
 - Thursday 8th January 2026 at 3:30pm – 4:30pm. [Click here to register](#).

While you're applying:

- [Application guidance](#) – Detailed guidance document walking you through the process step by step

- [Budget template](#) – Excel template with guidance notes to help you plan and present your costs

Need additional support?

Complete our [application support request form](#) to:

- Request the form or guidance in a different format (e.g. large print, Easy Read)
- Arrange translation of information or guidance
- Book a 30-minute call to get help with understanding any part of the application
- Get technical help with submitting the online form

Or email us: CommunityGrants@macmillan.org.uk

Office hours: Monday to Friday, 9am to 4:30pm