**Information Pack: Hong Kong Community Fund**

1. **Introduction**

The Greater London Authority (GLA) is inviting applications from the London voluntary and community sector to Hong Kong Community Fund.

There are two types of grants available:

* **Development grants** of between £1,000 and £10,000
* **Impact grants** of between £10,001 and £20,000.

The Hong Kong Community Fund is targeted at non-established, newly established, or smaller grassroot groups or organisations run by and/or for Hongkongers and their partners. Whilst Hong Kong-led groups and organisations will be prioritised, we also welcome applications from other organisations, particularly those who are experienced working on one of the intersectional needs identified below. Organisations and groups should be able to identify activities that will have a positive impact on the lives of new arrivals from Hong Kong during the project timeline, and test ideas of activities that can contribute to their welcome and integration in London.

Applications are accepted from 22nd February 2023 and the deadline is 27th March 2023 (9am).

1. **Programme Background**
   1. **About the Fund**

Following China’s imposition of the National Security Law on the people of Hong Kong in July 2020, the UK government introduced a new immigration route for Hong Kong British National (Overseas) (Hong Kong BN(O)) status holders, providing the opportunity for them and their family members to live, work and study in the UK. The UK government announced the expansion of the eligibility of this immigration route in February 2022, allowing younger Hongkongers born to BN(O) status holders on or after 1 July 1997 to independently apply for the BN(O) route. The UK government’s impact assessment [[1]](#footnote-2)in October 2020 estimated that between 123,000 and 153,000 BN(O) status holders and their dependants could take up the route in its first year, with between 258,000 and 322,000 over five years. So far, since January 2021 to end of September 2022, there have been 150,600 applications for the visa, of which we estimate that more than 35,000 people have chosen to live in London[[2]](#footnote-3).

The Welcoming Hongkongers Fund was created in 2021 to support Hongkongers, to make them feel welcomed and to build a sense of belonging in their new communities. The fund provided support to various small organisations and groups, which are led by and/or for Hongkongers and most of them are active grassroots and unconstituted community groups. These organisations designed and delivered many activities that created a great and positive impact on the lives of many Hongkongers in London.

Building on the success of the first year’s programme, we are happy to launch the Hong Kong Community Fund. In addition to welcoming newly arrived Hongkongers in London, in this second-year funding programme, we aim to expand our support. This year we will continue to support the grassroots of the sector through **development grants** of between £1,000 and £10,000 but we are also introducing **impact grants** providing funding up to £20,000 so organisations can expand and scale their work.

We are seeking to fund projects that can meet the following aims to:

* **Promote a sense of welcome and belonging for both existing and newly arrived Hongkongers in London:** to meet the evolved needs of those Hongkongers who arrived previously, to welcome newly arrived Hongkongers and build belonging.
* **Support Hongkongers with intersectional needs, including**
  + *Children and young Hongkongers –* this might include supporting children with special educational needs or disability and their parents;helping younger Hongkongers, e.g. secondary students, to navigate the education and examination system, supporting children from single-parent families; young Hongkongers aged 18-25 due to the expanded eligibility of the BN(O) route.
  + *Older Hongkongers –* this might includesupporting older Hongkongers to navigate public services and systems; offering tailored English language learning provision; supporting older Hongkongers to improve their technological literacy; providing wellbeing support to improve their mental health
  + *LGBTQI+ Hongkongers –* this might include offering wellbeing support and creating safe spaces for LGBTQI+ Hongkongers; promoting the availability of sexual health services in the UK; celebrating LGBTQI+ Hongkongers, including through the arts
  + *Hongkongers with disabilities –* this might include supporting Hongkongers with disabilities to understand what their rights and entitlements are in relation to accessing healthcare and support services; offering support for carers; promoting the inclusion of Hongkongers with disabilities in welcome activities, removing barriers to participation and promoting social connection
* **Championing Hong Kong cultures, identities and heritage:** to celebrate and preserve Hongkongers’ language and cultural identity through education, arts and culture.
* **Foster connection amongst Hongkongers and their wider communities:** to improve access to mainstream services and connections between Hong Kong-led groups and wider voluntary and community services. Projects encouraging social connection between Hongkongers and local communities from other backgrounds to facilitate cultural exchange and increase opportunities to practise English are encouraged.
* **Support the wellbeing needs of Hongkongers:** to develop buddy schemes, mindfulness activities and spaces for Hongkongers to feel safe and nurtured, supporting Hongkongers mental health including through development of trauma-informed and culturally specific resources and services.
* **Enable Hongkongers to access and thrive in employment, skills and training:** to support accessing further and higher education, English language development (ESOL), employment support, and information on starting a business. Where there is interest from learners, and this provision is not already offered in the locality by existing [adult education providers](https://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/jobs-and-skills/find-adult-learning-providers-near-me), ESOL projects may include informal ESOL conversation clubs, English for professionals (IELTs/OET), ESOL and orientation, ESOL and embedded hobbies, e.g., knitting/cooking, ESOL in the weekend, ESOL and sector specific skills training.

If your proposed project includes English language development, please include information in your application on how learners will be offered progression routes to [mainstream adult education and training](https://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/jobs-and-skills/find-adult-learning-providers-near-me) at the end of their course. We also strongly encourage groups and organisations to work in partnership with their local adult education provider to ensure Hongkongers are able to access the wide range of mainstream opportunities available to Londoners to improve their skills and employment prospects.

* **Grow the capacity of Hong Kong led civil society:** to cover costs incurred to become constituted, undertake DBS checks, training, qualifications, back-office costs and expenses incurred by volunteers.
* **Increase Hongkongers’ confidence to navigate their new communities/ environment:** to organise English conversation clubs, to support Hongkongers accessing services, and understanding rights and entitlements.
* **Promotes non-party political civic and democratic participation:** to raise voter registration awareness raising and activity, to platform youth voices, and to organise events that facilitate awareness-raising of civic and democratic rights, political literacy, media literacy, and other relevant, strictly impartial activities around democratic and civic participation.

This list is not exhaustive. We welcome proposals from both Hong Kong-led organisations that draw on their experience and knowledge of Hongkongers’ needs, as well as organisations that have great experience working on a particular intersectional need identified above and are interested in further developing their work to involve and engage with Hongkongers in London.

Refer to Appendix 2 p. 11 for samples of successful programmes that were previously funded by the GLA that had similar funding criteria to the Hong Kong Community Fund.

* 1. **Funding available**

We expect to fund approximately 10 development grants and 10 impact grants. The overall grant allocation will be flexible to meet the different needs of the programme.

* 1. **Who and how much funding can applicants apply for?**

Applicants can apply for either one development grant or one impact grant.

**Development grant**

* Funding of between £1,000 and £10,000.
* Projects should start and be completed within six months. Projects may start at any time after their award is finalised, as long as they are completed within six months.
* Projects must meet the aims of the Hong Kong Community Fund.
* Available for groups with an annual turnover of £200,000 or under in their last published annual financial accounts.
* Projects can take up to 6 months.

**Impact grant**

* Funding of between £10,001 and £20,000.
* Projects should start and be completed within six months. Projects may start at any time after their award is finalised.
* Projects must meet the aims of the Hong Kong Community Fund.
* Your organisation must be legally constituted, in order to apply for this funding stream.
* You are only allowed to apply for a grant up to 50% of your annual turnover. Your turnover is the amount of money which comes into your organisation within your last accounting year.
* Projects can take up to 6 months.

If your organisation is not legally constituted, then you must partner with a sponsor organisation. There are no restrictions of the turnover of the sponsorship organisation, regardless of the size of grant you apply for. For example, they may have a turnover of larger than £50,000.

To be eligible to apply, applicants will need to be one of the following – or, if your organisation is not legally constituted, you must have a sponsor organisation that fulfils one of the following criteria:

* Registered Charity
* Charitable Incorporated Organisations (CIO)
* Community Interest Company (CIC)
* Charitable Company (limited by guarantee)
* Constituted Group/Organisation
* Excepted or exempted charity
* Community Amateur Sports Club
* Community Benefit Society

All application organisations or sponsor organisations must have at least two Trustees/Directors/Management Committee members who are not related and have a charitable dissolution clause within their governing document.

All organisations who are recipients of The Welcoming Hongkongers Fund are welcome to re-apply for the Hong Kong Community Fund, as we are keen to support them to continue, expand or reformulate their existing projects.

**Grant payments to successful unconstituted groups/individual applicants:**

We will only make payments to unconstituted groups/individuals via a sponsorship organisation – this is a constituted organisation that agrees to accept the money on behalf of the unconstituted group and will pay out the fund from their own bank account. This means that the sponsored organisation is responsible for the grant funding terms and will need to sign the grant fund contract with the GLA.

**We will not fund**:

* For profit organisations
* Local authorities
* Schools or formal educational settings (however, we are happy to accept applications from small community education groups, e.g. library homework club, ESOL conversation clubs, after school projects etc.)
* Project activities that generate profits for private gain, or activities that are charging a fee that will cause significant financial barrier to participation
* Projects and provision that can be funded by another income stream. For example, adults arriving via the Hong Kong BN(O) visa route are entitled to £850 per adult for ESOL formal or informal provision and ESOL related expenses including childcare, travel expenses, digital devices and more via their local authority. In addition, Hongkongers on the BN(O) route and other long-term routes in London are now eligible for [Adult Education Budget (AEB) funding](https://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/jobs-and-skills/find-adult-learning-providers-near-me), which funds the majority of ESOL in London, on arrival. We will not fund activities which can be funded by either of these funding streams. Where applicants believe costs cannot be covered by existing funding streams, a robust rationale will be required.
* Projects that practice or promote religion or that is partisan political, or any activities actively promoting certain belief/political systems. Faith based organisations can apply but the activities funded under the Hong Kong Community Fund must not fall under this stated exclusion
* Projects for retrospective costs, including any costs incurred in community consultation and/or submitting your application
* Projects involving large-scale capital costs or routine repairs and minor improvements to community buildings
* Loan repayments
* Recoverable VAT. Please note if you are not VAT registered, you will need to include VAT costs as part of the funding you request for your programme
* Organisations applying on behalf of individuals (individuals can apply and receive funds via a constituted organisation).
  1. **Funding prioritisations**

**Priority will go to:**

* Organisations that are equity-led (meaning led by the communities that they serve with at least 75% of the organisation’s Trustees and 50% of group members having personal experiences of the issues they are tackling).
* Projects that are community-led (meaning that people from the community groups the project is supporting must be involved in the design, planning and delivery of the proposed project).
* Applications that can clearly evidence how their project will address priority needs of Hongkongers

1. **How to apply**

Each grant application has two levels of assessment. These are proportionate to the level of grant:

**Development grant (between £1,000-£10,000)**

1. Complete the application form: <https://www.grantrequest.co.uk/SID_123?SA=SNA&FID=35412>
2. Provisionally approved grant applicants will have a scheduled follow-up call with a Grants Officer to gain more insight about the project and whether it meets our eligibility requirements and criteria. The call will last approximately 30 minutes.

**Impact grant (between £10,001-£20,000)**

Complete the application form: <https://www.grantrequest.co.uk/SID_123?SA=SNA&FID=35420>

1. Provisionally approved grant applicants will have a scheduled follow-up call with a Grants Officer to gain more insight about the project and whether it meets our eligibility requirements and criteria. The call will last approximately 30 - 45 minutes.
   1. **Submitting an application**

To apply for this grant funding please complete and return the application form by 27th March 2023 (9am)

If you need support or have any questions about applying or the fund, please get in touch with Rachil Kotidi at [HKcommunityfund@groundwork.org.uk](mailto:HKcommunityfund@groundwork.org.uk) or call at 0207 239 1292 or 07726695812.

* 1. **Information Session**

We will be holding an information session so that organisations can hear more about this opportunity and have the chance to ask questions. This will take place virtually. The session will be held on the week commencing 13th March 2023. Please visit Groundwork London’s page for more information on how to register your space to attend the session.

Please email Rachil Kotidi at [HKcommunityfund@groundwork.org.uk](mailto:HKcommunityfund@groundwork.org.uk) to register your space.

1. **Assessment Process**
   1. **Assessment criteria**

We are seeking to fund work/projects that can meet the aims stated in Section 2.1 (page 2 of this document). To help us assess this we will be using the following criteria:

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| **Criteria** | **We will be looking for** |
| Strength of proposal to deliver activities | * Clear plan for delivery with a realistic timeline * Value for money e.g. cost per beneficiary |
| Relevance of previous or current engagement with Hong Kong arrivals | * Examples of relevant previous or current engagement with local Hong Kong communities * Relevant partnerships with other organisations or groups |
| Extent of ability to reach members of the community and understanding of the issues | * Evidence that demonstrates ability to build trust and provide a safe environment for Hongkongers * Evidence of understanding the experiences of Hongkongers and the barriers they may face on arrival to London * Plan for supporting Hongkongers with intersectional needs (e.g. LGBTQI+ Hongkongers, newly arrived young Hongkongers, older Hongkongers and Hongkongers with disabilities) |
| Likelihood of success | * A clear plan for delivery and evaluation * Demonstrated need/demand for services organisation is seeking to deliver * An appropriate project lead/team |

We reserve the right to ask for clarification on applications over the phone or email. Qualifying applicants will then progress to the next stage of the evaluation process and be assessed using the scoring mechanism above.

**Hong Kong Community Fund Advisory Group**

A Hong Kong Community Fund Advisory Group will meet to assess the grant applications shortlisted for selection by the GLA. This group will be comprised of community leaders with diverse backgrounds with varying knowledge and professional and/or lived experience related to the Hong Kong BN(O) visa. The role of the Advisory Group is to advise on whether projects will be accessible and inclusive to Hongkongers but the final decision on all funding will be with the GLA. The principles for the Advisory Group can be found on Appendix 1 p.10.

* 1. **If an application is successful, what happens next?**

1. If successful, we will notify applicants via email that they have provisionally been awarded a grant. All awards are provisional until necessary checks are undertaken and a fully signed grant agreement is received.
2. To enable us to complete necessary checks on the applicant group, Groundwork will request documentation and carry out due diligence checks. If all the checks are met, we will prepare a funding agreement. DBS certificate and safeguarding policy documents will need to be provided within 72 hours of being awarded the grant for spot checks to take place.
3. All grant recipients will receive two milestone payments, once the GLA is in receipt of a fully signed funding agreement and all conditions are met.
4. We will provide successful applicants more information about the process of monitoring and evaluation at a welcome/inception meeting, as this is needed to evidence the impact made.

**Invitation to Hong Kong Incubator**

As part of the grant journey, all successful grantees will be invited to join our Hong Kong Incubator**.** The Incubator will be led by a partner that the GLA has commissioned specifically to provide successful grantees support. This may also involve networking opportunities with other trusted organisations that work with Hongkongers in London. The aim of this group is to help you make the most out of your grant, build a legacy from your work, and help you to grow further. We will co-design the incubator with successful applicants to ensure that it is as rewarding as possible for you in return for your time and energy.

* 1. **Due Diligence**

The GLA is committed to investing time and resources to due diligence as we believe the safety of Hongkongers is paramount. To support this, all provisionally approved grant applicants will need to provide:

* Two references from a trusted authority e.g. a church minister/pastor, GP, charity etc. Anyone in a civic position to vouch for your group
* Additional information if your group has been operating for less than a year i.e. length of time your group has been active, has your group partnered with any other civil society groups
* A short mission statement explaining your work and objectives
  1. **Timeline**

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| **Activity** | **Timeline** |
| Applications open | 22nd February 2023 |
| Information session about the Hong Kong Community Fund | Week commencing 13th March 2023 |
| Applications close | 27th March 2023 (9am) |
| Application outcome announced | 21st April – 28th April 2023 |
| Induction session for in-principle grantees | 28th April 2023 |
| Project delivery begins | Beginning of June 2023 |
| Submission of mid-project report | October 2023 |
| Project delivery ends | Beginning of December 2023 |
| Submission of final monitoring report | Mid-December 2023 |

1. **Accessibility**

Applicants are asked to include budget lines to show the projects’ accessibility costs where appropriate e.g. providing information in different formats or community languages.

Any queries, please contact Rachil Kotidi at [HKcommunityfund@groundwork.org.uk](mailto:HKcommunityfund@groundwork.org.uk) for any queries regarding accessibility.

**Appendix 1: Principles for the Hong Kong Community Fund Advisory Group**

Conditions for recruiting advisory group members and their function:

* We will contact Hong Kong community leaders, prioritising those with whom we have an existing working relationship, to get a sense of whether there is interest and capacity to participate in the grant assessment process.
* Panel members should be experienced community leaders who are aware of and are currently working closely to support the needs of recent Hong Kong BN(O) arrivals in London. These community leaders must have lived or learned experience of the HK BN(O) immigration route and are trusted by the Hong Kong community.
* Panel members will be expected to bring expertise and knowledge of on the ground activity to advise which applications would be the most inclusive and responsive to Hongkongers’ priority needs.
* Panel members will be required to make a decision on grant applications based on the following selected questions in the application forms and RAG scoring system:

1. **In what ways do you expect your project will benefit the priority needs of Hongkongers particularly those most at risk of marginalisation?**
2. **How will your project ensure the safety of Hongkongers?**

|  |  |
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| **RAG-rating** |  |
| Red | Uncertainty about level of trust Hongkongers would place in this project, and its ability to meet a priority need |
| Amber | Hongkongers may have further questions around this project’s aims. Further due diligence or a conversation with the applicant to gain more information is recommended. |
| Green | Level of trust in this project should be high amongst Hongkongers. Shows clear understanding of Hongkongers’ priority needs with a feasible plan to ensure their safety. |

* The final grant assessment decision will sit with the GLA.

**Appendix 2 Case Studies**

Here are example case studies for inspiration, funded by other grants programmes with a similar funding criteria to the Hong Kong Community Fund.

Kingston BEATS C.I.C.

As one of the successful grantees of the Welcoming Hongkongers Fund, Kingston BEATS C.I.C. delivered their project, Kingston Jo-Sun (‘Jo-Sun’ means Good Morning in Cantonese) across a six-month period. This involved a series of activities and cultural events, aiming at celebrating Hongkongers’ identity and strengthening connections among Hongkongers and across communities. They also organised Welcome Days and produced written guides to provide information to newly arrived Hongkongers and support them with navigating around their new living environment.

HearthTalk UK

Funded by the GLA’s Welcoming Hongkongers fund, HearthTalk UK delivered webinars and workshops in Cantonese on various mental health topics across a six-month period. They also offer short-term counselling support and signposting service, aiming to connect with the Hong Kong community in London and facilitate connection between newly arrived Hongkongers and their wider community in London.

St-Martin-in-the-Fields

St Martin-in-the-Fields Trust, one of the grantees of the Welcoming Hongkongers Fund, delivered a project named Food for Our New Home, aiming to welcome Hongkongers in London and enable them to build new lives in the UK. They provided a weekly meal and foodbank for the Hong Kong community, which encouraged community, friendship and solidarity.

London’s Arabic Choir

Funded by the Culture Seeds fund that supported small or informal organisations and groups including individuals, this was a new choir to bring together Arab and non-Arab communities in the City of Westminster.

[The Dancing Together Project](https://www.whfs.org.uk/index.php/what-we-do/past-projects/198-health-in-old-age-dancing-together)

Dancing Together was a three-month project funded by Community First and addressed elderly isolation, health and wellbeing in the over 50s in the Bow East area of Tower Hamlets. While aimed primarily at local communities, it was not exclusive and was open to people from all communities.

This lively and fun weekly gathering brought different groups of people together to enjoy and practice dance and movement. It also provided a relaxed environment to meet people, develop new skills and have the opportunity to seek health-related advice and specialist support.

[Coco Collective](https://www.instagram.com/cococollective_org/?hl=en)

Based in Lewisham, South London, a partnership was created between Lewisham Homes, Grow Lewisham and Discussion Thursday, to support BAME community garden spaces using funding for participative research as to why communities often find it challenging to engage. This was a partnership funded by the GLA’s Civil Society Roots Incubator, which brought together expertise in engaging with communities and access to space.

[COMPASS (in partnership with Groundwork London and Counterpoints Arts)](https://counterpointsarts.org.uk/esol-plus-arts/)

Funded by the Mayor’s ESOL Plus Arts Programme. This project included weekly conversational English sessions across London, interweaving language learning with arts sessions facilitated by a professional artist. Learning was facilitated by bringing English learners together with English speakers and engaging them in practical art projects that tested and expanded their English proficiency. The project integrated participatory ESOL at its core by choosing an art form based on participants’ interests and promoting the sharing of existing skills. Find toolkits for integrating ESOL with arts, culture and heritage on the [ESOL Plus Arts Hub](https://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/communities-and-social-justice/migrants-and-refugees/english-esol-classes-london/esol-plus-arts-hub).

[Convene Healing Circles](https://www.transformchi.com/healing-circles/)

Integrating residents from different backgrounds and cultures is a priority for London. But true integration is hard to achieve when people carry a history of prejudice, fear and disappointment in dealing with differences. Healing circles are a support group where people share their pain and listen to each other. Members of healing circles commit to helping one another solve their deep issues and heal from individual struggles. They also commit to work together to cure existing cultural traumas in their community.

After the City of Chicago launched the “Together We Heal” campaign, many Chicagoans started to organise their own healing circles with a focus on racial trauma. Mediated by professionals, they can also become safe havens for people who need help to overcome other cultural stigmas, such as suffering with anxiety and mental health conditions.

**Appendix 3: Glossary**

**Hong Kong Community Fund Advisory Group**

Made up of GLA teams and community leaders from Hong Kong civil society groups. Comprised of people with diverse backgrounds and varying knowledge and professional and/or lived experience. The role of the advisory group is to advise on the provisionally approved grant applications.

**Hong Kong Community Fund Development Grant**

Funding for a project of between £1,000 and £10,000.

**Hong Kong Community Fund Impact Grant**

Funding for a project of between £10,001 and £20,000.

**Community-led organisation**

Puts the people most affected by its work at the forefront of all activity. An organisation that is led by the community it serves, be that a community of place (geographical) or a community of Interest (issue based).

**Equity-led organisation**

Led by the communities that they serve with at least 75% of the organisation’s Trustees and 50% of staff members having personal experiences of the issues they are tackling. These organisations are working particularly with communities with protected characteristics (e.g. race, gender, sexual orientation, disability).

**Priority need**

Something that responds to what Hongkongers need to settle and thrive in London, and that will make people’s lives better over the project timeline.

**Necessary Checks**

The necessary checks we refer to are sometimes known as ‘due diligence’. This is the investigation or exercise of care that a reasonable organisation is expected to take before entering into an agreement or contract with another party. This includes reviewing organisational and financial information of the organisation who is entering into the contract.

**Outcome**

The result of the project, e.g. because of your outputs, what will be the difference for your community.

**Output**

An activity that you will deliver as part of your project. These deliverables should have numerical targets attached to them.

**Sponsor organisation**

If your organisation is not legally constituted (e.g. If it is a mutual aid group or unincorporated association) you can apply through a constituted partner organisation (with annual turnover of any size) who can support your application as your sponsor. Regardless of the sponsor’s organisation type, they will need to have at least two Trustees/Directors/Management Committee members who are not related.

**Trusted references**

These can work in a recognised profession or be ‘a person of good standing in their community’. Further examples include but not limited to: accountant, solicitor, dentist, local government officer, nurse, teacher, civil servant (permanent), bank or building society official, director, manager or personnel officer of a VAT-registered company.

1. [Hong Kong British National (Overseas) Visa RPC Opinion: N/A (legislation.gov.uk)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukia/2020/70/pdfs/ukia_20200070_en.pdf) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-statistics-year-ending-september-2022/summary-of-latest-statistics [↑](#footnote-ref-3)