



Gloucestershire Community Foundation

Volunteer Grants Panel Member

Application Information

February 2025

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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 one of our community grants panels.

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 2024, Gloucestershire Community Foundation distributed more than £400,000 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.

GCF Grant Programmes

GCF operates a variety of different grant programmes throughout the year, many of which have community grants panels who have delegated responsibility for making decisions regarding the award of grants. Below are the programmes that we are looking to recruit new panel members for:

Main Grants Programme:

Our Main Grants programme benefits people who are disadvantaged or isolated. To be eligible for a grant from this programme, organisations must work with people who are disadvantaged due to poverty, disability, age, location or culture.

We also give priority to groups that:

- Enable people to take opportunities that would otherwise not be available
- Reflect the concerns and priorities of people living and working in the area
- Involve local people in improving their community

To be eligible for a grant from the Main Programme you must be able to demonstrate that you will benefit people in your community by helping them to lead more fulfilling lives, particularly where there is known deprivation, disadvantage, or isolation. Disadvantage may be the result of poverty, disability, age, location or culture.

Grants range can be to £5,000.

We are currently looking to recruit three new panel members for this programme

In addition to the Main Grants Panel, we have some new programmes coming up in 2025 that we will also be creating community grants panels for in the future.

2. Organisations supported by Gloucestershire Community Foundation grants

Grants from the Gloucestershire Community Foundation help thousands of people in Gloucestershire each year. These are a few recent grants:

Strike a Light were awarded a grant of £9,950 per year for two years.

The project supporting local people to lead 3 creative projects responding to the needs of their community, particularly Gloucester's Black African, Caribbean, South Asian and Muslim communities.

Philippa, Michelle and Halima worked as community producers, alongside local and national artists and volunteers to produce:

1. A textiles/ poetry group who meet monthly as well as arranging their own social and creative events and getting involved in other Strike A Light projects.

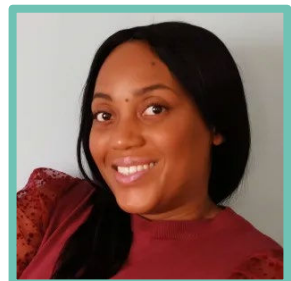
2. Hear Me Out: a poetry group for 7 young women from Gloucester, aged 14-20, working with Halima and poet Oshanti Ahmed over 10 weeks, culminating in a performance for friends and family.

3. Soumik Datta's Hope Notes: a full band combine traditional Indian sarod music with electronica, activism and spoken word to share the refugee experience at Gloucester Guildhall.

4. 75 Years, Our Story: Halima Malek, Daniel Farmer Patel, filmmaker Hardik Gaurav, and volunteers from the South Asian community have been collecting and filming stories from the Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Indian communities in Gloucester to be shared in an event with food and an exhibition. This has included street art workshops and artefact sharing conversations with artists Aumairah Hassan and Liaqat Rasul leading to new community/ artist created artwork and photography for the exhibition.

5. I Remember When: a film and oral history project with Caribbean elders created by Philippa and Michelle, culminating in an event with live music, Caribbean food and performance from spoken word artist Shaday Barrowes-Bayewunmi and Bristol laureate Miles Chambers responding to the Gloucester elder's stories. This was also live streamed.

6. Philippa also collaborated on the King's Square launch event with workshops from Avant Garde Dance, supporting members of her community to take part.



A grant of £6,000 awarded to the Family Haven in 2023 enabled the charity to support disadvantaged families struggling through the cost-of-living crisis by offering support and financial advice.

Family Haven delivered personal development sessions, offering practical assistance such as hands-on parenting support.

They focused on offering financial advice, information regarding benefits, English classes and help with CV's and training. They also provided active listening sessions where support workers give the parent an opportunity to unload some of their emotional problems, providing emotional space to think and, as a result, be in a more positive position to help their child to cope with their emotions and anxieties.

36 individuals attended **101** times over **17** parenting and **34** personal development sessions.



Lucy Pearce, Centre Manager, and some of their visitors talk about the support the centre provides [HERE](#)

A grant of £500 enabled Blackbridge/New Dawn Allotment's gardening group to purchase compost and materials to build one wheelchair accessible raised bed and a small raised flower bed.

The group is accessed by people with disabilities and both physical and mental health issues as part of the local GP surgery's social prescribing service.

The group leader, who is a volunteer at the allotment says:

“Having the wheelchair accessible raised bed allows an amputee client to garden more easily, giving him the same opportunities as the more able-bodied clients. Because of where the raised bed is situated, it also gives our client who has had a stroke more accessibility. The value of the weekly gardening group has given clients friendship, the joy of working together as a group, helping one another to learn about growing vegetables and improved mental health, wellbeing and self worth. We know this from the questionnaires we have asked the clients to fill out and what the clients tell us.”



Please take a look at our [Impact Reports](#) for more information about the work we do and the communities we support

3. 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?

A: You won't need any formal qualifications to volunteer. We are looking for people who know and understand communities across Gloucestershire, particularly people who may have an understanding of the challenges and disadvantages faced by vulnerable people living in our communities. 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 (increasing to £12.21 in April 2025). 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 Main 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 includes one GCF trustee and at least three other volunteer panel members. The GCF Grants Manager also attends 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.

4. 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

5. Applying to be a Grants Panel Member

Please submit your completed application form by 9am on Thursday 20th February. Successful candidates will be invited to an online interview on either Tuesday 25th February or Thursday 27th February between 2.30 and 5pm.

We look forward to receiving your application and thank you for your interest in Gloucestershire Community Foundation.