



Independent
Age

Grants Fund

Overview

Reaching older people most likely to be missing out – now and beyond the coronavirus pandemic

The coronavirus has changed life for everyone in the UK, but older people are amongst the hardest hit. It is humbling to see the huge efforts that are being made across the UK to make sure that older people get the practical help they need and can stay safe, healthy, connected and contributing during a long period of socially isolating. Despite the challenges they are facing, organisations are keeping vital services running, providing advice, support, opportunities, and practical help. And many thousands of people have volunteered to deliver food, medicines, and day to day essentials, to keep in regular contact with older people and to make sure as many as possible are involved in exercise and social contact through digital means. The collective national effort to raise and distribute emergency funds is in full swing to help organisations weather the storm, but many funds are oversubscribed, leaving some services without adequate resources to support even the most vulnerable older people.

In response, our trustees have decided to release £2 million from Independent Age's own funds to help smaller organisations across the UK who are working with some of the older people hardest hit by the virus.

Our priorities

Sadly, we will not be able to help every organisation that is struggling to meet increasing needs in their communities. We have decided to begin by supporting work with two groups of older people, who can too easily miss out:

Older people living in particularly complex and challenging situations

We want to help organisations providing targeted, practical services for older people who are managing additional difficulties in their lives. They may have no network of family, friends or community to call on; have a disability or long-term health condition; be caring for a dependant adult with learning disabilities or dementia or be facing other circumstances that make it harder to manage at this challenging time. We want to help make sure that they can get the support they need to stay safe, healthy and connected with others during the difficult months ahead.

Older people in danger of being out of sight and out of mind

We want to help organisations connecting with older people who are very isolated and most at risk of missing out on the help available from government or charities (like our own) that serve a very wide client group. They may be part of an isolated, neglected or very poor community, be facing stigma or discrimination or have needs which make it hard for them to access services, perhaps because they are homeless, live with HIV or are hidden from view in an abusive relationship. We want to help make sure that the needs of these groups of older people are understood and met.

There will be four rounds of grant-making, with £500,000 available in each of June, July, August and September 2020. We hope to be able to make up to 200 grants from the Fund over this period.

We hope very much that with the generosity of partners in independent foundations and business, we can build the Independent Age Grants Fund up to £5 million, so we can learn more about the needs and priorities of smaller organisations across the UK and offer more funding to support this vital work later in the year and into 2021. None of this money will go to Independent Age – it will all be distributed to smaller organisations working with older people on the ground.

Who can apply?

Your organisation must be registered as a charity with The Charity Commission for England and Wales, The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland, or The Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR).

You must have at least one paid member of staff (part-time is fine) and an annual income of £1 million or less (averaged across the last three financial years).

You must be already working with older people in one or both of our two priority areas – older people living in particularly complex and challenging situations and older people in danger of being out of sight and out of mind.

And you must know what you want to do – or do better – to help make an immediate difference to their lives over the next six months.

Organisations that do not specialise in work with older people are welcome to apply – but you must already be providing services for older people as part of your work and to be able to tell us what you have achieved.

How much money can you ask for and for how long?

We can make grants of between £5,000 and £15,000 for up to six months. Please only ask for what you really need so that the money can be shared by as many organisations as possible across our sector.

What kind of work will we support?

We will support any kind of work that you believe will make a real and immediate difference to older people living in particularly complex and challenging situations or older people in danger of being out of sight and out of mind. You know your communities and the older people that need help – we trust your judgement about what the priorities are and where money is best spent. And we understand that you may need to change your plans as the situation develops over the next months.

Who can't we help?

We are sorry but, at this stage, we cannot accept requests for funding for:

- Any organisation that isn't a registered charity in one of the four nations of the UK.
- Work that is not specifically targeted towards older people in our two priority areas. We regret that we are not able to support some of the broad services that older people's organisations provide for all older people. This is hugely important work, but we simply don't have enough funds at this stage to help meet this need.
- Organisations who do not already have substantial experience of working in our two priority areas – older people living in particularly complex and challenging situations or older people in danger of being out of sight and out of mind.
- Charities who do not have at least one full or part-time staff member – again, we are sorry that we don't have the funds available to support the many smaller groups doing such great work on the ground. But we may be able to help you in other ways (www.independentage.org/get-support)
- Charities with an annual income of £1 million or more (averaged over the last three financial years).
- Applications for work outside the UK.

Other services and support from Independent Age

We provide free information and advice for older people and their families on care and support, money and benefits and health and mobility, along with friendship services to relieve loneliness. We also use the knowledge and insight gained from our frontline services to challenge poor care and campaign for a fair deal for older people – a reasonable standard of living, fair access to information and an opportunity to contribute to their communities. Further details on how to access this support can be found here www.independentage.org/about-us/how-we-help

Alongside the Independent Age Grants Fund we would like to understand where else we could support you in your work in the future. The application will ask if you would be interested in Independent Age getting in touch to discuss other areas of support such as training, events, fundraising, safeguarding and social media.