

Democratic Participation Grants - Prospectus - Phase Three

July 2024



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1. Introduction

The Greater London Authority (GLA) is running phase three of its Democratic Participation Grants Programme, as part of its Civic and Democratic Participation Programme.

The grants programme is funding civil society equity-led groups to deliver targeted awareness-raising information and activity in trusted community settings for London's most under-registered and under-represented communities at risk of disenfranchisement.

GLA analysis has highlighted the following priority groups:

- young Londoners (16–25-year-olds)
- Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Londoners
- migrant Londoners, including EU and Commonwealth Londoners
- Deaf and disabled Londoners
- older Londoners
- LGBTQIA+ Londoners, with a focus on trans and non-binary Londoners
- low-income Londoners
- Londoners in precarious housing situations or homeless, and social and private renting Londoners

By equity-led, we mean at least 50% of an organisation's management (trustees and senior management) and staff identify with one or more of those identities and have experience of the civic and democratic barriers they are trying to address.

You can apply for grants from £10,000 - £25,000.

2. What are the aims of the programme?

The aims of the Democratic Participation grants programme – phase three are:

- Support Londoners and civil society to increase their political literacy, by equipping them with the knowledge and the tools they need to uphold their democratic rights.
- Support Londoners to access their democratic rights by addressing barriers to participation (voter registration, Voter ID, proxy and postal voting, etc.)
- Support Londoners to get heard on decisions impacting them and their communities, beyond elections, including through deliberative and participatory democracy at local level, and other mechanisms to participate in civic life.

- Grow the number, capacity, and resilience of civil society organisations in the democracy/ social justice sector by ensuring civil and democratic participation is embedded in their business-as-usual activity and future work.

Building on the activity delivered in phase one (January to March 2023) and phase two (August 2023 - February 2024), this third grant round is offering funding for activity to take place over 10 months, from September 2024 - June 2025. **Successful applicants will be expected to outline how they will deliver against at least two of the above aims.**

Projects will have a focus on supporting Londoners to navigate the democratic system in the post-elections landscape, and supporting Londoners in understanding how to get heard and participate at every level in civic and democratic life. They will support Londoners to access their civic and democratic rights both through engaging in the electoral system, (e.g. registering to vote and applying for Voter ID,) and beyond the ballot box, (e.g. by participating in local level decision making, community organising and taking part in wider civic life). Projects will also build capacity more broadly by training civil society organisations to deliver this kind of support to Londoners, as well as working in partnership and facilitating learning between organisations.

Please see the programme's evaluation framework for more information.

Organisations applying for this grant need to consider and provide application details on the size and scale of their target communities, the geographic locations where activity should happen, the data/ evidence for their approach and any accessibility needs, including for materials in community languages.

The size of grant award will reflect the size of the community being reached; the geographic scope of the project and the array of methods used to engage with communities. We expect applicants to explain who their communities are, size and geographic location; the specific structural barriers they experience to civic and democratic participation; how they will effectively reach their communities to meet the above aims.

3. What types of projects will you support?

This funding is focused on supporting organisations to deliver targeted awareness-raising and related informational activity in trusted community settings for groups most under-registered and under-represented.

Activity could include (but not be limited to):

- Large local community events to raise awareness of civic and democratic rights and offer support to Londoners, including stalls at relevant festivals, fairs, etc.
- Running workshops, webinars, and experiential learning on civic and democratic participation with under-represented Londoners and/or civil society organisations working with them.
- Creating spaces for Londoners to better use their voice and participate in civic and democratic processes.

- 1:1 sessions to support Londoners with understanding their rights/ political literacy, registering to vote, applying for an accepted photo Voter ID or the free Voter Authority Certificate
- The development of a local network of volunteers to ensure information on civic and democratic participation is shared at scale
- Content in pan-London generic mass media and / or in community-specific mass media, e.g. TV stations, press, radio, news blogs, etc.
- Targeted social media campaigns
- Establishing partnerships to reach London's under-registered and under-represented groups across a geographic area (e.g. a number of boroughs or a London subregion, etc.) or all Londoners from a certain ethnic or other protected characteristic background across London.

Grant funded activity must take place in communities between September 2024 and June 2025, kicking off with online and offline activity during the GLA-coordinated London Voter Registration Week (16-22 September 2024).

All organisations and projects must be led by and for groups mostly likely to be impacted by structural barriers to civic and democratic participation and the unprecedented changes to the voting system (stating you are equity-led will not be sufficient, further detail will be necessary) and they must deliver in London (this includes location specific and pan-London activity).

The first and second round of community grants were delivered between January 2023 and February 2024. Read more about the grantees and their activity on our GLA Democracy Hub:

<https://registertovote.london/voter-id/gla-democratic-participation-grants/>

3.1. Impartiality

Grantees are expected to raise awareness and run strictly non-party political community activity to enable targeted networks and individuals to exercise all their civic and democratic rights at every opportunity.

To be successful in applying for this grant programme, organisations must be able to demonstrate impartiality. This means demonstrating impartiality across their track record, social media activity, and in the political neutrality of their senior leadership and trustees/ management committee. For example, we would not be able to fund an organisation where members of the leadership team are standing elected officials or vocal party-political members, unless the organisations can demonstrate cross-party representation across its structures and impartial governance. If you have any questions about this before you apply, get in touch with us as democracygrants@groundwork.org.uk.

Whilst we welcome applications from organisations working across a range of issues and causes, this fund cannot be used to mobilise support for or further a particular campaign, or for lobbying purposes.

If successful, all project activity and communication produced through this grants programme must remain impartial at all times in terms of messaging, engagement and delivery. Published materials must

at all times be apolitical, objective, factual and neutral; and not duplicate civic and democratic participation materials already produced by the GLA (these will be shared with grantees).

The GLA will need to review any public-facing materials (e.g. social media assets, videos, flyers, posters, PowerPoint presentations), prior to their use. The process for submitting materials for review will be explained in further detail to successful grantees.

NOTE: Past grantees cannot automatically reuse assets from Phases 1 and 2 without prior approval from the GLA, as they might contain out-of-date information. These grantees will be supported by the GLA to update their assets for Phase 3.

4. How much funding is available?

We have a grant pot of up to **£250,000** to support civil society organisations deliver this work.

Organisations can apply for grants between **£10,000 - £25,000**

Grants of £15,000 and above are available to organisations working across multiple boroughs or in partnership with other organisations to ensure a broader geographical reach.

The grants will be paid in three instalments:

- 50% on signing the contract
- 25% following the first interim report (due mid December 2024).
 - **NOTE:** We will take into account your expenditure and forecast in determining when to make the next payment.
- 25% on sharing the final evaluation report and requested proof of expenditure (by mid-July 2025)

There is a **£12,500** accessibility pot managed by Groundwork to ensure all relevant programme documents are accessible (Large Print, Easy Read and BSL) for Deaf and disabled Londoners and to support applications from civil society groups led by Deaf and disabled Londoners throughout the delivery and evaluation stages.

Grantees are expected to factor accessibility into their project budgets. However, if unexpected costs arise in relation to accessibility that cannot be covered by the grant, grantees can apply for additional funds from accessibility pot, which will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

5. Who can apply?

To be eligible to apply, applicants must meet the following:

- Organisations will need to be a non-for-profit organisations, such as:
 - Registered, exempted, or accepted charity
 - Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)
 - Community Interest Company limited by guarantee

- Company limited by guarantee (that is also not a registered charity)
 - Social Enterprise
 - Community benefit society (Industrial and Provident society)
 - Faith group, where the activity is not promoting religion
 - Community Amateur Sports Club
 - Constituted but unincorporated club or association
 - Constituted Tenants and Residents Associations, and Tenant Management Organisations
 - Constituted community group
 - Community Infrastructure Organisations or Umbrella organisations
 - Non-constituted community group
 - Mutual Aid Groups.
- Unconstituted community or mutual aid groups can apply, but you must work with a constituted sponsor organisation to support your application.
 - Organisations must be permanently based in a London borough and with a London-based correspondence address. This includes civil society organisations who might have a regional or national remit.
 - Organisations must have an impeccable non-party political reputation and be able to meet legal guidelines governing the GLA Civic and Democratic Participation programmes (please see section 14).
 - Organisations must be equity-led, and by this, we mean at least 50% of an organisation's management (trustees and senior management) and staff identify with one or more of those identities and have experience of the civic and democratic barriers they are trying to address.

There are no restrictions on applying if you have received GLA funding in the past or are currently receiving GLA funding for another project.

Organisations must meet the impartiality requirements.

6. Who can't apply?

- Individuals, or organisations applying on behalf of individuals
- Business or for-profit organisations, this includes:
 - Companies with a legal status of Limited by Shares
 - For profit organisations including those who apply with a non-profit sponsor

- Sole traders including those who apply with a non-profit sponsor
- Organisations who do not have a charitable dissolution clause in their governing document
- Local Authorities
- Schools or formal educational settings, though we are happy to accept applications from community education groups, e.g. library homework club, ESOL groups, after school projects
- Organisations whose projects would cover the following:
 - Activities that generate profits for private gain
 - Activities that practice or promote religion, or any activities actively promoting certain belief systems (or indeed the lack of belief). Faith-based organisations can apply, but the activities funded must not fall under this stated exclusion
 - Activities that are party political and encourage political support towards certain political parties or candidates. This includes civil society or lobbying groups associated with political parties.
 - Activities that aim to further support for issue-based campaigns or have lobbying purposes.

7. What support is available for applicants?

If you have questions about the grant programme, have any accessibility needs, or queries on the legal guidelines and impartiality requirements and the eligibility of your organisation or project plan, please email democracygrants@groundwork.org.uk or call 020 7239 1390.

Groundwork London are running an online application workshop to tell you how to apply, how to write a strong application and what we are looking to fund. BSL interpreters will be present at these sessions. If there are any other adjustments we can make to enable you to attend, please let us know as soon as possible so we can do our best to accommodate you. You can sign up via the link below:

[Tuesday 16th July 2024 12.00-1.30pm - Register here](#)

Please ensure you have read the prospectus and application guidance before attending the workshop.

8. How can we apply?

Please apply via the application portal [here](#), which you can also access on the Groundwork website, [here](#). You will be asked to complete an eligibility questionnaire before being taken to the application portal, to ensure you and your project are eligible for funding. To apply, complete the application form and submit your application using the online portal.

Make sure you read the information and guidance about the grant programme available on the Groundwork website before you submit your application. If you have any questions or need additional

support to complete your application, please email democracygrants@groundwork.org.uk or call [020 7239 1390](tel:02072391390).

The **application window is open from 8th July 2024** and the deadline for submission is **12pm on 6th August 2024**.

8.1 Due diligence guidance

As the grants come from public money, we'll need to carry out due diligence checks. These are tests to check that you are who you say you are and that you've got all the relevant policies and insurance in place when you start your project.

We will ask you to provide a series of documents with your application. In particular, you will be asked to:

- Provide your organisation's UK bank account details or attach a confirmation letter from your sponsor organisation to confirm they can hold and ringfence the funds on your behalf alongside a reference statement
- Provide your or your sponsor organisation's governance documents, including a suitable 'dissolution' or 'winding up' clause
- Provide a copy of your or your sponsor organisation's most recent audited accounts or accounts signed by an independent and qualified accountant
- A statement of your or your sponsor organisations cash flow for the current year
- Evidence of your or your sponsor organisations public liability and employer's liability insurance.
- Provide your or sponsor organisation's financial regulations/procedures, including a statement of cash flow and budget for the current year
- A safeguarding policy
- An Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy/ statement if available

8.2. Impartiality

If you decide to submit a bid, your organisation's impartiality track record will be reviewed. This will include checking:

- Social media posts for any party-political comments, party membership or for inappropriate behaviour that might bring the GLA into disrepute through association.
- Website, especially information on management and trustees, registered address and any activity or statements that might be perceived as party political advocacy or activity.
- Charity Commission and Companies House checks
- Reputation of organisations for controversies and track record via a Google search.

- Conflict of interest in senior management and trustees, e.g. if there is an elected politician on the board and a risk mitigation strategy for how the project will ensure impartiality hasn't been included in your application.

Please provide evidence of your track record, especially previous impartial civic and democratic engagement activity, its scope and impact. If your experience in this area is limited, please show your understanding of civic and democratic rights, your community's barriers to this participation, and how you plan to address this gap, including any partnership work.

9. What costs will the grant cover?

We will fund a broad range of activities and the costs associated with running your project.

Costs could include (but not limited to):

- Project management costs, transport and overheads. These must be proportional to the work being carried out and cannot exceed 30% of total grant amount. You must show clear calculation of these costs in your budget
- Staff and volunteer costs, such as travel expenses, participation fees (in line with London Living Wage) and provision of refreshments
- Venue hire
- Professional fees, such as cost of hiring people to help with the project (e.g. graphic designer, video maker, BSL interpreter, etc)
- Production of materials and resources to support the delivery of outreach activity (as long as they do not duplicate materials already produced by the GLA)
- We expect grants to include costs to support accessibility requirements¹ for project activities

10. What costs will the grant not cover?

The following costs will not be covered by the grant:

¹ By accessibility to a project, we mean how you include everyone in the community group/s so they can take part in your project in the best way possible. Applicants should include budget lines to show the projects' accessibility costs where appropriate, e.g. providing information in different formats or community languages, providing a British Sign Language Interpreter at events, or providing adjustments to the physical environment.

- General overheads not related to the delivery of the project
- Retrospective costs, including any costs incurred in community consultation and/or submitting your application
- Large-scale capital costs or routine repairs and minor improvements to community buildings
- Activities that have already happened or taken place before we have reached a decision on the application
- Activities and resources that have not been vetted by the GLA to meet the impartiality test
- Activities outside of London
- Profit-making activities
- Loan repayments
- Recoverable VAT – if you are not VAT registered, you will need to include VAT costs as part of the funding you request for your programme

11. How will you decide what to fund?

We will assess your application against a few key criteria:

- Your organisation's previous experience in this space and understanding of civic and democratic participation and the barriers impacting some groups. **NOTE:** If you were a Phase 1 or Phase 2 grantee, please include in your application how you will build on your previous project and draw on lessons learnt.
- How proposed project activity meets the aims of the fund and reaches London's under-represented and under-registered groups.
- How your project will take part in and deliver during London Voter Registration Week (16-22 September 2024)
- How you will ensure the community is involved in the development and delivery of the project
- How accessibility has been considered and factored into the budget
- Your organisation's ability to demonstrate impartiality and deliver in a neutral and non-party political way. As mentioned, activity will need to meet the legal guidance and remain impartial at all times.
- How clear you are on how to make your proposal happen, including a well thought-out budget and timeline, including any risks and how you will mitigate them
- Whether your organisation has provided evidence of being equity-led
- How you plan to monitor delivery and impact, as well as report via intermediary and final evaluation reports

12. Do organisations need to report on grant-funded activity?

Yes, all grant-funded organisations will need to report on their projects. This will include the following:

- High level mid-delivery reports by mid-December 2024 and early March 2025.
- Final detailed evaluation report by mid-July 2025.

We will give successful applicants more information about the monitoring and evaluation information that we will want them to collect at an induction meeting before the project starts, but some of the key metrics include (this is not an exhaustive list):

- Total number and the demographics (age, gender, ethnicity and other key protected characteristics) of under-registered and under-represented Londoners who participate in online and offline grant funded activity and the locations and boroughs where activity happened
- Total number of applications to register to vote, for an accepted form of photo voter ID or the free Voter Authority Certificate made via in-person events run via grant funded activity
- Reach and engagement via social media channels so Londoners from under-registered and under-represented communities understand and have better awareness about the changes to their civic and democratic rights.
- Feedback/ case studies from Londoners from under-registered and under-represented groups who participated in grant funded projects.

Grantees will be provided with a range of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) tools that can be used to gather this data in different settings. We are happy to discuss your project's approach to M&E at the beginning of the project and make adaptations, if necessary, to make sure it is suitable for your community and project activity, and our wider reporting purposes.

Grantees will also need to submit an activity log with their interim and final reports. This allows the GLA to track where activity is taking place across all our workstreams and ensure all London boroughs are covered.

13. What support will be offered to grantees once they have been awarded funding?

Grantees will be supported throughout the grant period from general queries, to IT, accessibility and impartiality support.

Grantees will be invited to an induction workshop to cover details of grant delivery, impartiality, monitoring and evaluation.

Grantees will also be supported with further training, advice and support on impartiality. This will include an initial introductory workshop which all successful grantees are required to attend, and further support during delivery.

The induction workshop will take place on Thursday 5th September 2024 at City Hall. Successful applicants will need to make sure at least one member of staff is available to attend either in-person or online.

Alongside this programme, the GLA and Shout Out UK have developed an impartiality campaigning toolkit for civil society organisations, comprising a manual, workshop slides and training videos with BSL interpretation. Grantees will be expected to use this toolkit to train relevant staff, volunteers and partners who will be working on this project. Further details will be provided upon award.

In addition, the GLA Democratic Participation team overseeing this grant programme will:

- Hold onboarding calls with all new grantees (those that did not receive a grant in Phase 1 or 2.)
- Schedule check-ins with all grantees to understand how the project is going and support with any challenges.
- Provide 1-1 support upon request.
- Attend one of your in-person activities (at your invitation) to see your project in action and give feedback.

14. What is the GLA legal guidance and governance around this grant funding?

Due to the nature of this work, there are established GLA legal parameters we have to meet to ensure impartiality. All grantees will need to ensure the following:

- Impartiality must be observed at all times in terms of messaging, engagement and delivery, that includes no direct association with the Mayor of London and promotion of any political party or individual politician.
- The “Supported by the GLA” logo will be used on information materials and to advertise events and other relevant activity.
- All activities and information materials must be apolitical and impartial and must not be perceived to be associated with the promotion of any political party or individual politician.

NOTE: To help ensure impartiality, grantees will need to receive sign off on project activities, materials and public comms before the project goes live and during delivery. Any activity, materials or public comms not sanctioned by the GLA will be deemed unauthorised and will not be reimbursed.

15. Apply now

Please apply via the application portal [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 fund.

If you need help or support accessing the application portal, completing the application form or need to access the application in a different format, please get in touch with Groundwork via democracygrants@groundwork.org.uk or phone 020 7239 1390, and a member of the team will be happy to help you.

We strongly suggest, before starting the application process, you review the Application 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 Evaluation framework to understand how your application will be assessed and the Application Portal User Guide, which explains how to access and use the application portal. You can find these documents on the Groundwork website, [here](#).

The application window is open from 8th July 2024 and the deadline for submission is 12pm on 6th August 2024.