

# GRAND UNION

The **Paddington** Partnership

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## Grand Union BID Microgrant Application Guidelines and Frequently Asked Questions

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# Key Microgrant Information

The Grand Union BID Microgrant is a new fund in Westminster, offering community grants up to £3,000. The fund is for activities and projects taking place over the next 12 months.

To align with the BID's core priorities for 2026/27, applications must focus on at least one of the following themes;

- Tackling social isolation
- Promoting digital inclusion
- Inspiring the next generation
- Assisting people into employment
- Improving health and wellbeing
- Championing sustainability

The money spent must benefit Westminster residents. Priority will be given to applications which:

- Target communities or groups with high levels of deprivation and need.
- Take place closest in proximity to Paddington or benefit residents throughout the Borough. We are less likely to fund activities that are exclusively for the South of the Borough.
- Most closely match our core priorities.
- Demonstrate and can measure clear impact.
- Commit to inclusive participation.
- Offer good value for money.

Priority will be given to organisations who:

- Are embedded in the community.
- Would be less likely to receive funding from larger charitable or statutory sources.
- Have not previously received a Grand Union BID Microgrant.

We will consider applications from organisations whose main office base or registered office is not in Westminster but will be using funds to deliver projects and activities in Westminster.

## Application Process

- Please complete the application form, ensuring all contact details are correct so that we can get in touch.
- Submit your application form by the deadline to [grants@thisispaddington.com](mailto:grants@thisispaddington.com) along with a copy of your legal governing framework / constitution and latest accounts.
- You should receive a confirmation email that your application has been received within two working days of submission. If you do not hear, please call the office on 020 3145 1202 to confirm your application has been received.
- Applications will be reviewed internally initially to ensure they are valid and eligible, before being taken to a panel of BID members and key stakeholders to review.
- Successful joint applicants will both be required to agree and sign the acceptance form.

We hope that this answers any questions you may have about this microgrant and the application process.

If anything is unclear or you require further information, please get in touch on [grants@thisispaddington.com](mailto:grants@thisispaddington.com)

## Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. What is Grand Union BID?

Grand Union Business Improvement District (BID) was established in June 2025, building on nearly 30 years of work undertaken by The Paddington Partnership (which remains our legal entity). The BID is a business-led partnership that has been created through a statutory ballot process overseen by Westminster City Council.

We have approximately 45 members, all businesses located in the Paddington Basin area. Our main activities can be broadly captured under three themes:

- Regeneration and Activation
- Volunteering and Social Value
- Networks and Wellbeing

Further information about our history and core areas of work can be found here: [Grand Union BID | Paddington](#)

## 2. How does Grand Union BID work with the community?

Volunteering and social value sits at the very heart of Grand Union BID. The Paddington Partnership first established a corporate volunteering programme in 2003, and each year we support approximately 1,500 employees from businesses in Paddington to share their time, energy, skills and talents by volunteering in local schools, charities and community groups.

Through this work we are acutely aware of the financial challenges many of you face to deliver services and projects. We hope that the new microgrants pot will play its part, alongside the other local and national funds available, in easing some of this pressure.

You can read more about our commitment to the local community here: [Volunteering and Social Impact | Paddington](#)

## 3. Who can apply to this microgrant?

The Grand Union BID microgrant is open to:

- Registered charities
- Community Interest Companies (CICs)
- Schools and educational institutions
- Projects based out of community hubs, community centres, care homes and food banks
- Other types of community group with an asset lock

The individual completing the form on behalf of your organisation must be over the age of 18.

## 4. What will the microgrant fund?

The microgrant can be used to cover:

- Direct project costs
- Equipment
- Courses, workshops and training
- Salaries for a set project
- Trips and travel
- Pilot projects

We recognise the value and efficiencies that can come from collaborative working and welcome joint applications.

Please note that we will not fund the following:

- Core costs e.g. rent and utility bills
- Academic research
- Individuals e.g. an individual hardship grant
- Religious or political activities
- Statutory bodies e.g. local council or NHS / GP Practices
- Projects run for individual or commercial benefit
- Contributions towards large-scale capital improvements
- Events, projects or activities that have already taken place or items that have already been purchased

## 5. How will applications be assessed?

All completed microgrant applications are initially reviewed internally by members of our Community Team, to ensure they are valid, eligible and pass due diligence (see question 11). Shortlisted applications are presented to a panel, comprising representatives from local businesses. The panel review and score applications and agree by majority vote on the successful applications.

## 6. When will we hear if we have been successful?

All applicants will receive an email confirming that their application has been received by the team. This email should be received within two working days of submitting your application. If you do not hear, please call the office on 020 3145 1202.

You will hear within three weeks of the microgrant application deadline whether you have been successful.

The decision of the microgrants committee is final.

## 7. Can we get feedback on an early draft of my application or an unsuccessful application?

As a small team we are unable to review drafts of applications. We will always notify unsuccessful applicants (on the same timelines as notifying successful applicants). Due to the high number of applications, it is not possible to provide feedback on applications.

## 8. How much can we apply for?

Up to £3,000 per application can be applied for as part of this microgrant round.

## 9. Will the microgrant cover the cost of VAT?

We will only fund VAT where it is a real cost. VAT registered bodies should apply net of VAT as you can claim back the VAT you pay. You will be asked on the application form to indicate whether you are VAT registered.

In Section 3 of the application form you are asked to provide a breakdown of how you would spend the microgrant. There is an opportunity here to account separately for VAT.

## 10. How often can we apply?

If unsuccessful in Round 1, you are welcome to review your application and re-apply to Round 2. Round 2 will open later in the year. We will fund an organisation once every 12 months. If successful in the last round, you cannot apply again for 12 months, even if this application is for a different project or branch / location of your work. We will not fund the same activity / project more than once for an organisation.

## 11. What supporting documentation will we need to include in the application?

As a minimum, your organisation must have a management committee, some form of written constitution and a dual signatory bank / building society account. You will need to send us your legal governing framework / constitution and a copy of your latest accounts, together with your completed application form.

Depending on the purpose of the project, we may ask you to provide us with up-to-date health and safety, public liability insurance, safeguarding, data protection or equal opportunities policies. You may be asked to confirm that employees / volunteers working with children, young people or vulnerable adults have a current, in date Enhanced DBS Certificate.

If making a joint application, this information will be required for both applicants.

## 12. Can we submit extra supporting documents (films, photographs, reports, case studies etc.)?

Regretfully, we are unable to take additional supporting documentation into account when reviewing applications. We will request this information if required to understand your project.

## 13. What happens if we are successful?

- You will hear by email that your microgrant application has been successful.
- An acceptance form will be attached to this email which you need to complete and return within five working days.

The acceptance form will ask you to:

- State the amount of grant awarded and ask for you to confirm the bank account details for your organisation so that payment can be arranged.
- Agree to credit Grand Union BID on marketing, media and PR related to activities using the microgrant. You will receive a branding toolkit to make this as simple as possible.
- Agree to completing a short evaluation form once your funds have been spent, detailing how the money has been spent (including receipts for all items purchased over the value of £250), its impact, beneficiary numbers, testimonials, photos and so on.
- Agree to return any underspend on the grant greater than £250, unless otherwise agreed in writing.

Successful joint applicants will both be required to agree to and sign the acceptance form.

## 14. How quickly do we have to spend the money?

Except in exceptional circumstances, we would expect funds to be spent within 12 months of being received. You will be required to provide an explanation if this is not the case and we may request remaining funds are returned, if we believe funding has not been spent appropriately. Unless otherwise agreed in writing, we will normally require any underspend greater than £250 to be returned after 12 months.

## 15. What if our plans for the microgrant change once we have the funds?

You must use the grant for the purpose for which it was awarded. We are open to discussions about changes to the use of the microgrant within reason, but you must contact us in advance before you change your spending plans. Should there be a breach of this trust, and we believe funds have not been spent appropriately, we may request that funds are returned.

## 16. How much monitoring and evaluation will grant recipients be required to undertake?

We recognise that these are relatively small pots of money and the time pressures our colleagues in the community are under. Our evaluation form is very brief – requiring you to:

- Confirm how the funds have been spent – with receipts for items over £250.
- Any evidence of success / impact (beneficiary numbers, testimonials, statistics).
- Where appropriate, photographs of your work.

Wherever possible, a member of the Community Team will visit you during the 12-month period following your grant to learn more about your work and explore other opportunities for us to work together.

## 17. Do you have other grants and funds?

We will be launching a smaller crisis fund for emergency purchases later in the year. This emergency pot will be available as a rolling fund, meaning applications can be received and will be reviewed at any time internally by our Community Team. We will aim to reply to applicants with a response confirming if their application is successful within two weeks.

Examples of uses for this fund are;

- If alternative venue hire was required at short notice and needed one-off funding.
- An essential piece of equipment breaks and needs replacing to enable projects and activities to continue.

This emergency pot will award up to £500 per application and organisations will be able to apply once per year.

## Further Information

For more information about Grand Union BID, our Microgrant programme and to also find an up to date application form, please email [grants@thisispaddington.com](mailto:grants@thisispaddington.com), call us on 020 3125 1202 or visit [www.thisispaddington.com/paddington-community-programme/grants](http://www.thisispaddington.com/paddington-community-programme/grants)

The Paddington Partnership  
7 Praed Street  
London W2 1NJ

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