

Sovereign Network Group: Summer Opportunities Fund Guidance Notes

What is the Summer Opportunities Fund?

SNG (Sovereign Network Group) is committed to improving customers' wellbeing and developing thriving and resilient communities. Our Summer Opportunities Fund is aimed at supporting not-for-profit organisations to deliver microgrants to groups working in SNG communities to provide free, enriching summer holiday activities that have a positive impact on children, young people and their families.

The fund is designed to provide fun, accessible and free activities that promote opportunities to socialise and make friends, improve confidence, support physical and mental wellbeing and enhance education.

Grants of up to £1000 will be available to support activities aimed at children and young people aged between the ages of 5 and 16. Projects must be taking place in an SNG community and be actively promoted to SNG customers. Projects will benefit children, young people and their families/carers. We will prioritise funding groups that are targeting low-income households/children that are eligible for free-school meals.

Who is SNG?

SNG (Sovereign Network Group) is a leading housing association, striving to provide quality, affordable homes and places, that people love for generations.

We have deep roots in the south of England, with over 82,000 homes focused in a core area covering Berkshire, Devon, Dorset, Gloucestershire, Hampshire, Hertfordshire, London, Oxfordshire, the Isle of Wight, the West of England and Wiltshire.

We're driven by our social purpose, with customers at the heart of everything we do. We build homes and provide great services, but our work doesn't stop at the front door – we invest for the long-term, creating great places to live, working with customers and partners to support them in realising their potential. [Read more about who we are.](#)

Eligibility criteria

To apply for this fund, you must meet the criteria below **and** you must be able to demonstrate how you will engage with and benefit SNG customers in the target regions.

1. Eligible groups are:

- Not for profit
- Registered charities
- CIO's
- CIC's limited by guarantee
- Community and voluntary groups

- Community benefit societies.
 - Social Enterprises (not for profit)
2. Groups must have a written constitution or governing document. The governing document must include the groups aims or purpose, objectives and a dissolution clause or asset lock which states what would happen to any funds should the group have to close.
 3. Groups must be governed by a voluntary trustee or management committee, with a minimum of three members, with at least two of whom are unrelated.
 4. We cannot accept applications from:
 - Individuals
 - Organisations based outside of the UK
 - Companies that pay profits to directors, shareholders, members
 - CIC's limited by shares
 - Organisations applying on behalf of another organisation
 - Groups with no written governance (e.g. a group of volunteers without a written constitution)
 - Statutory services (e.g. schools, Town and Parish Councils) unless the group can evidence that their project in question is not statutory in nature and has a wider community benefit.
 5. Activities we will not fund:
 - National appeals
 - Activities which are of a wholly political or religious nature
 - Retrospective funding
 - Activities that are statutory in nature
 6. Groups must have a bank account in its name, with at least two unrelated signatories.
 7. Groups must have relevant and up to date insurances and policies in place for its work including safeguarding, health and safety, GDPR and equality and diversity and we may request copies of these documents for due diligence purposes.
 8. We do not set an upper organisational income limit; however, we will prioritise funding groups with smaller incomes.
 9. If you have an existing funding relationship with SNG this will be taken into consideration when our panel makes its funding decisions. We are unlikely to make multiple awards through our grant programmes unless groups can evidence clear need and distinction from an existing funded programme.
 10. We welcome applications from existing SNG partners and grantees as well as new organisations to SNG.

What will we need to know about your organisation?

At the point of applying, you will be required to provide data about your organisation, including your charity/company number (where applicable, or equivalent) and contact details.

If your project is successful, you will also need to provide additional organisational data, including additional contact details and banking information.

SNG Communities

We will prioritise funding groups who are delivering in the following SNG Communities and evidence the impact on SNG customers and communities within their application.

London	
Area	Number of homes
Brent	Over 5000 homes
Westminster	Over 1000 homes
Lambeth	Over 1000 homes
Ealing	Around 700 homes
Barnet	Around 500 homes
Harrow	Around 500 homes
Hackney	Around 300 homes
Newham	Around 300 homes
Tower Hamlets	Around 300 homes
Hounslow	Around 200 homes
Kensington and Chelsea	Around 200 homes
Islington	Around 100 homes
Hammersmith	Around 100 homes
Haringey	Around 100 homes
Richmond upon Thames	Around 100 homes
Three Rivers	Around 100 homes
Newbury & Reading	
Area	Number of homes
Newbury	Over 500 homes
Hungerford & Kintbury	Over 500 home
Greenham	Over 500 homes
Thatcham	Over 500 homes
Burghfield & Mortimer	Over 500 homes
Lambourn	250-500 homes
Downlands	250-500 homes
Ridgeway	250-500 homes

Hertfordshire	
Area	Number of homes
East Hertfordshire	Around 4000 homes
Oxfordshire	
Area	Number of homes
Faringdon	Over 500 homes
Abingdon	Over 500 homes
Didcot	Over 500 homes
Blewbury & Harwell	Over 500 homes
Watchfield & Shrivenham	250-500 homes
Ridgeway	250-500 homes
Wantage & Grove	250-500 homes
Steventon & the Hanneys	250-500 homes
Botley & Sunningwell	250-500 homes
North Hampshire	
Area	Stock density
Basingstoke	Over 500 homes
Kempshott & Buckskin	Over 500 homes
Hatch Warren & Beggarwood	Over 500 homes
Whitchurch, Overton & Laverstoke	Over 500 home
Bramley	250-500 homes
Oakley & The Candovers	250-500 homes
South Hampshire	
Area	Number of homes
Southampton	Over 500 homes
Test Valley (Mid)	50-250 homes
Four Marks & Medstead	50-250 homes

Theale	250-500 homes
Tilehurst	250-500 homes
Reading	250-500 homes
Ise of Wight (IOW)	
Area	Number of homes
Ryde	Over 500 homes
Newport	Over 500 homes
Cowes	250-500 homes
Pan	50-250 homes
Osborne	250-500 homes
Carisbrooke & Gunville	250-500 homes
	250-500 homes
BCP (Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole)	
Area	Number of homes
Burton & Grange	Over 500 homes
Christchurch	Over 500 homes
Commons	250-500 homes
Kinson	250-500 homes
Canford Heath	250-500 homes
Creekmoor	250-500 homes
Poole	250-500 homes
Weymouth	250-500 homes
Ringwood	50-250 homes
Ferndown	50-250 homes
Bearwood & Merley	50-250 homes
Hamworthy	50-250 homes
Newton & Heatherlands	50-250 homes
Alderney & Bourne Valley	50-250 homes
Bournemouth	50-250 homes
Branksome	50-250 homes
Boscombe & Pokesdown	50-250 homes
Highcliffe	50-250 homes
Milton	50-250 homes
Fernhill & Hordle	50-250 homes

Binsted, Bentleu & Selborne	50-250 homes
Central Meon Valley	50-250 homes
Lymington	50-250 homes
Devon	
Area	Number of homes
Plymouth	Over 500 homes
Exeter	Over 500 homes
Torquay	50-250 homes
Paignton	50-250 homes
Honiton	50-250 homes
Tiverton	50-250 homes
Wiltshire	
Area	Number of homes
Andover	250-500 homes
Swindon	250-500 homes
Chippenham	50-250 homes
Devizes	50-250 homes
Trowbridge	50-250 homes
Bristol & Gloucestershire	
Area	Number of homes
Bristol	Over 500 homes
Chipping Sodbury	50-250 homes
Gloucester	50-250 homes
Cheltenham	50-250 homes

For more details, please view this [map of SNG homes](#) which shows our properties by location.

If you have a potential project within these areas but you would like more information about our grant eligibility or the location of our communities, get in touch with us at - grants@sng.org.uk

What will we support?

We will support a broad range of activities if they meet our key eligibility criteria and can demonstrate how SNG communities will benefit as a result of the activities. We particularly welcome projects that focus on:

- Sports and recreation activities
- Creative workshops
- Day activities and local recreational trips
- Community events and celebrations that bring the community together
- Educational and developmental activities e.g. healthy eating/food workshops/family learning sessions.

Projects will support children, young people, and their families/carers. We will prioritise funding groups that are targeting low-income households/children that are eligible for free-school meals.

Priority will also be given to applications that can clearly demonstrate their objectives, the outcomes that their project will achieve and the difference that will be made by their project. We want to see how your organisation's work will have a positive and long-lasting impact on the local community.

Examples of what we've funded previously

- **Theatre Summer holiday provision** - For 35 young people in a SNG Community to access a Theatre Summer Holiday Provision that includes food. The project was jointly funded by the HAF programme and SNG. The funding from SNG helped create a holistic programme where families were also invited to attend advice and guidance sessions and received food budgeting advice too.
- **Food club** - The project took an intergenerational approach to activities and provided exercise sessions each Saturday morning across summer with anywhere between 30 and 80 turning up on each session. It was an inclusive and open to all ages programme and also included Cookery Workshops where children cooked and then ate outdoors picnic style with parents or carer.
- **Creative activities** - This provided fully funded school holiday activities for 30 young people who were SNG customers via referral to the school holiday arts club provision. The sessions explored a wide range of combined arts activities such as drama, dance, puppetry, film, photography, music, storytelling, craft and experiment with different artistic techniques such as oils, watercolours, inks, spray cans, clay and charcoals.
- **Wellbeing programme** - Summer activities in the heart of one of our communities which helped to support the wellbeing programme taking place in the community and promoted physical activity.

- **Summer festival** - This project supported mini summer festivals to run alongside the Summer Activity Programme already running in the community, providing additional opportunities for young people and their families as well as hot food.

What funding is available?

Grants from £300 to £1,000 are available. The fund will open on Tuesday 27 May 2025, and close on Friday 20 June 2025. Successful applicants will be informed by Friday 27 June 2025. All projects should be fully delivered by 5 September 2025.

How to apply

To apply for funding, you will need to register your project on the [ActionFunder website](#). ActionFunder is a digital community engagement platform that connects funding bodies with non-profits with the goal of supporting thriving local communities. By launching your project on ActionFunder, you will have the potential to match with multiple different funding pots, not just this fund.

When registering your project, you will be asked for the following information, so please have this on hand when starting your application:

The pitch

The first section of the application is where you will identify why your project is needed and what you intend to deliver. **You have the option to provide this information in written form or submit a video pitch** describing your project idea, why it is needed and why you are best placed to deliver.

For written applications, you will be asked to answer the following three questions:

1) Problem statement

Your problem statement should identify the issues or barriers that your community faces and why your project is needed. Using quotes and statistics can help us understand the specific needs of your community.

Example:

The families within our area (almost nine out of 10) are in the lowest 20% deprivation in the country. Rising inflation and fuel bills are causing huge difficulties for many families and the increase in the cost of living has been having a detrimental effect on the families within our school. Free School Meals (FSM) children are our priority group; however, we also identify vulnerable children as well as SEN pupils who can benefit from HAF. Where this project is based, 36% of all children live below the poverty line and may lack access to good, nutritious food. Whilst at school, children can access free school meals, however, during school holidays many parents struggle to fill this gap. This is an issue

that directly impacts customers in SNG communities; we have received feedback from talking to community centres and other local organisations that there has been increasing reliance on food banks in the area.

We have a high level of immigrant and refugee families within our area who speak a vast array of languages. HAF gives our children time to learn about each other outside of the classroom and develop their communication skills. We know that physical activities and social interactions also assist with the mental health and well-being of our children.

Our parents say ‘the HAF program is a lifeline and helps provide our families and children with food and activities in a safe, non-judgmental environment that supports them over the holidays.’

2) Solution

This answer should summarise your project idea and key outputs. By reading this, you should be able to understand what exactly the applicant intends to deliver.

Example:

Our project will deliver fun and positive opportunities for those children identified as FSM and needing additional support across summer. We will run sessions for a minimum of 4 hours each weekday that will include a wide range of combined arts activities such as drama, dance and storytelling together with a range of physical activities such as football, table tennis and more. Activities will be led by our youth leaders and workshops by qualified professional or sports leaders. We have partnered with a local school and will make use of their kitchen to enable us to both provide daily hot meals and provide healthy and nutritious meal kits for the children to take home in the evening.

3) Why are we best placed to deliver?

Here you should tell us why your organisation will be able to deliver this project well. Do you have specific relevant experience? A team of volunteers? Any relevant qualifications?

Example:

Our Youth Club is based at Compton Primary School which is located in the centre of an SNG Housing area. We have been established since 2018. The Youth Club has been running the HAF programme throughout the Christmas, Easter, and summer holidays to provide a space for children in and around the area to have fun and be supplied with a nutritional meal each day supported by the Kitchen staff of the local primary school. With 21 spaces available on the HAF programme, the centre supports children from the local community and is also able to support SEND children. Our Youth Leaders are fully qualified, and we bring in sessional workers to run specialist workshops.

Delivery plan

The second section of the application is where you provide more detailed information about how much your project will cost and what the impact of your activities will be.

1) Budget breakdown

This section is for you to record your project budget. Whilst we are looking for budgets to represent good value for money, we also want them to be realistic. It is important to know exactly how much you will need to carry out your activities effectively, and not underestimate costs, as this can lead to long-term financial problems and can impact project delivery.

What we will fund:

- Staffing/volunteer costs
- Transport
- Venue hire
- Refreshments and health food provision
- Other direct project costs
- Core costs/overheads (up to a maximum 10%) of your total project cost
- Capital/equipment items associated with your project (up to a total of 25% of your total project cost)

What we will not fund:

- Expenditure not clearly linked to project activities
- Items that do not appear to have been costed
- Activities that fall outside of your delivery timeframe

Example:

Total budget: £986

Breakdown of costs:

- *4 x 2.5-hour Workshops to be delivered once a week – drama - £400*
- *4 x 2.5-hour Workshops to be delivered once a week – dance - £400*
- *Additional equipment table tennis bats - £40*
- *2 x standard DBS certificate renewal @ £23 each - £46*
- *Core running costs including contribution to rent (10% of project total) - £100*

2) Beneficiaries

Here please specify the total number of beneficiaries you will engage with during your project. You will then have the option to choose specific groups from a multiple-choice list below.

3) Expected impact

This answer should explain what impact you hope to achieve from your activities. Try to be as specific as possible with your outcomes and link this back to your problem statement.

Example:

By delivering positive activities and additional workshops for local children through the HAF scheme, we hope to expose young people with limited opportunities to new skills, activities and hobbies that they can take with them. We know that physical activities and social interactions will also assist with the mental health and well-being of our children.

We expect to be able to directly support 21 families with meal kits.

By providing families with meal kits to use over the school holidays that are healthy, nutritious, we will alleviate a significant stress for parents who are struggling to keep up with rising food costs. This will support families living within SNG communities who are impacted by this issue.

4) Track record

This is an opportunity to give us additional details about what your organisation has previously delivered and could include quotes from previous beneficiaries or partners.

Example:

In the three years that we have been delivering the HAF program we have developed a strong relationship with the local schools, based in an SNG community, who refer children and young people into our summer holiday activities. We have supported over 100 families during the time we have been delivering the programme, and the activities have become a much-loved part of the holidays for children and young people, and often a lifeline for parents. One of our parents said 'My son always looks forward to attending the activities during the holidays. They have given him a varied timetable to keep him busy and active with his friends, which I would otherwise struggle to afford financially. He has learnt lots of new skills and is excited to tell me all about what he has learnt at the end of each day. The healthy meal kits have been a huge help and have really helped ease the financial pressure that the holidays bring.'

Application top tips

Here are some of our top tips to consider when completing your application:

- **Do you meet the eligibility criteria?**

Your application will not be considered if you do not meet the key eligibility criteria listed above. Please carefully consider if you are eligible to apply before submitting your application. If you are unsure, please don't hesitate to contact us at grants@sng.org.uk.

- **Pay close attention to your budget**

One of the main reasons that funding applications are unsuccessful is due to poor budgeting. Above we identify the things we will and won't fund, please read these carefully before producing your project budget. It is good practice to plan your budget for the whole year and get quotes for all the items included. The more detail you can include the better, but we also understand that some things may change over the course of your project and will work closely with you to resolve any issues that arise.

- **Evidencing need and linking to SNG communities**

We want to know how the money they provide will make a positive difference. Using statistics, quotes and other testimonies can help bring your application to life and showcase why you are best placed to deliver the project. This can be figures to show why the project is needed in your community (through using local surveys, council websites, Government reports) or through testimonies of how your previous work has benefited the community.

Particularly important for this fund is demonstrating **how your activities will directly benefit SNG communities**. This means understanding whether we manage homes in the area your project takes place in, and if so, how your project can offer support to local customers. [See where our homes are here](#).

- **Be clear and concise in your language**

Try to avoid using complex jargon and abbreviations. If you are submitting a written application, keep your writing concise and stick to the key details of your organisation and project. It can be helpful to share a draft with someone who doesn't know about your project to see if they understand what you are aiming to achieve. If you would prefer to submit a video application, you can do this via the ActionFunder platform.

- **Embed sustainability**

We want to ensure that funding has a long-lasting impact, so we recommend embedding sustainability into your project design. For an environment and place project, this may look like incorporating maintenance costs into your project budget. For a project focusing on employment support, this could include providing training qualifications or electronic devices for long-term use.

- **Consider how you will monitor and evaluate progress**

It is important to read over what will be expected of you in terms of reporting on your project and incorporate this into your project model to save you time and difficulty later (see more details regarding reporting expectations below). Consider how you will track financial information as well as other key project data both numerical and qualitative.

Selection process

All projects that meet the criteria set out above will be reviewed and assessed by our grants panel to determine which projects will be offered funding. If your project does not meet the eligibility criteria, it may be rejected before the panel meeting, and you will receive a notification of this via ActionFunder.

We may request further information from you following the panel discussion, and in some cases, may encourage you to reapply for funding with amendments to your project.

The fund will close on Friday 20th June. All applications will need to be submitted for consideration by this date. Successful applicants will be informed by Friday 27th June. We will focus on ensuring funding is distributed equitably, particularly in terms of geographic location and types of beneficiaries.

Should we offer you funding, you will have the opportunity to accept or reject the grant via the ActionFunder platform. Before a payment can be approved and released to the applicant, all checks will need to be completed in respect of relevant permissions, policies, and insurances.

We will provide feedback to all shortlisted applicants who are unsuccessful at the panel. Please note, we will be unable to provide feedback for applicants who do not progress to the shortlist for panel.

Communications and branding

By uploading your project to ActionFunder, you consent to ActionFunder's terms and conditions which allows for the material you upload to be used for marketing and promotional purposes by both SNG and ActionFunder. Please read [ActionFunder's terms of use](#) for more information.

Successful applicants must acknowledge financial support of SNG in its documentation and publicity material by following our communications protocol and brand guidelines. If you are successful in securing funding, our Grants Team will be in touch to share the guidelines.

Reporting requirements

If your application is successful and you receive funding from us, you will be required to meet our reporting requirements for your grant. You will be asked to complete a light touch update mid-way through the project, and an end of project report. You will be notified about the reporting requirements through the ActionFunder platform when the funding has been awarded.

We would also love to hear updates throughout the duration of the project, which you can do via ActionFunder, including what has gone well and any challenges. You will be able to post comments, videos and photos to keep us updated.

At the point of funding being awarded, we will also put you in touch with one of our Community Investment and Partnership Leads for your location. They will be in contact to introduce themselves and discuss potential future partnership opportunities.

Timescales

The fund will open on Tuesday 27 May 2025, and close on Friday 20 June 2025. Successful applicants will be informed by Friday 27 June 2025. You will be notified via the ActionFunder platform if your application is successful.

Task/activity	Date
Fund goes live	27 May 2025
Application window closes	20 June 2025
Successful applicants are informed	27 June 2025

Useful Links and Resources

- [SNG homes map](#)
- [ActionFunder resource materials](#)
- [Our Actionfunder web page](#)
- [Our web page](#)