

JUST FACT ACTION LEARNING GRANTS

COMMUNITY HUB GRANT GUIDANCE

Introduction

These guidelines have been created by the [Women's Environmental Network \(Wen\)](#) for applicants for a Community Hub Grant within the Just Food and Climate Transition (Just FACT) Programme.

Wen is the lead organisation for the Just FACT programme and is responsible for awarding the grants. The funding is provided by The National Lottery Community Fund (TNLCF)'s [Climate Action Fund](#), and the grants are compliant with their funding guidelines.

We only have a limited amount of funding to award, so please make sure you have read all the guidance and criteria before applying. If you are unsure if your project is suitable for Community Hub funding and would like to find out more, please come along to one of our upcoming events. There will be an updated list of frequently asked questions and upcoming events on the website – www.justfact.co.uk. [There is also a needs and offers document](#) where people can post anything they need or can offer for the delivery of a project.

One to one support is also available for people who are applying for funding for the first time, for whom English is a second language, who have a sensory impairment (visual, auditory), who are neurodiverse (dyslexia, dyscalculia, autism etc). Please express interest in receiving one to one support by emailing justfact@wen.org.uk



About Just Food and Climate Transition (Just FACT)

Just FACT is a partnership programme led by the Women's Environmental Network (Wen) with research from Platform London. It is funded by The National Lottery Community Fund (TNLCF)'s Climate Action Fund. The programme launched in 2021 and will run until 2025.

Just FACT seeks to create a more environmentally sustainable and socially just food system in Tower Hamlets, London. This means a system which works both for people and the planet.

As part of the 5 year programme, people in Tower Hamlets are researching what a better food system could look like, and testing ideas through a wide range of projects. This includes projects funded through these grants. What we learn will help us create a 'Blueprint' for change (a plan or a model that can be developed on a bigger scale), that can inspire others and have a wider impact around the UK.

Key terms

It is important that you understand the below key terms before you complete the application form.

What is the food system?

The food system is the web of activities that gets food from farms to our forks – in other words from the land into our plates and our tummy. This includes everything that happens from before the moment the seed is planted, to how the food is grown, where we buy it from, how it got to the market/supermarket/café, how we cook it, where we eat it and how we discard, recycle, compost it – the cycle includes farming, manufacturing, packaging, transporting, retailing, food preparation, consumption, and how waste is managed.

What do we mean by environmentally sustainable?

Environmental sustainability is about protecting natural resources and global ecosystems to support health and wellbeing, now and in the future. Our current food system is not good for people or the planet. If we stop and think of how the land and



people who grow food are treated around the world (when food comes in planes), but also closer to us in the UK, we realise that our food system is in crisis.

Some of the environmental issues in our food system include:

- A highly industrial system reliant on pesticides and chemicals. This degrades soil, pollutes water, reduces biodiversity and contributes to climate change.
- The large-scale production of meat and dairy (contributes 60% of all carbon emissions from agriculture)
- Commercial and domestic food waste (contributes 6-8% of carbon emissions).
- Plastic packaging, which has carbon emissions several times greater than materials such as paper and glass, and contributes to plastic pollution in soil and water.

A third of global carbon emissions come from our food system – driving climate change. Climate change is a crisis of injustice, to both people and the planet, not just a problem of carbon emissions. Although it's a global issue, some communities of the world are more vulnerable to its effects than others. People in the global south are feeling the impacts most severely – even though they are least responsible for the problem.

What do we mean by social justice?

Social justice in the food system (or food justice) means that access to good food is a human right: nutritious, affordable, and culturally appropriate food is for every one of us. In a 'just' food system those of us hardest hit by the injustices in our food system – both in the UK and globally - would be listened to, and we would have more influence or control over how people and the land are treated, how food is grown and gets to our plates.



Just FACT Action Learning Grants

Through the Just FACT Action Learning Grants we want people to identify an issue or issues linked to the food system, then test ideas and solutions.

We want to explore how our relationship to the food we eat can be transformed, what might empower and enable us to make more sustainable food choices in a way that celebrates our cultures and traditions, and what bigger changes are needed to create a food system that is better for people and planet. We want to know what the challenges and opportunities for change are in a borough like Tower Hamlets.

What you learn through your project will contribute to the Just FACT 'Blueprint' which is being developed over the 5 years of the programme by [Platform and the Blueprint Architect group \(more about them here\)](#). The Blueprint is our community vision for a better food system, and will have case studies and practical examples of how we might get there.

Community Hub Grants

Community Hubs Grants will be between £1,000 - £10,000. They are called Community Hubs Grants because we imagine most of these projects will take place in a building or space that is open and accessible to the local community.

Projects will create space for learning and action on food and climate issues. Projects will bring together local residents, such as families, social circles, intergenerational groups or young people in Tower Hamlets to share ideas, build understanding and create new community connections. They will explore ways of creating change and taking action together towards a better food system.

Project criteria

1. Create the space for **conversation and learning** around climate and food
2. Explore ways of **taking action together** as a community and/or as social circles
3. Build on the **cultural, experiential and practical knowledge** and skills that already exist within Tower Hamlets



4. Value the wider benefits of activities e.g. **wellbeing and community connection**
5. Create a way for **learnings to be shared beyond the project**, with other people and organisations

Your project will only be eligible for funding if it meets **all** of the project criteria. If you are unsure of whether or not your project idea is eligible, please come along to one of our upcoming events or you can get in touch with us at justfact@wen.org.uk

Examples of types of projects and activities

- Schools' programmes
- Growing and composting courses/workshops
- Cooking and eating courses/workshops
- Community cookbooks
- Supper clubs / shared meals
- Kids' kitchens (courses for young adults and kids)
- Exploring healthy planet diets
- Low waste living / upcycling and reuse
- Exploring energy saving in food growing, distribution or preparation
- Exploring faith, spiritual and cultural connections to land and food
- Sharing food knowledge and skills
- Talks and screenings
- Conversation clubs
- Community action plans
- Community campaigns
- Digital knowledge sharing (e.g. videos, blogs)
- Food festivals

Please note: this list is not exhaustive



How projects might meet the criteria

Example project: A food growing programme in local schools, working with students, staff, parents, to develop school gardens.

How it meets the project criteria:

- **Criteria 1:** Schools workshops create space for learning about the soil, seasonal food, where food comes from - connecting to why it's important
- **Criteria 2:** Teachers, parents and students are given the confidence and skills to take action and grow more of their own food
- **Criteria 3:** What is grown will include food that is culturally relevant, and growing skills that already existing in the local community will be brought in
- **Criteria 4:** Wider benefits include raising young people's achievements across the curriculum, improved motivation and behaviours in and out the classroom, enhancing health and wellbeing, developing and improving schools
- **Criteria 5:** A how to guide will be created so that other schools can create their own school garden

Decision-making through collective voting

Funding decisions will be made through a collective voting process. If you apply and your project is eligible, you will be asked to participate in collective voting. This means that everyone who applies will help decide which projects get funding. Individuals are unable to vote for their own projects. Other community representatives within Just FACT will also be given a vote; this includes representatives from existing funded projects and the Blueprint Architect group.

To support the community voting, we will share some of the information contained in your application form with other applicants and community members. This includes the project name, the main project details and the total amount of funding you're asking for. It is made clear on the application form which information will be shared.

Alongside your application we also ask you to submit a photo that relates to your project. This will bring your project to life for people at the collective voting stage.



Why have we chosen collective voting?

The process is designed to put decision-making in the hands of community members themselves as agents of change and shift traditional power dynamics between funder and grantee. We believe local people are best-placed to understand what projects can have the most impact and will work for their community. That is why we want community members to help us decide which projects receive Just FACT grants. It's also a way for people to hear about other organisations and groups, and learn from different approaches people are taking.

Please note: Participation in collective voting is required in order to receive the funding. Applicants should get in touch if you have any questions or concerns.

Grant offer

We will be awarding £45,000 through the Community Hubs Action Learning Grants in this round. You can apply for anything between £1,000 to £10,000. **We anticipate this will fund approximately 5-7 eligible projects.**

The length of the project may vary depending on funding size. We anticipate the majority of projects will be 6-18 months. Funding needs to be spent and reported on before August 2025.

Who can apply

Below summarises who we can and can't accept applications from. Your organisation or group does not necessarily have to be based in Tower Hamlets, but you will need to demonstrate that the work you're doing is Tower Hamlets focused or provides a direct benefit to the borough's food system.

We will prioritise groups with smaller incomes. Organisations that have a large annual income might not be eligible to receive funding.



Who we can accept applications from:	Who we can't accept applications from:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Voluntary and community organisations ● constituted groups or club ● registered charities ● charitable incorporated organisations (CIO) ● not-for-profit companies ● community interest companies (CIC) ● schools ● community benefit societies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Individuals (see note below) ● sole traders ● organisations based outside the UK ● one organisation applying on behalf of another (including businesses or consultants who say they can support you with funding applications). ● companies that can pay profits to directors, shareholders or members (including Companies Limited by Shares)

*If you are an individual or unconstituted group with a proposal for a small grant, you need to be 'hosted' by an organisation or constituted group. If this applies to you, you will need to provide a letter confirming the hosting arrangement.



What we can fund

We can fund things like:	We cannot fund:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Staff costs ● volunteer expenses ● general project costs ● engagement activities ● learning and evaluation ● utilities or running costs ● organisational development and management costs ● some capital costs – this could be for buying equipment or small land or refurbishment work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Statutory activities and activities that replace government funding (for example, we can only fund school activities that happen outside of normal teaching hours) ● loans, endowments or interest ● paying someone else to write your application ● political activities, including lobbying ● activities where a profit will be distributed for private gain ● VAT you can reclaim ● Alcohol, drugs and any illegal substance ● things you've spent money on in the past and are looking to claim for now ● items which will only benefit an individual, rather than the wider community ● religious activities (note: religion and faith can be used to discuss the climate crisis and environmental justice, but the project must be open to all and not promote one particular faith) ● Projects that create an unfair advantage over local

	competitors (see below note on subsidy control)
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Capital costs

We might need to request further information on case-by-case basis to approve funding for capital costs. This will be particularly relevant to any food growing projects where applicants should be able to provide evidence of ownership or lease with guaranteed access to the land for a minimum of 5 years.

UK's Subsidy Control Commitments

Our grants must comply with the [UK's International Subsidy Control Commitments](#) (the new rules replacing the State Aid rules). This means projects cannot create an unfair advantage over local competitors. It is possible to run affordable sustainable food access projects, but you just need to check that what you want to do is possible within these rules. If you think this might apply to your project please contact us, and we can give you further information and advice: justfact@wen.org.uk

