

Better Bankside Community Grants 2025-26

Better Bankside was one of the first Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) in the country, established in 2005. Since then, we have been leading positive change in our neighbourhood, co-creating a programme to benefit businesses, Banksiders and the neighbourhood.

Better Bankside's Community Grants support voluntary and community sector organisations that are working to meet the needs of the local community.

What are we looking to fund?

Funding is available for one-off or ongoing projects, for organisations that focus on one or more of the following:

- Helping people affected by:
 - the cost-of-living crisis, including food insecurity and food poverty.
 - mental and physical health issues.
 - social isolation and loneliness.
 - digital exclusion.
- Bringing people together to build social cohesion and create connections between different groups.
- Projects that address community safety concerns, including violence against women and girls.

Grants available this year range from £500 to £1,000. Please bear in mind that most grants will be in the lower range, and in previous years, most grants awarded have been in the region of £300-£700.

Funding can be used as a significant contribution towards new or ongoing projects; or for one-off items of expenditure that support ongoing service delivery or are considered core costs.

What will we prioritise when awarding funding?

We will use the following criteria to help prioritise which grants to award:

- Does the request present a long-term, sustainable or innovative solution to the issue it is seeking to address? As an example, funding tables to be used at a food bank service, rather than the cost of food items.
- Where does the organisation operate, or where do the people live who the project or service helps? Priority is giving to organisations supporting the Bankside community, followed by those organisations or services that support areas of Southwark affected by high levels of deprivation, such as Bermondsey, Camberwell, Elephant & Castle, Peckham or Walworth.

We are also interested in funding organisations that are led by, or services or projects that have a positive impact on Southwark's diverse communities, including LGBTQIA+; Black, Latin American or other global majority groups; people with a disability, learning differences or neurodiversity, and/or their carers; young people; or older people.

What kinds of organisations can apply?

Your organisation must meet the following criteria:

- Be an existing not-for-profit community organisation with a formal constitution, e.g. a registered charity, community interest company (CIC), charitable incorporated organisation (CIO), tenants & residents association, or similar.
- Have a bank account requiring two signatures.

What will we not fund?

Grants will not be awarded to applications for the following:

- Large scale projects, including those that already have funding, or to general appeals or 'bricks and mortar' major capital projects
- Projects or organisations supporting people outside of the geographic areas identified
- Individuals or informal groups of individuals
- Reimbursing costs already incurred
- Commercial or profit-making organisations and projects
- Projects, activities or organisations which are purely for the advancement of religion or politics.

If your organisation has been awarded a grant by Better Bankside in the past, you are still eligible to apply to this year's grant scheme.

Timeline

Applications will be reviewed by a panel of representatives from Better Bankside's Responsible Business and Inclusion Theme Group, which is made up of Bankside businesses, as well as local community stakeholders.

There is only one round of applications in 2025-26 with the following timeline:

	Timeline
Application deadline	Monday 23 February 2026 - 10am
Update on application	Week commencing Monday 9 March 2026
Grant payment details deadline	Wednesday 18 March 2026 - 10am
Grant payment made	By end of March 2026

How to apply

All applications must be made using the online [Application Form](#).

You also need to send a copy of your most recent annual accounts and your organisation's registration certificate from the Charity Commission or Companies House as pdf files to rn@betterbankside.co.uk - please include the name of your organisation in the subject of your email.



An example application form can be found below to help you prepare your responses. If you have any questions about the online Application Form please contact Rachel Nicholson:

rn@betterbankside.co.uk

Applications submitted after the deadline will not be accepted.

Further details may be requested to support your application; these will be communicated via email during the week commencing Monday 23 February.



Template Application Form

Better Bankside Community Grants Application Form - 2025-26

Please complete all the questions in this form.

Questions 1-12 ask for information about your organisation that is needed for processing your application, due diligence checks, and so that Better Bankside can contact you about your application's progress.

Questions 13-20 ask for information about your funding request. What are you planning to do, what are the costs, and how will it make a difference?

Once you have completed this application form, please send a copy of your organisation's most recent accounts and its registration certificate (as pdf files) to rn@betterbankside.co.uk

If you need any help with this application form, please contact Rachel Nicholson at Better Bankside: rn@betterbankside.co.uk

Questions and example answers.

NB this example is to illustrate how to answer the questions only, it is not intended as a guide to the kind of project that will be successful.

1.Your organisation's name: *Better Bankside*

2.Your organisation's registered address (please include the post code)

18 Great Guildford Street, London SE1 0FD

3.Your organisation's website: *www.betterbankside.co.uk*

4.Your name: *Rachel Nicholson*

5.Your job title/role at your organisation (e.g. trustee, director, fundraising manager): *Responsible Business & Inclusion Manager*

6.Your email address: *rn@betterbankside.co.uk*

7.Your phone number (only to be used by Better Bankside for any queries about your application): *020 7928 3998*

8.Your organisation must be an existing not-for-profit organisation with a formal constitution. Please select your organisation's registration type from the options below, or if it is not one of these, please select and other and provide details.

- Registered charity
- Community Interest Company (CIC)
- Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)
- Tenants & Residents Association (TRA)
- Other – please state: *Business Improvement District, not-for-profit company*

9.Please provide your organisation's registration number(s), e.g. Charity Commission, Companies House: *04438887 - Companies House*

10.What is your organisation's annual income? You can refer to the most recent full financial year for this. *£1,234,567*



11. What types of funding does your organisation receive? Tick all that apply.

- Local authority
- Grants X
- Fundraising/donations
- Fees/subscription - X
- Earned or trading income
- Other

12. Does your organisation have a bank account in its name with two signatories?

- Yes X
- No

13. What is the value of the grant you are applying for? Grants are available for £500-£1000, but please note, most grants awarded will be at the lower end of that range. We recommend you factor this in when planning your application.

£500

14. Please provide a very short summary of what you need funding for, ideally in one or two sentences. Keep this answer short, it will be used in a summary of all applications received. You can provide more information in the other questions that follow.

We will use the funding to deliver 3 events to support older people who live in the Bankside area to connect with young professionals who work for Bankside-based businesses, to build new connections across our community.

15. How does your application meet the criteria? Please select from below the criteria that are most relevant to your organisation.

Please select at most 3 options.


- Helping people with the cost of living and/or food poverty
- Helping people with mental and/or physical health
- Helping people with social isolation and loneliness X
- Bringing people together to create social cohesion between different groups X
- Addressing community safety issues, including violence against women & girls

16. Where does your organisation operate, or if your organisation covers multiple areas, what is the specific location that will benefit from this grant if awarded?

- In the Better Bankside BID area X
- In areas of Southwark affected by high levels of deprivation, e.g. Bermondsey, Camberwell, Elephant & Castle, Peckham or Walworth
- In Southwark, but not an area listed above

17. Please tell us in more detail what your organisation is planning to do, including why is this needed, how many people will it help, or how many activities/sessions/events will it help you to run? Or what will it help your organisation to do? In other words, how will you use the finding, if you are awarded a grant.





The grant will cover the costs of refreshments for the three events. These will be held in the Better Bankside office. The events will take place in spring, summer and autumn. We will invite up to 20 local older people and 20 local workers to each event. It will help us to foster new connections across the Bankside community, helping to address the issues of social isolation and loneliness that affect older people but also young professionals who move to London for work, and can find it hard to replicate the family and social connections of where they grew up.

The events will include fun activities to help build connections between participants, such as bingo and storytelling.

18. Please tell us about the budget for what your organisation plans to do, including the total cost, as well as any specific costs to be funded by this grant if you are successful. If the total cost of your project is more than the grant you are requesting, how else will you fund the project? You can answer this with a list of costs and short descriptions. E.g. art materials - £250; artist fee - £250; total cost - £500.

Tea, coffee, milk- £3 per person x 40 people x 3 events = £360

Biscuits and other snacks - £15 per event x 3 events = £45

Materials for activities, e.g. bingo cards, pens = £45

Marketing collateral, including posters and flyers = £50

Total cost - £500

19. Please provide more context for your proposal, including:

- What does your organisation do? Who do you support and where do you operate in Southwark?
- How did you decide on this proposal, and why is it needed?
- Who will benefit if your organisation is awarded this funding? Is it everyone who uses your organisation's services, or a specific group?
- Is it an innovative or sustainable (long-term) solution that will help your organisation to meet the needs of the people you support?

Please refer to the criteria for this year's grant and make sure this answer clearly tells how your application meets these.


Better Bankside exists to improve the experience of our neighbourhood for everyone.

Powered by the people of Bankside, Better Bankside leads innovative economic, environmental and social action to drive positive change in one of the world's great neighbourhoods.

Through a programme co-created with Banksiders, we respond inventively to urban challenges and celebrate the differences that define our neighbourhood.

Through conversations with key local charities such as Blackfriars Settlement, and feedback from people who work for Better Bankside's members, we identified an opportunity to create new connections between local older people and young professionals. Many of the local workers who volunteered as part of the Bankside Christmas Gift Appeal, which supports several local services for older people, said that they would like to get to know more about the people who receive the gifts and support them over the longer term, following on from their volunteering in December.





Loneliness has been identified as having a significant negative impact on people's mental and physical wellbeing, for all ages. There is also much debate about the differences between older and younger generations. This project is a chance to address both social isolation and create opportunities to bridge this 'generation gap'.

The project will benefit local older people who live in the Bankside area and young professionals who work for Bankside-based businesses.

We are running this as a pilot project and hope to expand it beyond the initial three events.

20. Finally, how will you know that your proposal has made a difference if your application is successful? What information do you already gather that might help monitor the outcomes of your proposal? We do not ask for detailed reporting, but we would like to hear stories about the impact of our grants.

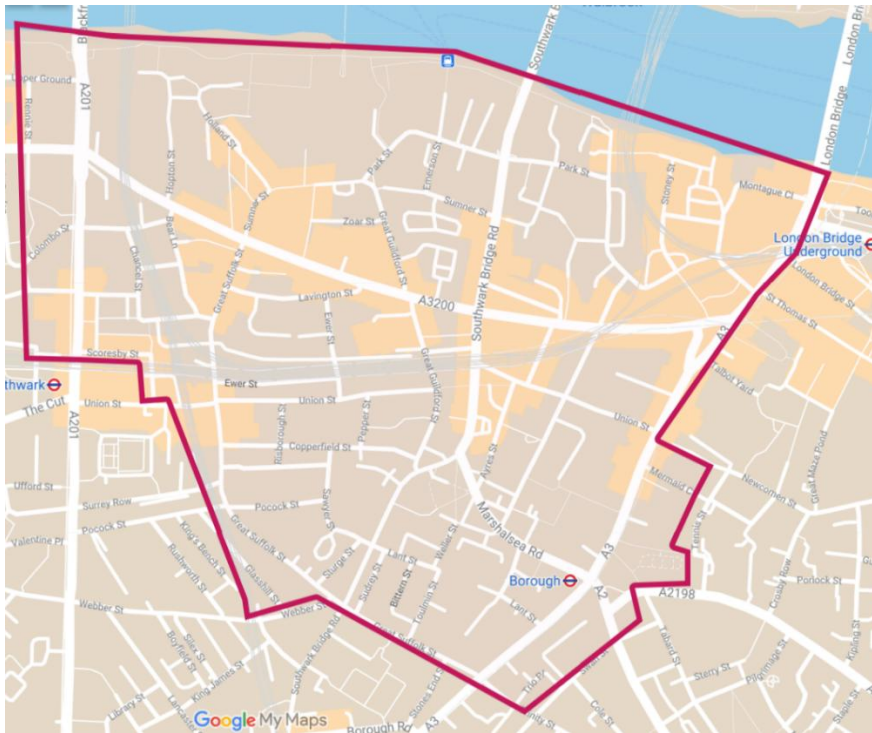
We will ask all participants to complete a short survey before the events and after each event to track how connected they feel, and over the course of the project, monitor any changes to self-reported happiness levels.

We will also gather qualitative feedback from participants, asking them questions such as 'did you learn something new about Bankside', 'what surprised you most about meeting the other group (younger/older)?', 'what did you enjoy about taking part in this project?'

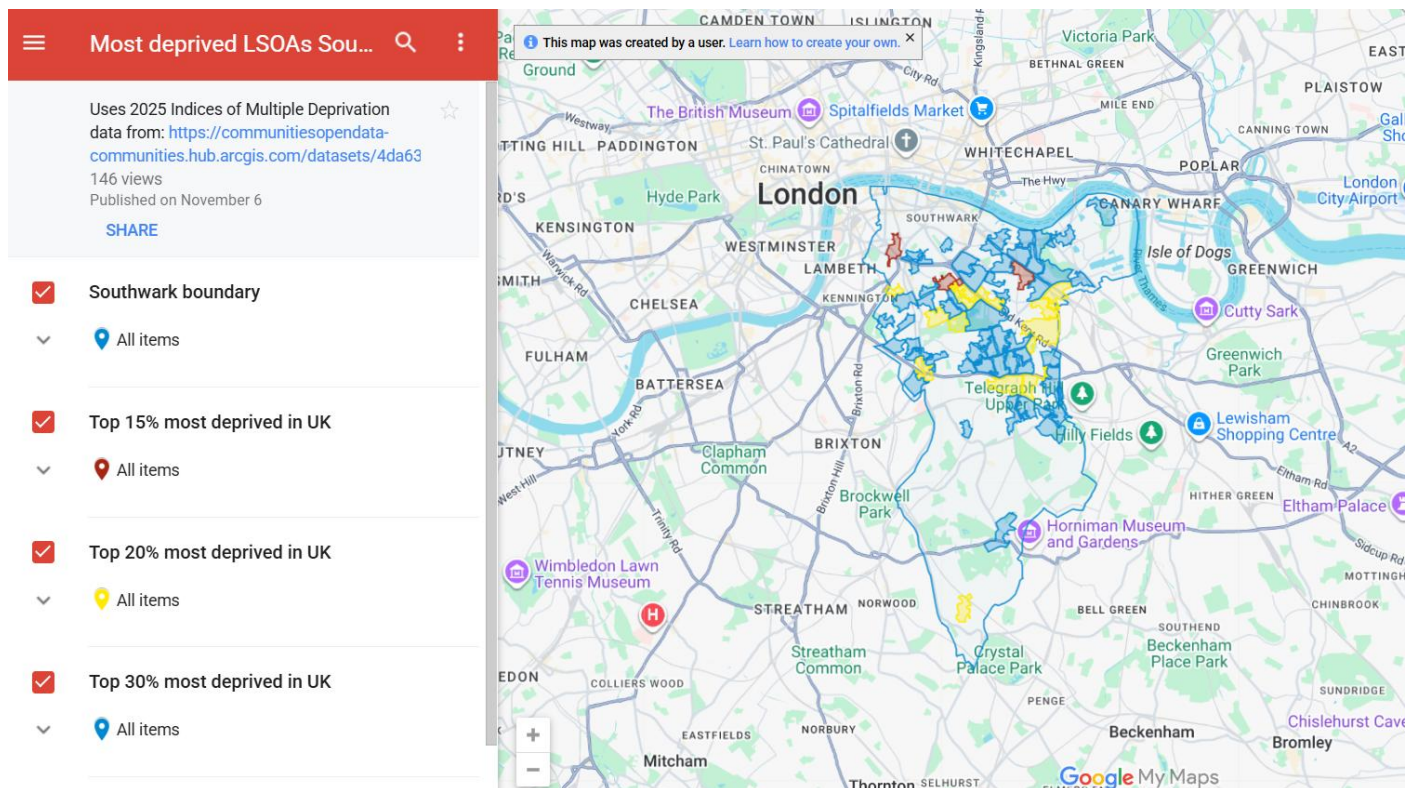
We will also ask for feedback on how each event runs, what could be improved to inform future events. We will also ask participants for permission to take photos and videos at each event and use these in writing up a case study about the impact of this project.

Useful information

Better Bankside BID area



Indices of Multiple Deprivation in Southwark – 2025 Data



[Community Southwark](#) provide more information on the Indices of Multiple Deprivation, including an interactive version of the map above.