

Macmillan Q Lab

Team Application Guidance

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Application process and timeline

How to apply – step by step

Step 1: Check you're eligible by completing our online [eligibility quiz](#):

This quick quiz will tell you if your organisation meets the basic criteria.

Step 2: Read this Team Application Guidance along with the information pack

(Available on the Macmillan Q Lab webpage [Macmillan Q Lab | Macmillan Cancer Support](#)))

Make sure you understand what we're looking for and whether your team is a good fit.

Step 3: Join the webinar

We're running an Information Webinar on the following date:

- 5th August 2026, 12-1pm

This will be an opportunity to meet the team and ask any questions. No registration is required, please use the link to join: [Macmillan Q Lab information call | Microsoft Teams](#)

Step 4: Complete the application form

Link to the online application form: [Macmillan Q Lab Application Form – Fill in form](#)

⚠ Important – Please read before starting

We do not expect or recommend that anyone completes the application form directly online in one go. This is because the online form does not automatically save your progress. If you close your browser or lose your internet connection, any unsubmitted work will be lost. We recommend that you complete the following steps:

1. Download the Word version first (available on the Macmillan Q Lab webpage [Macmillan Q Lab | Macmillan Cancer Support](#))
2. Complete your answers offline – this allows you to save, review, and share your responses with colleagues
3. Copy and paste your final answers into the online form only when you are ready to submit

The application form includes questions about:

- Eligibility
- Your organisation's details
- Primary contact details
- Aims and background information
- Collaboration and make up of team

Step 5: Submit by the deadline

Please submit your application via the online form by 11.45pm on **14th of September**.

We will send you an automatic confirmation email once we have received your application.

Step 6: Assessment of applications

Assessment period: 15th September – 19th October 2026

During assessment, we might contact you to:

- Make sure we have properly understood something in your application
- Ask for more information about something you have written

This is a normal part of the process – it doesn't mean there's a problem with your application. Please make sure someone from your organisation can respond to any queries during this period. If your main contact is not available, just let us know an alternative contact.

Step 7: Decision-making

Applications will be assessed and scored against the following key areas that your team need to demonstrate:

- Your team will have the ability to enact change within the system
- How you will effectively collaborate across organisations in your team

- Operational responsibility to effectively create change within the system
- Skills such as data and insight, and experience of participatory approaches is desirable
- A host organisation who can coordinate the funds to other organisations involved
- Readiness for collaboration across organisations and sectors, including a willingness to interrogate and work through power dynamics and work as equal partners.
- Currently working or has clear plans to work with people with lived experience, particularly marginalised groups
- A commitment to working with communities who experience the poorest cancer outcomes, experiences and access

A decision-making panel will review all eligible applications and make final decisions.

Step 8: Shortlisting and interview

Applications passing the first round of shortlisting will be invited to have a conversation with the Macmillan Q Lab team. More information about what to expect will be provided with the invitation.

If your application is **shortlisted**, we will ask for some additional documents. These will include for example:

- Due diligence questionnaire
- Three years of annual accounts (or all available accounts if your organisation is less than three years old)
- Governing document (constitution)
- Safeguarding policy
- Bank details (these will be asked for at the outcome stage from successful applicants only)

Step 9: Outcomes communicated

If you're **successful**, we will send you:

- Grant Agreement contract
- Information about monitoring requirements
- Invitation to the onboarding call and workshops

If you're unsuccessful, feedback will be provided.

Who can apply

Teams are made up of community organisations and public sector organisations working together to bring cancer care closer to home.

System teams **must** be made up of community organisations (at least one), and public sector organisations (at least one) working together. We welcome teams who include more than two organisations, and collaborations that include organisations outside of the public and third sector, as long as teams meet the minimum requirement.

Examples of public sector organisations:

- NHS Trusts
- Integrated Care Boards

- NHS Territorial Boards
- Integration Joint Boards
- Cancer Alliances
- Managed Clinical Networks
- Wales Cancer Network
- Northern Ireland Cancer Network
- Local government body

Examples of community organisations:

- Registered charity
- Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)
- Community Interest Company (CIC)
- Company Limited by Guarantee
- Faith-based organisation

Eligibility criteria

- Your organisations are based in the UK
- Your team has at least one community organisation and one statutory organisation
- Your team has senior leadership sponsorship for involvement in the Lab
- Your team includes people with lived experience of cancer or you have a plan in place to achieve this
- Your team can commit to the time required to participate fully in the Lab
- The Host organisation can coordinate, and has the mechanisms in place to distribute funds to other organisations involved

Selection criteria

- Demonstrate meaningful partnerships and how organisations will work together across community and statutory and people affected by cancer
- Show that relevant people and skill sets are involved or available to work together over the next 9 months
- Understanding of the challenge in a local context, how it affects marginalised groups and opportunity that has motivated being involved in Q Lab Macmillan
- Commitment to Q Lab Macmillan process
- Openness and transparency in ways of working and decision-making
- A commitment to iterative learning, experimentation, and reflection
- Valuing diverse perspectives, experiences, and expertise
- Actively sharing learning and insight

Can we apply if we are already funded by Macmillan?

If you are already funded by Macmillan, you can still apply for Macmillan Q Lab if:

- Your new project is completely separate from existing Macmillan-funded work
- There's no duplication of costs
- You can manage multiple projects at once

- You're up to date with all Macmillan reporting requirements

What we can and cannot fund through this grant

What we can fund

Staff and people costs:

- Salaries for project staff (including recruitment costs)
- Freelance trainers, facilitators and consultants
- Fees for experts by experience and community facilitators
- Training and supervision for project staff

Project delivery costs (examples of possible activities):

- Training design and delivery
- Reverse mentoring programmes
- Action research and testing new approaches
- Awareness-raising or promotional activities that aim to influence change
- Partnership development with NHS, social care or other organisations
- Co-design workshops with communities
- Resource development (materials, tools, accessible formats)
- Venue hire, equipment hire, refreshments
- Project overheads (e.g. public liability insurance)
- Accessibility accommodations (BSL interpreters, transport, etc.)

Organisational costs:

- Up to 15% of total project costs for overhead/core costs (such as rent, utilities, management time that supports the project)

What we cannot fund

Costs that shouldn't be in a grant application:

- Statutory funding replacement (costs that should be covered by the NHS or local authorities)
- Retrospective costs (anything already paid for, including application preparation costs)
- Core organisational costs beyond the 15% allowance
- Debt payments, loans, interest payments or building up reserves

Activities outside programme scope:

- Pre-diagnosis activities (screening, early detection) – this programme focuses on post-diagnosis care
- Political lobbying or party-political activity
- Activities primarily promoting religion
- Work that isn't legally charitable
- Activities generating private profit
- Individual sponsorship or redistributing grants to individuals or other organisations
- Activities where people are excluded on the basis of religion, sexual orientation, sex, or ethnicity (unless the issue is group-specific and this approach is justified)
- Activities that are not legally compliant (for example, lacking appropriate safeguarding, insurance or data protection measures)

Capital and other excluded costs:

- Buildings, renovations or major equipment
- Purchase of vehicles
- Purchase of alcohol
- Travel or activities outside the United Kingdom

Grant Activities Reporting

The Host, in collaboration with the local team and Sub-Grantees will complete a Reflective Learning Report at months four and eight using the template provided by Macmillan after grant award. An overview of the questions in the Reflective Learning Report are available in Appendix A - Reflective Learning Report.

Appendix A - Reflective Learning Report

Macmillan Q Lab: Reflective Learning Report

This report is an opportunity to pause and reflect on your team's learning. It is not an evaluation or performance report. We are interested in how your thinking is developing, what you are learning through testing ideas and working across your system, and what this means for your next steps.

Please answer each section as openly as possible. Reflections on challenges and things that haven't gone to plan are just as valuable as successes.

1. Where are we now?

Briefly describe where your project is at.

- What have you been focusing on since the Lab began?
- What progress have you made?

2. What are we learning?

Reflect on your learning so far.

You might consider:

- What have you learned about the challenge you're trying to address?
- What has surprised you?
- How has your thinking changed?
- What are you learning about working across organisations?

3. What's changing?

What changes are you beginning to notice?

This could include changes in:

- relationships or partnerships
- ways of working
- understanding of people's needs
- testing new ideas
- confidence or capability
- opportunities for improving cancer care closer to home

What evidence or examples have you seen?

4. What's challenging us?

What challenges or barriers have you experienced?

How have you responded?

What have these challenges taught you?

5. What's next?

Looking ahead to the next phase of your work:

- What are your priorities?
- What will you build on?
- What support would help?
- What are you most curious to learn next?

One sentence reflection

Complete this sentence:

[The most important thing we've learned so far is] ...