



Cabinet Office

Carers Social Action Support Fund

Frequently Asked Questions



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General Questions

1. What is social action?

Social action can broadly be defined as practical action in the service of others, and is:

- more than traditional volunteering, including a wider range of practical actions in the service of others;
- carried out by individuals or groups of people working together;
- not mandated and not for profit;
- done for the good of others; individuals, communities and/or society; and
- bringing about social change and/or value.

2. What is a carer?

A carer is anyone who looks after, without pay, a friend or family member who due to illness, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction cannot cope without their support. Carers are a diverse group and include the following:

- Adult carers: An adult caring for someone over the age of 18.
- Parent carers: A parent caring for a child with additional needs
- Young carers: A carer under the age of 18.



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3. What is a Theory of Change?

A theory of change shows the path from needs to activities to outcomes to impact. It describes the change you want to make and the steps involved in making that change happen. Theories of change also depict the assumptions that lie behind your reasoning, and where possible, these assumptions are backed up by evidence. Theories of change are often shown in a diagram, allowing you to see the causal links between all the steps. More information on how to develop a Theory of Change can be found at: <http://www.thinknpc.org/publications/theory-of-change/>



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Eligibility

4. Who can apply for the Fund?

Organisations with a strong track record in supporting unpaid, family carers can apply for the fund. These could include local authorities, social enterprises, carer support groups, community enterprises and voluntary groups. Your organisation must be one of the following;

- A legally constituted Civil Society Organisation (this could be a company limited by guarantee, or CIC for example) which may, or may not, also be a registered charity
- A public sector body, for example local authority, hospital trust, or university
- A business with a social mission or clear objectives in its corporate social responsibility policy toward increasing social action, or business involved in the delivery of public services

Organisations can apply in partnership.

5. What will be funded?

Social action services which:

- target unpaid adult carers caring for another adult,
- build on or adapt an existing service,
- have the capacity to reach at least 50 new carers (this is a minimum number and projects which will be able to reach larger numbers of carers will be strongly favoured)
- have volunteers at the core of their delivery,
- focus on England only



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6. I'm not sure if my project has volunteers as core to the delivery of the service. What do you mean by this?

Projects need to have **social action** at the core of their delivery. We've used the term 'volunteering' as short hand for social action in our guidance, but social action is about more than just traditional volunteering. We define social action as 'people helping people'. You should check your proposal against our definition of social action, detailed in the guidance notes and in Question 1 above. It is important to note that projects don't need to make use of volunteers in the conventional sense to be eligible for funding. A carer mentoring or support group, for example, might not use volunteers in the traditional sense but would count as a social action initiative because it is about people coming together to help other people (in this case carers and/or ex-carers who get together to support/mentor each other). Another example would be initiatives which use staff who, alongside paid support, provide significant unpaid, voluntary support.

7. Why do you only support projects focusing on adult carers?

We recognise the needs of and issues faced by other carers as well as the hard work and range of projects in this area. However, due to government priorities (for example, on ageing) and our aim of creating an overall programme evaluation, which requires consistency in scope and target, we have decided to focus on adult carers caring for other adults.

8. Why do services need to reach a minimum of 50 carers who haven't used the service before?

We want to develop a stronger evidence base for the effectiveness of social action models in supporting carers. Therefore we want to fund to projects where we will be able to measure impact; to do so we need a big enough sample size. The carers must be new to the service so that it is possible for us to measure the impact of the service by asking questions before and after the carer uses the service. 50 carers is the minimum but we will strongly favour applications that can reach larger numbers of carers.



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9. Why does this fund only apply to England?

The Centre for Social Action is an Office for Civil Society (OCS) programme. OCS only funds activities which directly or indirectly benefit the whole or any or part of England (whether or not they also benefit any other area). Organisations with a wider impact outside England will be able to apply, provided they predominantly benefit England. OCS cannot fund projects that are purely beneficial to those outside England.

10. What are capital items?

Capital items are fixed assets with a useful economic life of more than one year. Examples include IT, office equipment and machinery, furniture, property, or vehicles.



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Funding

11. How much money will be available through the Fund?

The fund will be worth up to £1 million. The minimum grant size per project will be £50,000.

12. Where is the money for the fund coming from?

The money is being provided by the Cabinet Office's Centre for Social Action. More information on the Centre can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/centre-for-social-action>.

13. How long is the funding for?

The funding will be from November 2014 to October 2015. The majority of the funding (70%) needs to be spent by the end of June 2015 and all money has to be spent by October 2015.

14. How many projects will be funded?

We anticipate funding between 5 and 10 projects.

15. Will applicants need to bring match funding?

We will favour applications with match funding from local partners, in particular for the financial year 2015/16, but this is not a requirement.



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16. Will funding be available to help organisations identify carers?

We recognise that organisations may require funding as part of their bid for activities to identify carers, however this should not be the main emphasis of the bid. We have a preference for organisations which use social action to identify carers, but this is not compulsory.

17. Which types of carer breaks are eligible for funding?

Applications will be assessed on a case by case basis, but as a general rule we will only fund carers breaks where social action based support enables a carer to take a break. This includes volunteer supported carers breaks, where a volunteer relieves a carer from their caring duty for a certain amount of time. This could mean that the volunteer sits with the person being cared for or provides practical support to the carer (such as grocery shopping) so that they have more time to themselves.

18. Will you fund volunteer expenses?

We will consider applications on a case by case basis. We will fund reasonable volunteer expenses and you should budget for volunteer expenses in your proposal.

If the service you are offering involves carers as volunteers (for example, in peer-to-peer mentoring groups), you should also include the cost of providing alternative care.



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Application process

19. How do I apply?

To apply, organisations will need to visit <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/carers-social-action-support-fund> to download the application form and guidance. The completed form must be submitted by noon on 22 October 2014 to satcorrespondence@cabinet-office.gsi.gov.uk.

20. When do I need to apply?

Organisations can apply until **noon on Wednesday, 22 October 2014**. See indicative timeline for the entire application process:

Timeline	
22 September 2014	Fund launched
22 October 2014	Deadline for applications
27th October – 31st October 2014	Interviews for shortlisted applicants
Early November 2014	Notification of successful and unsuccessful applicants.
Late November 2014	Announcement of successful applicants
Early December 2014	First grant payment
February 2015 onwards	Project delivery and evaluation
March 2015	Second grant payment
July 2015	Third and final grant payment
October 2015	Deadline for total spend of grant
December 2015	Final evaluation report



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21. How do I submit my application?

- **Save:** Once you're ready to submit the form, ensure that you save the final version. Keep a printed copy if you prefer.
- **Collate:** Ensure your form is complete and that you've got all the required supporting documents at hand.
- **Send:** Forms must be emailed to satcorrespondence@cabinet-office.gsi.gov.uk, along with your supporting documents (if required).
- **Confirmation:** Expect an automated reply from us once you've sent us your application.