

LONDON BOROUGH OF MERTON
Supporting information for voluntary and
community sector funding applications
Form S1/09



About this document

This document supports application form A1/09 and aims to give further information and guidance to organisations completing the form, particularly for those organisations that do not have a high level of experience of completing funding applications.

Please note the following:

Along with this supporting information, please ensure that you read the following before filling in the application form:

- The relevant criteria and priorities for the funding stream you are applying for. (Form CP1/09)
- The 'conditions of funding' and 'additional considerations' included in the funding pack for the funding stream you are applying for (Form Cond1/09)
- The monitoring form (Form Mon1/09)

Examples of answers have been used throughout this information to guide you. Obviously they cannot reflect all priorities but hopefully they will give you ideas of how to form your answer and the level of information the council needs.

General guidance for completing the application form

When completing the application form, please:

- type or write in black ink
- feel free to use bullet points where appropriate
- ensure that you have answered all the questions, and that you have signed the declaration on the last page

Tips for completing the application form:

- try to be as brief and concise as possible and **keep to the space provided by the application form** – if you go over the space provided, the additional information may not be taken into account
- where appropriate give clear targets and/or achievements and evidence as to how this has or will be achieved.
- Your application will be assessed by a scoring system. All questions will contribute to the final score, however a higher weighting is given to questions 15, 16 & 18. Your final score will also be considered alongside evidence of planning, financial viability (including reserves) and good organisational management.

The application form can be submitted electronically. However, please note that the declaration on the last page will must be signed and a hard copy submitted within five working days after the closing date, otherwise the electronic submission will not be considered.

PART A: Information about your organisation

Questions 1 to 3: Name and contact details

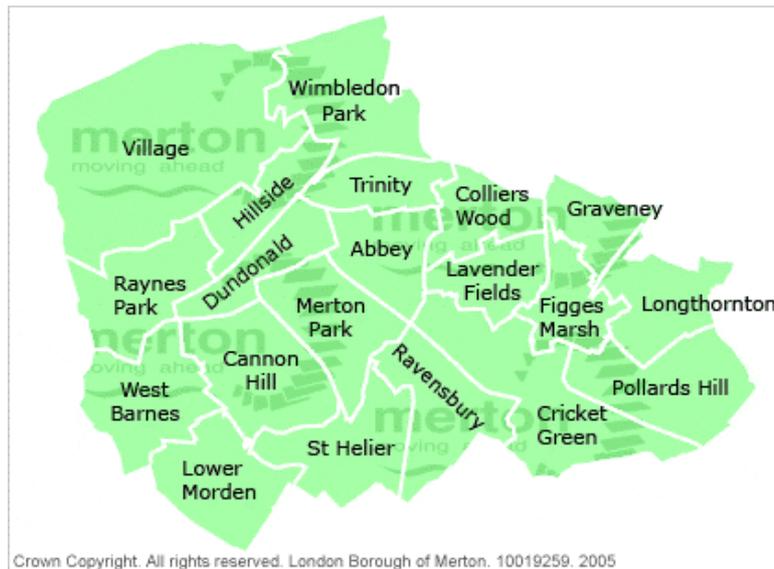
- Ensure you give full name and address details
- Your main contact does not have to be the person who is signing the application, but it should be someone with authority concerning this grant application and who is available to be contacted during office hours

Question 4: Legal status of your organisation

- This question asks you to indicate how your organisation or group is registered legally. You may have more than one legal status (for example registered charity and company limited by guarantee)
- Indicate each one that applies, giving registration numbers where appropriate.
- Only not-for-profit organisations can receive grant aid but you do not have to be a registered charity. The criteria that must be met are set out on the London Borough of Merton “Conditions of grant aid” – this is included in your application pack

Question 9: Geographical area covered

- Indicate which of the area(s) listed are covered by the work of your organisation or where most of your service users live, work or study
- Merton Council’s geographical areas are defined by the council’s ‘wards’ – the map overleaf illustrates the location of the wards



- For more detailed information and street names, go to: <http://www.merton.gov.uk/neighbourhood.htm> and click on the link to the area you want further information about
- If you are unsure which ward you are located in, go to the following link and enter your postcode: <http://www.merton.gov.uk/council/councillors.htm>

PART B: Financial information

Question 10: Amount of funding sought in this application

- Indicate the total amount of grant you are seeking from Merton Council
- Indicate whether you are seeking this grant to contribute or fully cover a specific project or whether this grant will contribute generally to the running of your organisation

Question 11: Total anticipated expenditure for 2010/11

- Indicate how much will your organisation spend in the year you are seeking funding funded for
- Use the financial year that you use for your accounts

Question 12: Projected income and expenditure

- In this section, you will need to provide us with a projected budget for your whole organisation. We recognise that a budget is only an estimate of expenditure and income, but please be as precise as you can.
- In the first column give your whole organisation's income for the year you are seeking funding for. If the income is sure please mark it with an 'a'.
- In the second column give your whole organisation's expenditure for the year you are seeking funding for. This is how much you will spend without the project you are applying for.
- In the third column show how you will use the grant you are applying for. If you are seeking funding for a specific project, you will need to detail the full project costs here, if you are seeking contribution to overall service provision you will need to detail the full contribution costs here. Please note that Merton Council supports full cost recovery so please include relevant overhead costs alongside salary or project costs.

Question 13: Reserves

- Reserves are pots of money which organisations have ‘put to one side’ for either specific reasons dictated by their own future plans or by funding restrictions or for use in emergency situations. Having reserves is usually a sign of good financial planning and viability
- Tell us what reserves you had at the end of March 2009
- You will need to indicate how much of your reserves were ‘Restricted Funds’ (funds which can only be used for specific purposes, imposed by the funder) and how much of your reserves are ‘Unrestricted Funds’ (funds that are available for general use within your organisation)
- You will also need to indicate how much of your unrestricted funds were ‘Designated’ (these are funds your organisation has set aside for a specific reason, for example repairing the roof) as part of its financial planning and explain what they have been set aside for. ‘Undesignated’ funds are funds your organisation has set aside for emergencies, for example paying staff wages in event of organisational closure.

Example: Project A has reserves of £5,000 as at March 2009

Restricted Funds:	Amount	<u>£2,000</u>
Unrestricted Funds:	Amount	<u>£3,000</u>
Designated Funds:	Amount	<u>£1,000</u>
	Designated for Roof Repair	

- Additional note on reserves
 - It is for each voluntary organisation to decide what level of reserves they need. Each voluntary organisation is different and it is not possible to issue a standard formula on how much money organisations should hold as reserves.
 - However, in circumstances where the level of reserves is considered too high, the amount of funding the council maybe able to offer to that group may be adversely affected. In exceptional circumstances, if an organisation holds high levels of reserves for a specific purpose and considers that this should not affect its grant application, evidence must be submitted which demonstrates how the reserves will be spent with specific dates and this will form part of any grant conditions.
 - In addition, you will not be refused funding from Merton Council if you do not have reserves, however it may be a condition of your grant to work towards improving your reserves.

PART C: Information about the services/activities for which funding is sought

Please note that if you are seeking funding for a specific project, you must only provide information in questions 14 to 25 specifically about this project that you are seeking funding for - and not about the wider organisation unless there are direct links with other organisational functions.

If funding is sought to support overall service provision, please provide information on your overall service in questions 14 to 25.

Question 14: Links between the proposed project and your organisation's aims

- Tell us how the project fits in with the work you do normally. We would expect to see that the project is related to the work you normally do.

Question 15: Evidence of need for the project/ service

- It is important that you can show there is a need for the project/ service. Tell us how you know that there is a need.
- Try and use evidence as much as possible. You may have carried out a survey or undertaken research, you may have been informed by other organisations' research or local census or other demographic information, you may have seen gaps in services in your local area and researched successful work elsewhere or you may have received feedback or suggestions from your service users.

Example: The need for further employment support for our service users has been highlighted by the following:

1. Research by national mental health charity X showed the success of similar support elsewhere with similar area and client group demographics
2. Our current user survey highlighted that 75% of our unemployed service users would like employment support, advice and guidance
3. There is a gap in current local employment support as it does not offer specialist support for people with mental health problems
4. The Merton Labour Force Study showed additional barriers faced by people with mental ill-health and the need for pre-employment support in their communities

Question 16: Outputs from the project

- Outputs are defined as all the detailed activities, services and products you actually do or provide (Charities Evaluation Services).
- To answer this question, briefly describe what, how many and for whom the funding you are seeking from the council will be used. These are called your project's outputs.
- You will need to show how these match with the funding priorities of the grant programme you wish to apply to. These are outlined in the Criteria and Priorities form CP1/09.
- These output targets will be used to monitor your project should your application be successful (the council will therefore be monitoring your organisation on what you said you will do). It is therefore essential that your output targets are measurable but are also a realistic estimation of what you will achieve in one year.

Example: An employment project for people with mental ill-health

Output targets:

- Drop-in careers advice and guidance service offered 3 mornings a week at central Mitcham premises; advice and guidance given to 100 people in 2010/11
- On-going into- and in-employment support (regular weekly outreach appointments for 3 months); 5 new people a month assigned an employment support worker in 2010/11
- Meeting regeneration priorities of improving access to employment – people with mental health problems find themselves socially excluded and many need the extra support described above to access and retain employment or relevant training. The majority of clients will live in the Neighbourhood Renewal area.

Question 17: Who will benefit from the service

- If you are directly supporting Merton residents you must give further information. If your project provides support for other organisations only and does not support residents directly, please describe these organisations and the end-beneficiaries.

Example: An employment project for people with mental ill-health

- 100 unemployed people who are experiencing or have experienced mental ill-health will be supported by this project in 08/09. All service users live in Merton and approx 70% of service users live in Merton's Neighbourhood Renewal Area. We expect this project to serve a similar population to our current client group - 45% are from BME communities and 30% have dependent children.

Question 18: Outcomes

- Outcomes are defined as the changes, benefits, learning or other effects that happen as a result of your services and activities (Charities Evaluation Services). Essentially, what difference will your services make to the individuals using them and to the community?
- To answer this question, briefly describe the impact you expect to see as a result of the services and/or activities you have described in Question 16. These are your project's outcomes. Outcomes should be linked to your project's aims.
- As part of this question you will need to show how these outcomes match with the funding priorities of the grant programme you wish to apply to. These are outlined in the Criteria and Priorities form CP1/09.
- Outcomes should include descriptions of 'harder' or more tangible changes such as a client obtaining accommodation or increases in numbers of people taking up referrals to specialist services. However, outcomes should also relate to changes in attitudes, self-esteem, confidence or skill levels – these are often described as 'soft' outcomes and are less easy to describe and measure but are very important in highlighting often unrecognised achievements by projects.
- The outcomes you describe will be used to monitor your project should your application be successful (the council will therefore be monitoring your project on what you said you will do). It is therefore essential that your outcomes are measurable but are also a realistic estimation of what you will achieve in one year. You may also find it useful to read the guidance on monitoring.

Example: An employment project for people with mental ill-health

Aim: To improve access to employment routes for people who have experienced mental ill-health.

Outcomes for Employment Project Service Users by the end of 2010/11:

1. 70 people will be more aware of training and career opportunities, including self employment and enterprise available to them
2. 70 people will show increased confidence concerning accessing training, work experience and volunteering
3. 30 people will have accessed learning opportunities, volunteering or work experience
4. 10 people will be in paid work or will be self-employed

Question 19: Quality

- Tell us how you will ensure a high quality of service delivery and how you will monitor and evaluate your services and activities.
 - **Quality** is essentially about learning what you are doing well and doing it better and finding out what you may need to change to meet the needs of your users. A Quality Assurance System sets out expectations or standards that your organisation should meet and is a tool to help you to meet these, for example through assessment, action planning and review procedures.
 - **A Quality Assurance System** sets out expectations or standards that your organisation should meet and is a tool to help you to meet these, for example through assessment, action planning and review procedures. Common systems used in the voluntary sector include PQASSO (Practical Quality Assurance System for Small Organisations), IIP (Investors in People) and ISO 9000, although a number of organisations use sector specific quality standards (for example Investing in Volunteers, Community Legal Service Quality Mark) and/or internally or locally developed quality marks
 - **Monitoring and Evaluation** are the planned collection of information to help you assess whether your project is meeting its aims and objectives and to help you to understand what is and is not working. Monitoring and Evaluation also act as tools of accountability to prove that you have succeeded in what you said you were going to achieve

Example

1. Quality is assessed against an internal “standards” checklist developed by service users and we are investigating the use of a sector standard quality assurance system
2. Service users accessing advice and guidance support or being referred to a Support Worker will complete a brief registration form
3. Impact of support will be monitored through completion of assessment forms at the beginning of the support offered to service-users and on a regular basis
4. All service users complete annual survey forms which highlight quality and impact of support on their life choices

Question 20: User involvement

- Tell us about how you will ensure that your service users are involved in the planning and delivery of the services and activities you would like the council to fund.

Example

1. We have a user group which meets once a month to discuss service developments (including this project) and air general comments and concerns – results from this group are reported to our trustee board
2. We hold an annual anonymous survey of user views and have a suggestion box
3. We have an active policy to encourage people with experience of mental health problems to work or volunteer within our organisation

Question 21: Partnerships

- Briefly describe which organisations you will work with.
- How will you work with them? How will you include other organisations and projects in the planning and delivery of the services and activities you would like the council to fund?
- This could include partnerships with funders, other stakeholders, other voluntary organisations or community groups, other local services, support or second-tier organisations and organisations who also offer services to your current or potential service users.

Example

1. Existing partnerships for this project include; referral relationships with homeless host local community centres b & c and the volunteer centre, links with mental health cha to share good practice and internal staff training.
2. Partnerships to be developed include; local employers to develop work experience placements, local colleges and the job centre and other local employment support projects for onward referrals and good practice sharing

Question 22: Equalities

- What practical steps have you made to ensure your project is accessible?
- How will your project ensure that it provides services and activities in a fair way? How is your equalities policy implemented?

Example

1. Our building is accessible and meets all DDA requirements
2. All staff and volunteers will receive diversity awareness training
2. Our Equal Ops policy is reviewed and monitored by a user and staff joint group
3. Project literature will be written in plain English and where appropriate in different languages, large print and Braille and will be reflective of our local community
4. Opening times will be mindful of religious needs and caring responsibilities

Question 23: Exit strategy

- Briefly describe what your plans are at the end of the year. Do you expect this project to continue and if so where will you go for funds? If not, do you have a plan (or exit strategy) for how you will end the project?

Example

1. Opening times will be mindful of religious needs and caring responsibilities. Our needs assessment currently highlights a long term need for this project and this is included in our business plan (see enclosed). We do currently intend to continue this project for at least 3 years and therefore may need to return to the council for further support but we will also research charitable trust funding during the year to find alternatives.
2. A project review will take place at the end of quarter 3 and an exit strategy developed if further need is not highlighted at this point.

Question 24: Part funding

- It may be the case that you are offered less funding than you applied for. If this was the case how would it affect your project? For example if you say you will provide 8 training sessions a month would you be able to provide 6 sessions with less funding?

- It may be the case that your project could not work at all without all of the funding. Please do not state that this is the case if it is not so as it may affect the decision.

Question 25: Added value

- Added value is the extra benefit that you can bring over and above the funding. For example, it may be that you are able to access further funding or work with partners.

PART D: Supporting information

If you have previously received funding from Merton Council you may not need to submit some of the above forms unless changes have been made. Please see your application form for further details or speak to the relevant council officer.

- All organisations will need to enclose their most recent audited accounts (meeting the requirements of the Charities SORP 2001 or if their annual income is less than £10,000 pa, a receipt and payment statement and list of assets and liabilities) their latest Annual Report and a list of the names and addresses of the organisation's current management committee members/board of trustees
- Reserves Policy and Business or Project Plans are expected from organisations, as this is a sign of good planning. You will not be refused funding from Merton Council, simply because you do not have these in place, however it may be a condition of your grant to work towards improved planning. (Please see question 15 for further information on reserves.) Business planning is a process of making decisions about the future of an organisation, defining how to make those decisions a reality and how your organisation will make sure it happens. A business plan is the written document that results from this process.
- Child Protection and/or Vulnerable Adult Policy would be expected from organisations who work with children or vulnerable adults. It is a legal requirement under section 115 of the Police Act 1997 and the Protection of Vulnerable Adults Regulations 2002 that employers must ensure that staff, volunteers and agency staff, who have contact during their work with children and vulnerable adults, have a criminal record check. Merton Council need to know what policies and procedures you have in place to ensure that your organisation's staff and volunteers are safe and suitable to be working with children and/or vulnerable adults.
- A copy of your organisation's governing document and equal opportunities policy would be expected from organisations, as follows:
 - A Governing document means any document setting out the charity's purposes and, usually, how it is to be administered. For unincorporated organisations, this is usually a Constitution or Set of Rules.
 - For a charity which is also a company limited by guarantee, this is usually a Memorandum and Articles of Association.
 - Organisations should have an Equal Opportunities Policy as this is a good indicator that your organisation takes equalities seriously.
- Relevant Job Descriptions are expected from organisations where funding for specific posts is being applied for.

PART D: Declaration

- The application form can be submitted electronically. However, please note that the declaration on the last page will must be signed and a hard copy submitted within five working days after the closing date, otherwise the electronic submission will not be considered.

Further information

- Please do not hesitate to contact the Merton Council officer responsible for the funding stream (details are given on the front page of your application form).
- For independent advice or support, please contact Merton Voluntary Services Council on 020 8685 1771 or info@mvsc.co.uk or use their website for information on other local groups and/or London or national links: www.mvsc.co.uk
- For information from the Charity Commission, go to their website: www.charity-commission.gov.uk