



Promoting Greener Communities



OUR SPACE AWARD PROSPECTUS

Please read carefully before completing the application form.

This round of the Our Space Award will fund projects that must be completed by 10th February 2025. The deadline for applications is midday on Monday 11th December 2023.

What is the Our Space Award?

The Our Space Award (OSA) aims to help Londoners clean and green the city through active community engagement and participation, increasing a sense of community ownership over shared spaces. It supports Londoners of all ages and backgrounds, communities and schools in greening their neighbourhoods, making them inclusive places for all to enjoy. It does this by enabling more groups to access funding for projects. The activities funded by the OSA will be designed to also make a significant contribution to a number of wider social and environmental objectives, notably:

- Tree planting (each project must plant at least one tree);
- Climate resilience and adaptations to climate change;
- Improvements to water quality and drainage through planting and reducing hard surfaces;
- Ecological and biodiversity benefits;
- Climate education alongside physical improvements;
- Improving air quality; and
- Reducing health inequalities and social isolation

Ways in which projects may be able to achieve the above objectives are (but not limited to):

- New tree planting;
- Native planting;
- Pollinator planting;
- Drought tolerant planting;
- Rewilding areas;
- Nest boxes, rock piles, bug hotels;
- Water habitat creation or improvement;
- Planting aimed at improving water quality;
- Rainwater harvesting;
- Creation of composting area, use of organic compost, organic mulching, use of food waste;
- Volunteer and community engagement; or
- Increasing access to nature

The OSA supports projects throughout Greater London. It will play its part by harnessing existing and new volunteer efforts in improving all types of open space, whilst engendering a true sense of civic pride amongst participants and encouraging a greater sense of ownership felt by communities over their shared spaces. The OSA also offers local people the opportunity to shape the ongoing

maintenance and improvement of their areas by working with partners from the public, private and voluntary sectors and stimulates mutual learning at all levels.

The OSA supports projects across all types of open space – in parks, on housing estates, in town centres, in woodlands and in school grounds. We prioritise applications where OSA funding forms a substantial part of the project and will truly enable the project to happen. You can see some examples of past projects on our webpage [here](#).

Who funds the Our Space Award?

The OSA is funded by private funders with an interest in supporting community organisations. In previous rounds the fund has partnered with Mayor of London, Thames Water, Metropolitan Police and Tideway.

Who does the Our Space Award fund?

The fund aims to reach groups who do not necessarily have a track record of fundraising and where the OSA would make up a substantial part of the project's budget.

The following types of groups/organisations are eligible to apply:

- Educational Establishment i.e. schools
- Religious Organisation
- Local Authority
- Registered Charity
- Informal or un-constituted group
- Company Limited by Guarantee
- Not for Profit Community Interest Company (CIC)
- Social Enterprise
- Constituted Community Organisation
- Friends of Group
- Tenants and Residents Association

Unconstituted groups are able to apply - These are community groups of three or more people who meet regularly, are not formally arranged or constituted, but do put energy and enthusiasm into their projects. If you are applying as an informal non-constituted group, you will need to provide reference details in your application for someone who can vouch for your work in the local community. This could be a local councillor, local authority employee, school, a local charity or doctors' surgery, for example. Please get in touch with Groundwork London if you are unsure who to ask.

You will also need to have a bank account with at least two signatories. You may need to partner with an organisation who can hold the grant money for you, if you are successful, as grant money cannot be paid into a personal bank account. This partner organisation could also assist you with delivery and planning, if you would like, but this depends on the arrangement you agree with them.

We welcome applications from schools. However, the project must be driven by consultation with the school community, i.e. schoolchildren, parents, carers, school staff. This could be through questionnaires, speaking to parents/carers at the school gates, holding information sessions to discuss

your ideas and get their opinion, and assemblies. We will want to see evidence that consultation has been carried out and we will prioritise projects where this consultation has taken place.

If you are interested in applying but unsure if your group/organisation is eligible, please contact Groundwork London via email ourspaceaward@groundwork.org.uk or phone 020 7239 1390.

What funding is available?

The OSA offer three tiers of grants going from £500 all the way up to £20,000:

- Small Grants: £500 to £2,000
- Standard Grants: £2,001 to £5,000
- Flagship Grants: £5,001 to £20,000*

Any group/organisation can apply to the Small and Standard Grants. We will prioritise awarding Flagship Grants to those who have previously successfully delivered an Our Space Award project. Please note, we anticipate funding a maximum of two Flagship Grants in this funding round.

* Please note, if you receive a flagship grant you will be paid 80% at the beginning of your project and 20% upon successful completion of your project and submission of monitoring information. All other grants are paid 100% upfront.

You can apply for funding for a wide variety of items, such as materials, sessional workers' fees, plants, tools, storage. However, please note that budgets should adhere to the following criteria for Small, Standard and Flagship Grants:

Type	Description	%
Capital	This includes items which will be used to physically create the project. These include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tools and equipment hire • Plants and compost • Materials such as wood, benches, nails, screws, paint etc. 	50% minimum
Revenue	This includes costs needed prior to the physical works and staff costs. These include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Labour costs • Sessional workers • Educational sessions relating to creation, maintenance or environmental benefit of the project • Design fees • Volunteer management and recruitment 	40% maximum
Ancillary	These are costs which are not essential to the project being completed, but which can help to make it more successful. These include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebration event • Volunteer travel and refreshments • Promotion and marketing 	10% maximum

Please note that in addition to the above, we will want to see that items in the budget offer good value for money. This does not mean you need to choose the cheapest option, but you should be able to show that your budget offers both quality alongside a reasonable price.

If you have any queries regarding which category particular costs would fit into then please contact Groundwork London via email ourspaceaward@groundwork.org.uk or phone 020 7239 1390, and a member of the OSA team will be happy to talk through your project and budget with you.

How can the Our Space Award help you?

The OSA can help get your project off the ground, whether or not you have really clear plans for your space, or are looking for some ideas and inspiration. We will be on hand to help provide advice, guidance and expertise as required. Our staff, corporate volunteers and partners can also work with you to help transform your local space. The OSA enables you and your local community to explore ways to live in a more environmentally sustainable way.

As mentioned above, the OSA aims to support groups/organisations who may not have been awarded grant funding before. We actively encourage you to call or email the OSA team to ask any queries about your proposed projects and ideas, to ensure you stand the best chance of being successful in your application.

Are you eligible to apply for the Our Space Award?

Please review the checklist below before you apply to ensure you are eligible for the fund. We will ask you to complete a short eligibility checker prior to accessing the application form portal:

- ✓ Your project must start **after 16th February 2024** and be **completed by 10th February 2025**
- ✓ The space is underused, neglected or would be significantly more usable or environmentally beneficial through your proposed improvements
- ✓ You have in principle permission from the landowner for the works at the site
- ✓ Your project idea will make a real difference to the current site
- ✓ You will encourage volunteering on your project and in the local community, with a focus on increasing the sense of ownership over the shared space
- ✓ You will support the aims and objectives of the OSA through social media and publicity
- ✓ You will complete and adhere to monitoring and evaluating your project so we can update the funders on your project progress and hear exciting stories from your project delivery
- ✓ If an informal/unconstituted group, you can provide reference details for someone who can vouch for your work in the local community
- ✓ You have a UK bank account with at least two signatories. If not, you are either able to apply for one before the grant money can be paid to you, if successful, or you have partnered with an organisation that can hold the grant money for you

It is really important that all deadlines are met. This includes monitoring and evaluation and project completion. Please ensure you bear this in mind when designing your project and completing your project plan.

How do you apply?

Small Grants

If you are applying for a Small Grant (£500 – £2,000), you have the option of applying via [ActionFunder](#). ActionFunder is a simple online system that allows groups to upload multiple projects that require funding – either in writing or through a short video application. Projects submitted via ActionFunder will be seen by multiple funders. For more information on ActionFunder, visit their website [here](#).

Applicants to the Small Grants can apply via the application portal (details below) if they wish.

Small, Standard and Flagship Grants

Please apply via the application portal on the Groundwork London website, [here](#). You will be asked to complete a short eligibility questionnaire before being taken to the application portal, to ensure you and your project are eligible for the OSA.

We are not able to process applications in MS Word documents via email or other formats. If you need help or support accessing the application portal or completing the application form, please get in touch with Groundwork London via email ourspaceaward@groundwork.org.uk or phone 020 7239 1390, and a member of the OSA team will be happy to help you.

We strongly suggest, before starting the application process, you review the Application Questions and Guidance alongside this prospectus, as this will show you the application questions, give tips on how to complete specific questions, and let you think about potential answers to your questions. We also advise reading the Application Portal User Guide, which explains how to access and use the application portal. You can find these documents on the Groundwork London website, [here](#).

What happens after submitting an application?

The deadline for Our Space Award applications is midday Monday 11th December 2023.

When you submit your application through our portal you will receive an automated message containing a copy of your application form and confirming its submission. It will then go to the Our Space Award panel that will take place within one month of the application deadline. Groundwork London may contact you via email or phone for further information about you or your project before a final decision is made. All applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application as soon as possible and feedback will be provided.

If successful, you will be offered an in-principle grant and asked to sign a grant acceptance form, which will include the terms and conditions of the grant and confirm your obligations as part of the funding. You will need to accept these in order to confirm your grant and receive payment. We will also ask for your bank details at this time, or the bank details for your partner organisation.

You will be asked to provide mid-project monitoring information in June 2024. This is so we can see how you are progressing and whether there is any assistance that we can provide to you to ensure your project is a success. You will then need to complete an end of project report once your project is finished.

Please note that it is really important that you meet these dates to ensure we can provide the right support to projects in future rounds. You should bear these in mind when designing your project.



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If you are unsuccessful we will provide feedback to assist with future grant applications and signpost you to other potential avenues of support for your project.

FAQs

Can two or more organisations apply together?

Yes, as partners, though one organisation must act as the lead organisation and will be responsible for money, communications and completing any monitoring requirements. When making your application you may wish to see whether there are nearby organisations that you can partner with and share costs on, such as tools, storage etc.

Does the project space need to be accessible to the public?

The site does not necessarily need to be open access to the public, but it should be accessible by a large part of the community. For example, school grounds, gardens at a community centre or communal gardens would qualify, but a private residents' garden would not. If there are any barriers to entry to a space, such as paid membership, these spaces will also not be eligible.

Can councils apply?

Yes, but the project must be one that has come from the community and involves community work, rather than council contractors. We will want to see evidence that consultation has been carried out and ideas for the final project should be decided by the local community.

Can schools apply?

Yes, but the projects must be driven by consultation with the school community, i.e. school children, parents, carers, school staff. We will want to see evidence that consultation has been carried out and we will prioritise projects where this is the case.

What do I do if I run into problems delivering my project or something is more expensive than anticipated?

If you are successful, Groundwork London are here to support you. Please contact the Our Space Award team via email ourspaceaward@groundwork.org.uk or phone 0207 239 1390 if you have any questions throughout your project delivery, if your plans change unexpectedly, if you need to change your budget or anything else relating to your grant.

Is there guidance on creating projects which involve aspects such as Sustainable Urban Drainage, Air Quality or greening schools?

There are good guides available online, for example:

Sustainable Urban Drainage:

www.groundwork.org.uk/suds-re-thinking-our-approach-to-managing-rainwater

www.london.gov.uk/environment/climate-change/surface-water

www.lbhf.gov.uk/living_with_rainwater_guide.pdf

Air Quality and tackling air pollution near schools:

www.groundwork.org.uk/tackling-air-pollution-near-schools

www.london.gov.uk/mayors-school-air-quality-audit-programme



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Greening Schools:

<https://schoolgardening.rhs.org.uk/A-Guide-to-Greening-Your-School>

Are contractors allowed?

You can use contractors for work, however this should only be where it is necessary or for safety reasons. Where possible work should be carried out by the community and volunteers, as we feel that this helps to promote the sense of ownership over the project space.

Can large organisations or charities apply?

Yes, but all projects should be driven by the needs and wants of the community. Community consultation should have taken place and they should be heavily involved in the development of the project. Bear in mind that the OSA aims to ensure funding is available for groups who may not have accessed grant funding previously as well as those with a track record of project delivery.

Do I need match funding?

No, you do not need match funding. However, we do prefer to support projects which will not happen without OSA support. Therefore, we may prioritise projects which do not have large amounts of match funding.

Will extensions be allowed in any circumstance?

We will only be able to offer extensions where there have been events which are not foreseeable or beyond the applicants control. Please ensure you bear in mind the project delivery period when designing your project and ensure your activities are suitable.

Contact details

If you have any queries about your proposed project, please talk to a member of the Our Space Award team on 0207 239 1390 or ourspaceaward@groundwork.org.uk. As mentioned above, we are happy to help talk through any project ideas or eligibility queries you might have.

Please follow this link for more information about some of the projects that have previously taken place: www.groundwork.org.uk/our-space-award.



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