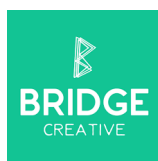


Community Voice Fund



The Community Voice Fund is money that is available to run projects that make life better for adults with a learning disability, autistic people, and their families and carers, living in County Durham.



The Community Voice Fund is being supported by **Inclusion North** and **Bridge Creative**.



Inclusion North exist to make inclusion a reality for people with a learning disability, autistic people, and their families/carers.



Bridge Creative help autistic adults and adults with learning disabilities to have good opportunities in their life. They do this by helping people with work experience, improving their skills, and other exciting opportunities.

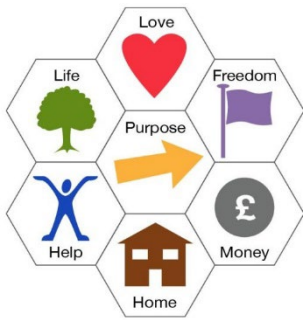


The Community Voice Fund gives money to **individuals, groups, and organisations** in County Durham.

The money must be used to **run a project**.

The project should **support**:

- Autistic adults
- Adults with a learning disability
- Their families and carers



Every project must link to at least one of the **7 Keys to Citizenship**.

These are Freedom, Direction, Money, Home, Help, Life, Love).



What are the 7 Keys to Citizenship?

Everyone wants to live a good life.
We all want to feel included, safe, and happy.



The **7 Keys to Citizenship** were created to help people, especially people with support needs to live a good life in their community.



These 7 Keys are like a guide. They show what people need to be **independent**, **respected**, and **connected**.



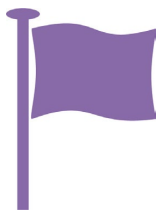
Independent means being able to do things on your own and make your own choices. You don't always need someone else to help you.



Respected means being treated well by others because of who you are or how you act. People listen to you and take you seriously.



Connected means having good relationships with others and feeling part of a group, so you don't feel lonely.



Here are the **7 keys to citizenship**:

Freedom which means

You can make your own choices.

You can get help when you need it, but you stay in charge.

Direction (Purpose)



Your life should have meaning and a reason to get out of bed in the morning.

Do things that matter to you and bring you joy.



Money

You need enough money to live well.

Money helps you do things on your own and do what you want.

Home



Everyone should have a safe and comfortable place to live.

A home helps you feel like you belong amongst the people around you, like family, neighbours, or close friends, who make your home feel safe and supportive. This is called **community**.



Help

It's okay to get support from others.

Good help makes you stronger, not weaker.



Life

Be part of your community.

This could be work, hobbies, or spending time with friends.



Love

Everyone needs relationships.

Friends, family, or partners help you feel happy and supported.



These 7 Keys help people live with **dignity**, **respect**, and **freedom**.



Dignity means being treated as important and valued for who you are.

Respect means people listening to you, being kind, and treating you well.



Freedom means being able to make your own choices and do things you want to do.

What money is available?



For **individuals** you could be given £1,500, £2,000, or £2,500 for your project.



You will not get the money directly. Bridge Creative will hold the money, and you will tell them what they need to buy for you to use for your project.



For **organisations or groups** you could be given £4,000, £5,000, or £6,000 for your project.

The money will be paid straight to the organisation or group.



You must apply for the lowest amount available

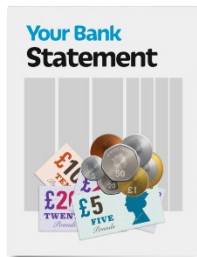
£1,500 for **individuals**

£4,000 for **groups or organisations**.

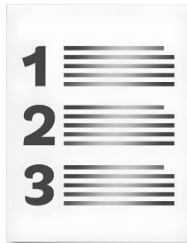


Organisations must submit a completed application form, and:

- Your most recent set of Accounts.



- A recent bank statement dated within the last 3 months.



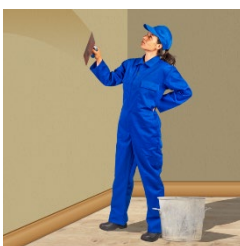
- Your governing document.



All money must be used, and the project must be finished by **30 June 2026**.



All projects must use the money to support **autistic people, adults with a learning disability, and/or their families and carers**.

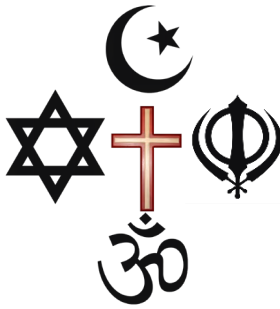


What you **CAN** spend Money On:

- Paying for equipment and tools but not vehicles or minibuses.
- Paying staff for their time
- Paying for training done by others
- Paying for activities
- Paying for the use of rooms or buildings
- Paying for people to travel for example, using buses, trains, taxis or petrol for their car.
- Paying people **involvement fees**.
Involvement fees are money that you can give to people who come and take part in your project.
- Fixing rooms or buildings that are used by people in the community.
- Paying managers for their time. Organisations can use up to 15% of their money for this.



What the fund will NOT pay for:

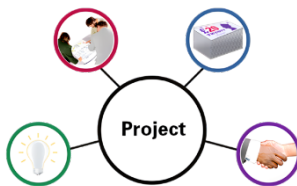


- Anything to do with a **religion**.

Religion is a set of beliefs about life, the world, and often a God or Gods. It usually includes practices like prayer, worship, or traditions that bring people together and guide how they live.



- Vehicles or minibuses.



- Money already spent on an existing project.



- Anything to do with supporting **political parties** or **lobbying**. **Political parties** are groups of people who share ideas about how the country should be run. They work to win elections so they can make laws and lead the government. **Lobbying** is when people or groups try to persuade politicians to make decisions or laws that support their interests or ideas.



- Projects that aim to make a **profit**.

Profit is the money someone makes after paying for what they spend.



- Community Interest Companies that are less than 12 months old.



- Services that should be paid for by the government.



- National charities that are not run locally.
- Organisations with a lot of money already.



How to Apply

You can apply on the application form or by video (no longer than 5 minutes) by answering the questions.



Bridge Creative can help answer any questions you have about the application.

They can also help you make your video.





If you would like help with your application, please contact:

Name: Deepak

Email: hello@bridgecreative.org

Phone: 01388 449410



All applications must be completed and sent back by **midnight on Sunday 2nd November 2025.**



How we will decide who gets the money?

Step 1:

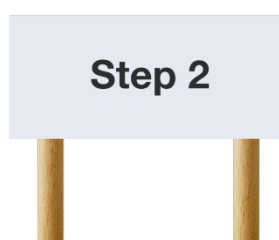
We will look through the video applications and application forms with people with lived experience to decide which applications will be given the money.



We will be picking 3 projects for individuals and 3 projects for groups and organisations.

All these projects will be awarded **one** of the amounts of money available.

How do we decide which project gets which amount?



Step 2:

The individuals and organisations or groups who are awarded money after step 1 will then be invited to the **Pitch Event** on **Thursday 20th**



November 2025 where they can share information about their project or share a video that tells us about the project if they would rather not do this in person.



We will be inviting other people living in County Durham to the event.



They will vote on each project to decide which amount of money each project gets.



We will have soup and refreshments and a chance to get to know each other.



We can provide up to £50 the people who will be telling us about their project at the Pitch Event.



Important Dates



- Applications open: **3rd October 2025**



- Applications close: **2nd November 2025 (midnight)**



- You will be told if your project will be receiving an amount of money on: **4th November 2025**

If you have not heard from us by 4th November 2025, then you have not been picked to receive any money.



- You must attend the pitch event on: **20th November 2025**



- The money will be available for your project from **December 2025**



- Your project must finish by: **30 June 2026**