



High Sheriff of Gloucestershire's grants programme

Volunteer grants panel member

Application Information

April 2024

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1. Introduction to Gloucestershire Community Foundation

We are delighted that you are considering joining the Gloucestershire Community Foundation as a volunteer panel member for the High Sheriff of Gloucestershire's grants programme.

Gloucestershire Community Foundation has a small team of staff with a big job to do. We welcome volunteers and are very grateful for the knowledge and experience they bring.

At Gloucestershire Community Foundation our vision is to bring together the talent, skills and resources available across Gloucestershire to help support disadvantaged people and build vibrant communities.

We believe we are incredibly fortunate to live and work in Gloucestershire but understand that life is not easy for everyone. Through our grant making and working with donors who want to help Gloucestershire communities, we are working to make life better for everyone.

We are one of the leading funders in the county. The Foundation is one of 46 Community Foundations across the UK, which together distribute over £70 million of funding each year to voluntary and community groups and individuals. In 2023, Gloucestershire Community Foundation distributed £438,000 to groups and individuals in communities throughout the county.

We work with donors, both large and small to help support a huge variety of projects across the county.

2. The High Sheriff grants programme

The High Sheriff Grants programme is one of the grant programmes that GCF manages.

The programme aims to encourage young people at risk of becoming involved with crime to be involved in challenging activities that build confidence, provide opportunities for growth and deter them from criminal and anti-social activities.

Each year the programme distributes around £55,000 in grants of £2,500 to organisations across the county that:

- Deliver activities to young people at risk of becoming involved with crime or anti-social behaviour
- Deliver a project that reflects the concerns and priorities of the target beneficiaries and fits well with existing community activities/ services
- Demonstrate they are well connected within the local community and their project involves working in partnership with local organisations and groups
- Have secured some level of match funding from their own fundraising activities

In assessing applications, the Panel looks to support activities for young people that will do one or more of the following:

- Divert young people away from crime and/or anti-social behaviour
- Prevent and deter young people from crime and/or anti- social behaviour
- Help to raise the confidence and self-esteem of young people, particularly those at risk of becoming involved with criminal activities
- Provide informal learning and development opportunities for young people at risk
- Improve the health and wellbeing of young people at risk

3. Organisations supported by the High Sheriff grants programme

Grants from the High Sheriff programme help thousands of people in Gloucestershire each year. Here are a few organisations that have been supported:



“Many of the young people are presenting with mental health issues or previously unidentified learning difficulties which we help them to address. This grant has allowed us staffing time to carry this out this. The process to apply for this grant was clear and communication with GCF was really good. We would like to thank you for your support.”
Cirencester Housing for Young People, awarded a grant in 2021



The Rock, Cheltenham received a grant of £2,500 in February 2022 towards ‘Transition Night Tuesdays’ for young people in school year 6- 8, supporting mental health and confidence in early teenage years.

4. What is a grants panel and how does it work?

To help see if this is an opportunity for you, we have put together some FAQs.

Q: What does the grants panel do?

A: The grants panel meets to discuss how Gloucestershire Community Foundation's funding will be allocated and decide which groups will benefit from this funding.

The GCF grants team carry out assessments of the applications and provided recommendations; these will be included in the meeting papers. Panel members will receive meeting papers at least one week in advance of the meeting.

During the meeting, the panel has a sum of money to allocate which is normally less than the total of funding requested from applicants. Panel members must decide which applications to fund ensuring the most effective use of funds and also fit with the criteria of the fund.

Q: What kind of experience and skills do I need to become a volunteer grants panel member for the High Sheriff grants programme?

A: You won't need any formal qualifications to volunteer. We are looking for people who know and understand communities and young people across Gloucestershire and understand the reasons why young people may become involved in crime or antisocial behaviour. You need the ability to read and analyse information about applications, listen to other perspectives and share your thoughts succinctly and clearly.

We would like to have a range of experience on the panel, including people with strong local knowledge, voluntary sector experience, or lived experience of the challenges facing our local communities.

Becoming a grants panel member could also help to improve your skills and experience by demonstrating your ability to work in a team and contribute your own ideas to important causes. It will also help you to learn more about what is happening in your local area. If you already work for a community group or as a fundraiser it is a great way of learning more about funding processes.

Q: Is this a paid role?

A: No, this post is a volunteer role and is not paid. However, we are keen to reduce potential barriers to becoming a panel member. Childcare costs or other caring costs that enable you to attend panel meetings can be reimbursed. We can also offer compensation for lost earnings whilst participating in the panel at the Living Wage rate of £11.44 per hour. Travel to meetings will be paid at the standard rate of 45p per mile.

Q: How much of my time will volunteering as a panel member require?

A: The grants panel currently meet three times a year with meetings lasting approximately two hours. Panel members are asked to prepare for these meetings by reading through the grants team's application assessments during the week before the meeting. The meetings' schedule will be released well ahead of time and if you are still unavailable to physically attend, you can send in your suggestions or thoughts on what is to be discussed at that meeting. Some meetings take place in person, others online.

Grant panel membership is for a four-year term which can be extended for a further four years by invitation. Panel members are asked to give reasonable notice if they intend to leave the panel. Panel members who are unable to attend three or more consecutive meetings will be required to step down and Gloucestershire Community Foundation reserves the right to remove members of the panel in cases where there is a conflict with the interests of the Fund.

Q: Why does my input or involvement matter?

A: Your ideas and contributions will matter to the grants panel because you are a representative of and resident of Gloucestershire. We want our panels to represent the communities we are supporting. Your knowledge of the county and experience of living in Gloucestershire will help to shape the decisions of the panel, as well as improving Gloucestershire and ensuring that funding is given to groups, people and areas that need it most. This is an important role and an opportunity for you to influence the support given to communities in Gloucestershire.

Q: Who else is on the panel?

A: All grant panel members are volunteers with relevant knowledge and experience. The panel is chaired by the current High Sheriff. The panel includes one GCF trustee and at least three other volunteer panel members. The GCF Grants Officer and Grants Manager also attend panel meetings in an advisory capacity.

Q: What training or preparation will I receive to help become a grants panel member?

A: You will receive an induction to the work of Gloucestershire Community Foundation, as well as guidance about the role of a panel member and you will be introduced to the processes and format of the grants panel and their work ahead of your first meeting

5. Roles, responsibilities and attributes of a Panel member

a. Key roles of a Panel Member include:

1. Sharing local knowledge with the panel as well as your understanding of issues and needs faced by communities in Gloucestershire.
2. Assisting in the prioritisation of grant applications and in making decisions regarding which applicants should be funded and how much to award.
3. Promoting and advocating for Gloucestershire Community Foundation within your networks, in particular its funding programmes, both to groups which are eligible to apply as well as individuals and organisations that might be interested in supporting the work of Gloucestershire Community Foundation.

b. Key responsibilities of a Panel Member include:

1. Preparing for each panel meeting by reading the application summaries provided by the Grants team and carefully considering each application.
2. Declaring any conflict of interest in relation to any application/s under consideration and abstain from discussions and decisions regarding those applications – a conflict of interest arises in circumstances where the panel member, close friends or family members, have a direct financial or personal interest in the outcome, or where the Panel Member has been closely involved in preparing the application.
3. Ensuring that comments, opinions and decisions are made on the basis of objective assessment and showing respect for all groups and individuals.
4. Responding to requests for availability to sit on a panel to set future meeting dates.
5. Informing the grants team if you need any further information or training
6. Informing the grants team of any news or information that could be relevant to the Foundation's grantmaking.
7. To maintain strict confidentiality within Gloucestershire Community Foundation; panel members must not disclose any sensitive information relating to

applications, panel discussions, donors or grant recipients, to anyone outside the panel.

8. GCF is committed to promoting equal opportunities and to valuing diversity regardless of age, gender, race, ethnic origin, nationality, religion/belief, culture, language, disability, learning difficulty, sexual orientation, marital status, economic status, health status, or any other discriminatory grounds. We expect everyone involved in the work of the Foundation to adhere to these principles.

c. Key attributes of a Panel Member include:

1. Ability to read and analyse information
2. Ability to share thoughts and ideas clearly and succinctly
3. Ability to listen to other perspectives
4. Ability to maintain confidentiality
5. Knowledge of Gloucestershire's communities
6. Understanding of young people and reasons why they may engage in crime and anti-social behaviour
7. Understanding of community groups and charities and how they work to engage in communities to make a difference to the lives of people within them
8. Commitment to equal opportunities and valuing diversity

6. Applying to be a Grants Panel Member

If you are interested in volunteering with Gloucestershire Community Foundation as a grants panel member, we ask you to complete the volunteer application form on the link below and email it to grantsofficer@gloucestershirecf.org.uk by 9am on Tuesday 21 May.

[Please download an application form here](#)

After we have received your application, we will contact you to discuss your areas of interest and explore how you might best fit within our current panel make-up. We may also ask you to attend a short interview. For further information the Foundation, please visit our website at www.gloucestershirecf.org.uk. We look forward to receiving your application and thank you for your interest in the Community Foundation.

