

SUPPORTED BY
MAYOR OF LONDON

THE VIOLENCE REDUCTION UNIT

STRONGER FUTURES PROGRAMME 2021/22

Summary Prospectus July 2021

Introduction



Lib Peck
Director

London's community-led groups are showing the very best of our city by helping to support our most vulnerable communities during incredibly difficult times. You are at the forefront of this work and often the first point of contact for young people. Thank you.

As you will no doubt be seeing first-hand, COVID has had such a profound impact on young people. It has diminished their social and physical activity, increased the number of them suffering from poor mental health, interrupted their education, and is threatening their employment prospects.

The Mayor has passionately and persistently advocated for more government support for London's young people and youth services. We are co-leading the strand of recovery focusing on young people - passionately advocating that every young person is entitled to a mentor (educational, skills, or personal support) and that every young person is entitled to quality and targeted youth activities.

Thank you once again for all you do to support London's most vulnerable young people. We hope to continue to work together towards the same goals of making London a safer, fairer, and more prosperous city for all its citizens in the months and years to come.

Hello from the Team



Darwin Bernardo

Community Engagement Lead

As soon as school finished, I don't know about you, but I never went home straight away! I would spend time with my friends. At least twice a week, I would attend our local youth centre.

From playing table tennis to attending cooking club (I'll never forget that dry pizza I made). The centre also gave me the opportunity to join the centre's advisory board. We shaped what activities we could introduce to the centre, spoke to local councillors, housing officers and different businesses around the importance of these provisions and even attended training sessions which supported me to become a centre volunteer and a mentor to the "youngers"

Fast forward 2 years, my first official job was assistant centre manager at the youth club.

This fund is really focused supporting your organisation to enhance the current provision your providing for vulnerable young people, we need to give our young people real opportunities, real responsibilities and a real chance to shape their future whether that's exploring a route to further education or employment. We want to support you to support our young people now!

As a youth worker by background, I know the importance of reaching and engaging young people in positive activities. The programmes provided by charities and community organisations can be invaluable to a young person, guiding them through life and providing positive role models during some of their most challenging times.

After school I often met with friends in the area, there was a lack of provision to keep us occupied meaning we'd end up walking around, hopping on and off buses and generally looking for something to do. This can easily leave room for young people to lose their path.

Ensuring there are positive activities for young people to engage in is important but even more important to ensure it is targeted and directly supports the needs of the young people most in need, providing opportunities and guidance and enhancing their employability and education prospectus. Through this fund we aim to support organisations to do just that!



Elisha Coates

Community Engagement Lead

Our Delivery Partners

The Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) have appointed Rocket Science and the Black Training & Enterprise Group (BTEG) to oversee the administration of grants and to support the assessment of applications and the monitoring of the grants awarded.

Rocket Science

Launched in October 2001, Rocket Science is an independent research and consultancy company with offices in London, Edinburgh and the North East. We are committed to making a difference to the lives of people and communities across the UK by supporting national and local government, its agencies, charities and the voluntary sector to deliver and improve their services.



As one of two delivery partners working with the VRU on the Stronger Futures Programme, we are responsible for supporting the VRU with the assessment of applications, grant administration, capacity building support and the monitoring of grants.

Black Training & Enterprise Group

Established in 1991, BTEG is a national charity delivering programmes for young black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) people aged 11-30 years. We conduct action research, operate as a learning partner for funders and provide a voice to government for BAME organisations.



BTEG will be supporting the awareness of the programme, along with assessment, capacity building and monitoring of grants.

Summary

The Stronger Futures Programme will enable community-led groups to support vulnerable young Londoners by providing them with opportunities and support in the hours following school, as well as at weekends in some cases. It will invest £1.2m in 20 projects across London. Grants of between £50,000 and £100,000 will be awarded, with an anticipated average size of c.£65,000 to be fully spent by August 2022.

This funding is designed specifically for groups and organisations in London which can demonstrate a track record of working with vulnerable young people who are either at risk or have been involved in violence.

To ensure that the Stronger Futures Programme has maximum impact, we will be adopting a “funder plus” model. This means that, alongside grant funding, we will provide capacity-building workshops and customised support to enhance delivery organisations’ resilience and sustainability.

The grant will be disbursed in two rounds of funding:

August delivery:

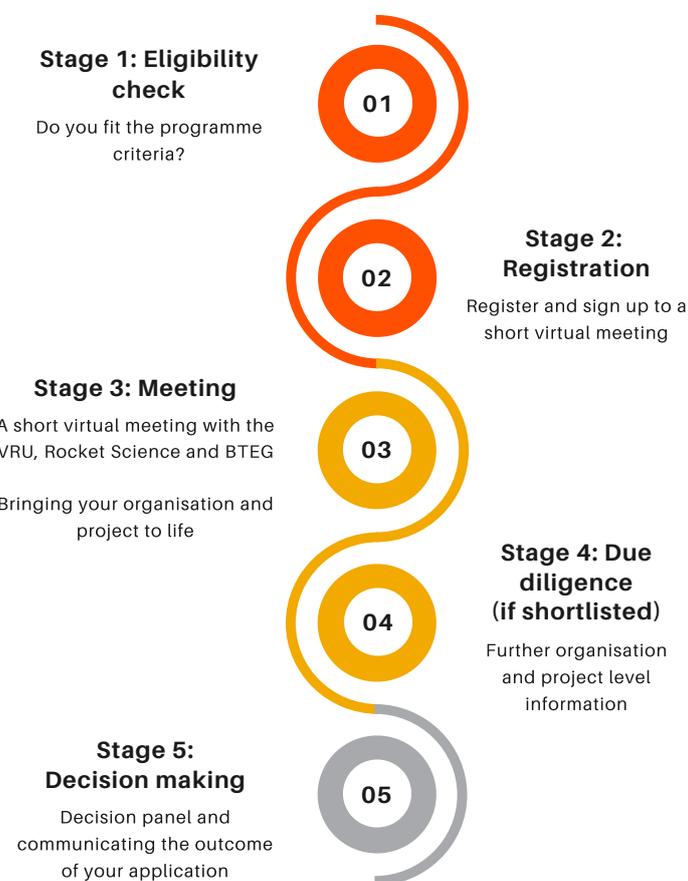
- Applications will close at 4pm on 16 July 2021
- Applications will only be accepted from organisations who can start delivery in August
- Decisions expected 16 August 2021.

October delivery:

- Applications will close at 4pm on 13 August 2021
- We will be accepting applications from organisations able to start delivery in October
- Decisions expected 8 October 2021.

If you feel you are eligible, please read on for more detailed information about the programme.

APPLICATION JOURNEY



About the Stronger Futures Fund

Background

The VRU's remit is to work with partners, stakeholders and local communities on the delivery of the following strategic aims:

- To reduce and stabilise violence across London – violence is a concern for us all; we will all play our part to reduce it.
- To increase feelings of safety – recognising that London is one of the safest cities in the world.
- To put community at the heart of our work – only by doing so do we have a sustainable long-term approach towards reducing violence.

The VRU recognises the life-changing work that community-led organisations do to support young people who are at risk of violence. Community-led organisations can generate creative, engaging and empowering ways of doing things which we want to encourage and support. The Stronger Futures Programme has been informed by discussions and feedback from consultation with youth sector practitioners, VCS organisations and, most importantly, young people themselves.

Aim of the fund

The aim of the £1.2m Stronger Futures Programme is to enable community-led groups to support those young Londoners most in-need, providing them with skills, opportunities and support in the hours after-school, which, evidence suggests, is a high-risk period for becoming involved in, or a victim of, violence. We will fund, support and evaluate community-led organisations across London which work to improve the educational outcomes, employability prospects, mental health and wellbeing of young people at risk or involved in violence.



Funding package

We want to provide you with the resource and support necessary to make both your organisation and your project successful. To this end, we have adopted a “Funder Plus” model, comprising grant funding alongside capacity building workshops and customised support to enhance your organisation’s resilience. Our full package of support is detailed below:

Funding

- We will be awarding up to 20 grants for between **£50,000 and £100,000**. The average grant award will be around **£65,000**.
- We will provide a full cost recovery approach to funding, including:
 - Staff salaries
 - Project activities
 - Overheads
 - Capacity building and organisational development costs
 - Expert support
 - Equipment costs (i.e. small capital costs like IT equipment)
- We will not fund the following:
 - Capital only projects
 - One-off activities like events, assemblies or roadshows
 - Projects that focus on political campaigns and or lobbying
 - Individuals

Capacity Support

- Each successful organisation will be allocated 3 days of free capacity building support and access to a range of thematic workshops, including financial and business planning, measuring impact, relationship management and more.
- You will also have access to a team of specialists at the VRU who have a range of experience in public policy, research and advocacy. The strength of the programme lies in our co-producing plans with you and supporting you along the way.

Pre-Application

- Our partners at Rocket Science and BTEG will be providing helpline support throughout to answer any questions you have via email and telephone.

Eligibility criteria and programme priorities

A full outline of the eligibility criteria for this fund has been provided below, broken down into the categories of organisation, programme, experience and priority areas. You will need to meet each of these criteria to be eligible so please read this carefully before submitting an application.

<p>Organisation</p>	<p>Your organisation will be based in and supporting young people in one or more London borough.</p>	<p>Your organisation will have an annual income of at least £150,000 and apply for no more than one third of your annual income.</p>	<p>Your organisation will have a current child protection and/or vulnerable adults safeguarding policy.</p>	<p>Your organisation will have current and appropriate insurance certificates (e.g. professional indemnity and employer's liability).</p>	<p>You will have a bank account in the name of the lead organisation.</p>	<p>You will be able to provide management accounts for the current year, cashflow forecast for the year ahead and annual accounts for the previous year.</p>	<p>You will be able to provide governing documents for the lead organisation.</p>	<p>The programme will encourage applications from BAME-led organisations.</p>
<p>Programme</p>	<p>Your activity will take place at least between Monday to Friday from 3pm to 10pm.</p>	<p>You will be able to mobilise, start delivery in August 2021 or October 2021, and be able to complete by the end of August 2022.</p>	<p>You can share the objectives of the project, what you need to deliver it, what activities are to be undertaken, the outputs to be delivered, and likely outcomes.</p>	<p>You will be able to provide a clear customer journey.</p>	<p>You will be able to provide costings based on the principle of Full Cost Recovery.</p>	<p>You'll be receptive to the range of capacity building support provided.</p>	<p>You'll be willing to work with the VRU's appointed evaluator and collaborate with other grantees to share experiences and expertise.</p>	<p>You will collect sufficient output and outcome level data for evaluators and be able to tell a story about your intervention.</p>
<p>Experience</p>	<p>You will be able to demonstrate specialist offers including but not limited to black and ethnic minority support, and women and girls.</p>	<p>Your organisation will offer culturally competent service models and programmes which are trauma informed.</p>	<p>You are able to demonstrate a track record of working with young people between 10-18 at risk of/have experienced serious violence, exploitation and/or grooming.</p>	<p>You'll be able to demonstrate experience of providing regular on-going support to young people and ability to track their progression.</p>	<p>You will be able to demonstrate your roots and connections in the local community.</p>	<p>Your Board will reflect and represent the community it serves.</p>		
<p>Priority areas</p>	<p>Provision for young women.</p>	<p>Provision for young people who have experienced the care system.</p>	<p>Black and mixed ethnicity young men involved in or at risk of entering the criminal justice system.</p>	<p>Black background young people at risk from school exclusion /or feel disengaged and unsafe at school/community.</p>	<p>Young people living in inadequate housing and areas characterised by poverty.</p>	<p>Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority people with poor mental health and experiencing poor outcomes from treatment.</p>	<p>Using referral pathways including Carers, Teachers, Social Services and integrated Community Relationships such as schools, pupil referral units.</p>	

How to apply

Working with our delivery partners, Rocket Science and the BTEG, we have reflected on recent grant programmes and listened to community-led organisations to understand the barriers they face when applying for support. Our aim is to make your experience of applying for this fund as straightforward as possible. To this end, we will adopt the eight commitments of a flexible funder, as promoted by the Institute for Voluntary Action Research.

We want to make sure that potential applicants do not waste time. We will be funding just 20 projects so we expect the fund to be highly competitive.

When to apply

Grant funding will be delivered across two rounds of funding.

Delivery from August

We will only be accepting applications from organisations who can start project delivery from August 2021

Successful projects will have to be able to start their programme of activity in August 2021 and complete by August 2022

Initial applications will close at 4pm on 16 July 2021

Delivery from October

We will be accepting applications from organisations based in any of the London Boroughs

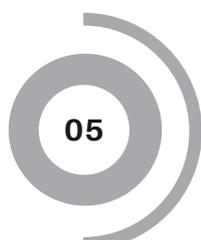
Successful applicants will have to be able to start their programme of activity by October 2021 and complete by August 2022

Initial applications will close at 4pm on 13 August 2021

For applicants looking to start delivery in August, we encourage you to view and complete the eligibility quiz and supporting questions no later than 4pm on 16 July 2021. Alternatively, we recommend that you re-apply no later than 4pm on 13 August 2021 for delivery from October. All projects must complete by the end of August 2022.

Application process

There are five key stages to the application process

		Delivery starting in	
		August	October
		Timescales	
	<p>Stage One - Eligibility</p> <p>By working through our online eligibility quiz and answering a set of straightforward questions, you can determine whether or not your organisation and project meet the core requirements of the programme or whether you should consider a partnership approach with a larger charitable organisation.</p>	<p>4pm 16 July 2021</p>	<p>4pm 13 August 2021</p>
	<p>Stage Two - Registration and verification</p> <p>If you are eligible for funding, you complete a short form to register your interest and verify your eligibility.</p>	<p>4pm 16 July 2021</p>	<p>4pm 13 August 2021</p>
	<p>Stage Three - Meeting</p> <p>If successful you will be invited to a 45 minute discussion to bring your project to life. We will ask several questions to understand more about you, your organisation, your project and the people you support.</p>	<p>29 July - 3 August 2021</p>	<p>31 August - 9 September 2021</p>
	<p>Stage Four - Due diligence</p> <p>If shortlisted following the meeting, a short due-diligence form will be provided for you to complete and ensure that you meet our internal checks, including finances, budgets, policies, potential risks and insurance.</p>	<p>6-10 August 2021</p>	<p>13-24 September 2021</p>
	<p>Stage Five - Decision</p> <p>Funding decisions will be made by a panel convened and chaired by the VRU. Once a decision about your proposal has been made, we will communicate the outcome to you.</p>	<p>16 August 2021</p>	<p>8 October 2021</p>

What happens if I'm successful or not?

Our delivery partner, Rocket Science, will notify all successful projects by email and work with you on your grant agreement and delivery milestones. You will be invited, along with the other grantees, to a welcome meeting to discuss your partnership with the VRU in more detail and to establish connections with other Stronger Futures Programme-funded organisations across London.

If you are unsuccessful at the eligibility check stage, you will receive an automatic notification letting you know. If you are unsuccessful at any other stage of the application process, Rocket Science will contact you and provide constructive feedback via email.

If you need to contact us

If you have any questions about the application process, please call us on 0207 117 2534 or by email at: vrusfp@rocketsciencelab.co.uk