

National Lottery Community Fund – Covid-19 Updated Response

17 March 2020

We know that many charities and community organisations across the UK are facing increasing challenges as a result of COVID-19 and we want to support those we fund as far as is possible at this difficult time.

Following the latest government guidance we have asked our staff to work from home and they are all equipped to do so. Our plan is to continue to deliver our services to applicants, grant holders and communities across the UK as normally as we can. We have already started to shift application deadlines for some of our funds that were due to close soon. We also want to be flexible where grant-holders get into difficulty or see problems on the way.

We are however in uncharted territory and things will occur that we hadn't expected and we will get things wrong. Please bear with us if we do, let us know, and we will be as helpful as possible as the situation unfolds.

At the moment our priority is to keep money flowing to support people, communities and the organisations.

Being flexible

We will support you to support your communities – we trust you to know what is best. This means that:

- We will be flexible with regards to your current grant: for example,
 - accommodating changes to timelines
 - accommodating changes to activity to respond to the current climate and critical local needs

- We will support you and your teams through this crisis: for example

- continuing to pay staff salary so that you can support existing staff who need to be off sick, self-isolate or have caring responsibilities
- considering any requests for support if you experience particular financial pressures as a result of the situation

- We don't want you to worry about deadlines and reporting: for example

- we will be flexible with regards to reporting
- if you record any changes you are making to your project, we can reconcile it all later

Getting in touch

Our funding officers can answer questions you might have, do get in touch with them if you need to. **However, to avoid delays, we trust you to focus on supporting your communities.**

We are currently testing new capability to service our advice lines so that they can operate remotely. For the next 24 hours you can use the email addresses on this page to contact us. Following that the advice line will be fully operational again. All details can be found here: <https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/contact>

Next steps

Given the unprecedented nature of the situation, we have been considering what else the Fund can do to support people and communities. We are reaching out across our network of grantees, partners and stakeholders to understand how they are already responding to COVID-19 and what we can do to support them in the short and longer term. We will keep you posted as our response continues to develop.

Finally, I want to say at this very challenging time how moving it is to see people coming together to support each other.

Yours

Dawn Austwick, CEO, National Lottery Community Fund.