

An unprecedented crisis

In only a matter of days, a public-health crisis caused by the Covid-19 pandemic has become a socio-economic crisis of a magnitude which this country has not experienced since the Second World War. Recent government announcements of almost unprecedented levels of public spending to shore up businesses marked the start of what the director general of the CBI called the “economic fight back.”

Civil society leaders have also been lobbying government for a similar rescue package for the country’s voluntary and charity sectors. Evidence presented by the [National Council of Voluntary Organisations](#) to the [Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee](#)¹ indicated that:

- charities could lose around £4bn of a predicted £12.5bn income in the next financial quarter alone due to a loss of trading income
- smaller civil society organisations are particularly vulnerable; only a quarter of charities hold reserves sufficient to see them through the next three months.

Whilst government support for businesses should go some way to ensuring that as many people as possible return to work once the crisis is over, the needs of civil society organisations are, if anything, more pressing. Emergency assistance is required now to sustain critical social and community services during this crisis, not least for those already disadvantaged groups and communities which will be hit hardest by the impact of the Covid-19 outbreak.

Rocket Science has signed the [London Funders](#) pledge and is committed to working on behalf of funders to mobilise emergency grant aid, refocusing existing support based on four key principles:

- 1. Adapting activities** – acknowledging that agreed outcomes may not be achieved in the timeframes originally set
- 2. Discussing dates** – not adding pressure on organisations to meet reporting deadlines
- 3. Financial flexibility** – allowing organisations to use money differently e.g. buying equipment and covering staff sickness
- 4. Listening** – encouraging frank conversations between funders and grantees, with funders being supportive of their needs.

As a member of London Funders, we adhere to these principles ensuring grants we manage are accessible and flexible. We ensure efficiency through collaborating with other funders, simplifying the applicant journey and keeping management costs affordable to maximise the value of grants reaching their intended recipients.

¹NCVO press release: “Every Day Counts” <https://www.ncvo.org.uk/about-us/media-centre/press-releases/2748-every-day-counts-as-charities-still-wait-for-government-support>

How can we support you?

Whether you are wanting to provide emergency funds; redesign and re-orientate existing grant services, or support your grantees' sustainability through the current crisis, we can help. We have set out below some of the ways we can add value and extra support to your role at this critical time.

We draw on research skills and evaluation expertise to inform your programme's design and the delivery of bespoke grant management services

Established in 2001, Rocket Science is a leading research, consultancy and grant-management organisation working across a range of social and economic policy fields. Over the last 2 decades, we have managed and evaluated government, corporate and independent-funders' programmes supporting young people's education and employability; promoting opportunities through arts, culture and sport; targeting interventions at particularly disadvantaged groups designed to redress inequality and promote social mobility.

We offer a comprehensive service, managing high-volume grant programmes aimed at grassroots charities; expert advice, tools and skills to support both funders & applicants alike.

Rocket Science is already working with several funders, place-based and sector-focused collaborations, to mobilise appropriate Covid-19 responses, as well as adapting and extending existing grant programmes we are managing on behalf of the Greater London Authority, L&Q Foundation and the Youth Futures Foundation. We are acutely aware of the impact of the crisis on smaller charities and grass-roots organisations, including challenges of cashflow, staff deployment and management. We apply best practice in grant making to ensure a straightforward applicant journey and minimise the bureaucracy involved in securing, monitoring and reporting grants.

We provide quality-assured grant management services run by a trusted and experienced team, using the latest digitised processes and tools

As a Crown Commercial Service approved supplier of grant and programme management services, our ISO-9001 quality-assured service uses a secure cloud-based digital portal, Blackbaud Grantmaking. Configurable software streamlines grant-making processes for applicants, assessors and decision makers, capturing essential monitoring data in easily exportable formats. We work alongside our clients to provide custom-built portals, simple on-line application and assessment, data collection and analysis for each fund we manage. Where appropriate, we automate processes to maximise efficiencies for both funder and applicant.

We design, manage and evaluate both small and large grant schemes, including multi-year programmes, targeting disadvantaged areas, particular issues and groups

Rocket Science works with funders, often at pace, to turn ideas and concepts into practical grant making. These include 'test and learn' programmes such as the Challenge Fund for the Department of Work and Pensions to identify new approaches to addressing the disability employment gap; we are also working with the new Youth Futures Foundation, using investment from reclaimed assets to pilot and evaluate models which tackle youth unemployment and the racial disparity in young people's employment.

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