

Grant Funding to Support People Seeking Asylum in Leeds 2023 – 2025

Application Guidance

Grant Funding to Support People Seeking Asylum in Leeds

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1. Introduction

Leeds is proud to be a diverse city with a long history of welcome to those seeking sanctuary in our city. As a welcoming and compassionate city, Leeds City Council has a well-established structure to deliver the [Strategic, Inclusive and Coordinated Approach to Migration](#), developed in partnership with organisations and volunteers across the city. This strategy sets out our long-term strategic direction on migration which aims to ensure people who migrate to Leeds are able to establish their lives quickly and successfully. The continued joint working of statutory services, Leeds Migration Partnership, the third sector and volunteers are instrumental in achieving this ambition.

Leeds has been a City of Sanctuary for a number of years with a wide range of organisations already committed to the movement. In May 2023, Leeds City Council joined the [City of Sanctuary Local Authority Network](#), a movement of local councils who are working to create a culture of welcome, inclusion and empowerment for people seeking sanctuary. As an unawarded member the council are working toward the award to learn, share and embed good practice across the council and city. This demonstrates the councils ongoing commitment to take positive steps to build on our approach and strengthen our partnerships.

Key issues

Global events and ongoing changes to national immigration policy have impacted vulnerable individuals, families and support services at a local level. It is recognised people seeking asylum are significantly impacted by the introduction of recent UK government policy. These ongoing national policy changes have put significant pressures on both statutory and third sector organisations to respond to the changing nature of the asylum agenda, and to provide the support required to meet local need.

Refugee Council define a person seeking asylum as - 'A person who has left their country of origin and formally applied for asylum in another country but whose application has not yet been concluded. Wherever possible, we prefer to describe someone as a person seeking asylum as we feel that the term asylum seeker is dehumanising'.

Asylum Hotels

In recent years, the number of hotels to accommodate people seeking asylum has increased across the country, including Leeds. During the pandemic, the Home Office became unable to move asylum-seekers from initial to dispersed accommodation within the expected timescale of 3 to 4 weeks. The Home Office therefore established contingency accommodation; in Leeds these arrangements has been the repurposing of hotel sites. The local authority does not have the power to negotiate the decisions made by the Home Office and are not apportioned additional resources.

Initially contingency accommodation was considered to be a short-term solution, however, over time the number of asylum hotels in Leeds has increased. Asylum families are currently not residing in hotels in Leeds, the current cohort is male, however this could change in the future as seen in other parts of the country. Residents are accommodated on a full board basis; however, concerns have been raised locally and nationally regarding the wellbeing of people seeking asylum living in hotels. In addition, wellbeing concerns

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have also been raised regarding individuals and families living in dispersed accommodation, due to the impact of the pandemic, the current cost of living crisis and increased isolation.

Asylum Claim Decisions

In March 2020, at the start of lockdown, the Home Office halted decisions on asylum applications. Whilst Home Office decisions later resumed in 2020, a backlog of people awaiting the outcome of their asylum application exists. In February 2023, the Government created the Streamlined Asylum Process, to address the backlog of asylum claims awaiting a decision on claims lodged before the Nationality and Borders Act 2022 came into force on 28 June 2022. This process of fast-tracking decisions was developed with the intention of clearing cases that are considered well founded, with a view to granting of protection status more quickly.

Legal Advice

It is well recognised there is a lack of free or low-cost immigration legal advice in the city. As a result, people seeking asylum are challenged to progress their asylum applications, which can lead to delays and increased complexity of cases. This can lead to people being unaware of their rights, increased fear, and potential risks of exploitation.

Newly Granted Refugees and 28 Day Move On

People who receive a positive outcome on their asylum claim are given 28 days to transition from asylum to mainstream support. The Streamlined Asylum Process is expected to generate a number of positive decisions, this is anticipated to increase pressures in accessing support to aid with move on.

Destitution

Organisations who support destitute asylum seekers to seek sustainable routes out of destitution, has seen an increase in the support needs as well as a lack of suitable accommodation provision.

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2. Programme Activity

Leeds City Council has recently received funding from the Home Office in relation to the asylum agenda. As a result, the council is able to offer one round of grant funding to the third sector to support people in Leeds who are going through the asylum process.

Through this grant funding process, we aim to strengthen the local support arrangements for **people living in Leeds who are seeking asylum, and for those who have been granted asylum status (newly granted refugees) within the 28 day move on period.**

This grant funding provides opportunities for new and innovative activity, as well as funding for the continuation of existing programmes and activities. We are keen to see increased access to support which result in improved outcomes for these client groups.

When is the funding available?

Funding is only available from **November 2023 to June 2025**. Therefore, in considering project activity and outcomes, **you must carefully consider what your project can realistically achieve within these timescales**. Organisations can apply for funding to deliver projects for a minimum of 6 months to a maximum of 18 months.

We are looking to deliver a range of activities across the city as soon as possible. Activity must clearly demonstrate how it will support the aims and outcomes of this grant funding guidance and criteria. Further details on the outcomes can be found in section 3.

Who Can Apply for this Funding?

We are seeking applications from organisations in Leeds who can meet the needs of:

- people seeking asylum and/or
- people who have been granted asylum status (newly granted refugees) within the 28 day move on period.

Applications could be from:

- A single organisation
- A formal partnership/consortium

Any partnership arrangements will need to have a service level agreement in place, identify a lead organisation and provide a description of the partnership structure arrangement.

Funding Available

The **total amount of funding** available is £600,000.

- You can apply for a minimum of £5,000 to a maximum of £50,000 under this grant. **However, we expect to award most grants in the region of £30k-35k, with only exceptional applications** that demonstrate a significant contribution to priority areas, or proposals which are delivered in partnership, will be considered for the maximum grant allocation.

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3. Eligible Activities

The **Grant Funding to Support People Seeking Asylum in Leeds** seeks to initiate a coordinated and targeted programme of activity, which support people living in Leeds who are seeking asylum, and people who have been granted asylum status (newly granted refugees) within the 28 day move on period.

Our [Strategic, Inclusive and Coordinated Approach to Migration](#) sets out our long-term strategic direction on migration. Our vision: Leeds is a welcoming and compassionate city for all new and existing communities. A place where people feel safe and connected, contributions are valued and celebrated and individuals, families and communities can reach their full potential. Our aim is to ensure people who migrate to Leeds are able to establish their lives quickly, with appropriate, efficient and effective support and services available as needed.

Through this grant funding we aim to achieve the following outcomes:

- People seeking asylum and newly granted refugees will:
 - Have **clear understanding of their rights, entitlements, and responsibilities** as residents in the city.
 - Be **better informed** of services and **better able to navigate the city**.
 - Have **improved access to appropriate services** to address need.
 - Have **access to specialist services providing advice and support** throughout the asylum process. This includes receipt of **positive and negative decisions** and those who have fallen into **destitution**.
 - Have **knowledge and information** to make **informed choices and decisions** through the support of specialist services.
 - Have **improved health, mental health, and wellbeing**.
 - Have **improved English language and the skills** needed for life.
 - Have **improved access and increased participation** in local activities and volunteering opportunities.

Partnership Working

Through this funding, we are looking for applications for programmes, projects and activity which improves accessibility, coordination across the city and outcomes for these client groups. Projects will score higher at appraisal stage that demonstrate:

- how they will utilise, strengthen and build on existing structures,
- commitment to developing strong and effective working relationships with appropriate partners including specialist organisations.

Examples of Activity

Listed below are examples of the types of activities that we are seeking to fund. This list is not exhaustive, eligible activities could include:

1) Legal advice and representation:

- It is recognised in Leeds that access to **good quality, regulated and timely immigration advice and case work** whilst seeking asylum is key, however there is a lack of free immigration advice available in the city. We would welcome applications outlining creative ways to build capacity and increase access to free immigration advice.

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- Please note: Immigration advice is regulated by the Office of Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC), only qualified OISC registered provision will be considered.
- 2) **Activity which supports the wellbeing of people seeking asylum living in Home Office hotels or dispersed accommodation within the Leeds local authority area, such as:**
- increased understanding of the asylum process.
 - increased understanding life in Leeds.
 - navigating and accessing local services, places to visit and things to do.
 - advocacy support.
 - access to activities and volunteering opportunities.
 - activities which support physical health, mental health and wellbeing.
- 3) **Aiding the development of English language and skills needed for life, such as:**
- ESOL/conversation classes and/or activities which provide people with opportunities to learn English, practice English and build confidence.
 - English language skills activity can incorporate aiding the development of digital access and skills.
- 4) **Support to for people who have been granted asylum status (newly granted refugees) within the 28 day move on period such as:**
- access to housing and benefits/welfare,
 - setting up bank accounts,
 - employability skills,
 - registering with GPs and access to health and wellbeing services,
 - Increasing knowledge and understand of mainstream services.
- 5) **Support for people who have become destitute as a result of their asylum claim - to explore legal options and find safe and sustainable routes out of destitution.**

Please note: Any advice service provisions referenced must be registered with the correct governing bodies as appropriate i.e OISC, AQS, FCA as only appropriately qualified provisions will be considered.

The above list is not exhaustive. If you have any queries about the eligibility of your proposed activity, please contact migrationteam@leeds.gov.uk for clarification.

Please note:

Organisations applying for funding for activity in relation to people seeking asylum who are residing hotels must:

- Make contact with the Home Office Accommodation Provider Mears Partnership Manager for West Yorkshire and North Yorkshire (details below) to confirm the viability of the proposed activity. You will need to confirm this in your application form for this funding.

<p>Sophie Hepworth, Mears Partnership Manager - West Yorkshire and North Yorkshire Email: Sophie.Hepworth@mearshousing.co.uk</p>
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4. Ineligible Activities

The following will not be considered for funding:

- For-profit organisations, statutory organisations (e.g. schools and hospitals) or overseas organisations or activities that form part of a public sector organisation statutory obligation.
- Activities that are solely for the purpose of promoting religious or political objectives.
- Any capital building expenditure
- Any activities that do not take place in Leeds or are not for the benefit for people seeking asylum or newly granted refugees during the 28 day move on period
- All fund-raising events or activities.
- Retrospective funding (activity and costs that have already taken place)
- Grant-making to other organisations and/or individuals

.....Other Issues to Consider

- Project management fees should not exceed 10% of the total project costs.
- Projects that demonstrate that their proposed activity can be sustained through embedding good practice within local communities and key service providers will score higher at appraisal.
- Individual organisations are permitted to be involved with more than one partnership application and apply on an individual basis if they wish to do so.

The above list is not exhaustive. If you have any queries about the eligibility of your proposed activity please contact migrationteam@leeds.gov.uk for clarification.

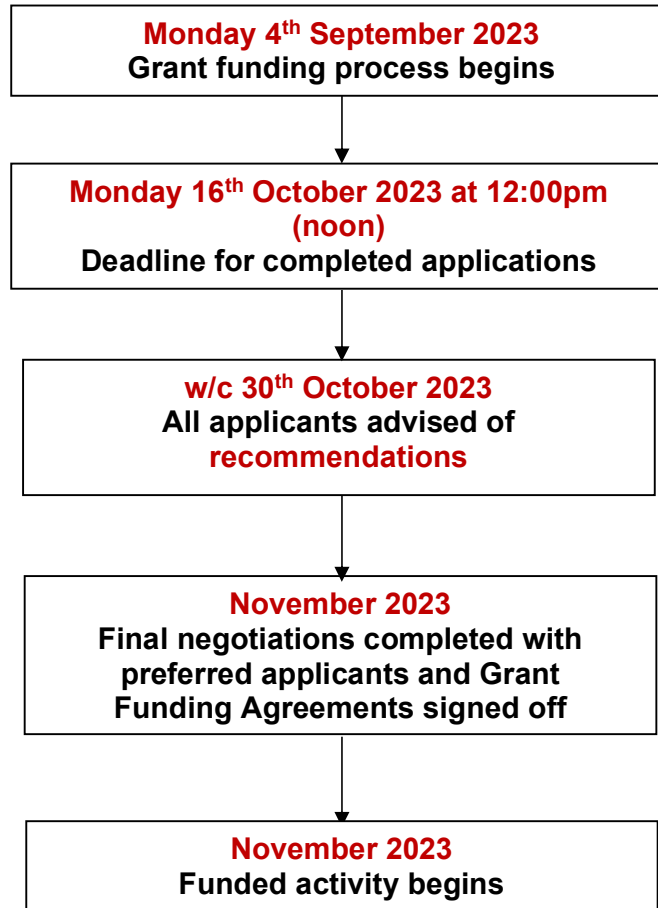
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5. Conditions of Grant Funding / Submitting your application

- Applications must be submitted by **Monday 16th October 2023 by 12:00pm (noon)** to migrationteam@leeds.gov.uk
- All sections of the application form must be completed unless otherwise stated.
- A lead organisation should be clearly specified in partnership/consortium bids. A service level agreement must be in place and submitted with your application form.
- Partnerships can apply to deliver all or individual elements of the activity.
- Applications under £5,000 will not be eligible. The maximum grant you can apply for under this programme is £50,000.
 - **However, we expect to award most grants in the region of £30k-35k, with only exceptional applications** that demonstrate a significant contribution to priority areas, or proposal which are delivered in partnership, will be considered for the maximum grant allocation.
- Grant funding to support People Seeking Asylum in Leeds is only available to support activity between November 2023 to June 2025.
- You will be required to submit quarterly monitoring; further information will be provided detailing the requirements and a monitoring form will be issued with the grant agreement.
- Projects which deliver up until June 2025 will be able to submit final monitoring by September 2025.
- The payment terms are as follows:
 - 50% of this grant funding will be paid in advance. Upon satisfactory receipt of quarterly monitoring the final 50% payment will be made halfway through your project delivery.
 - Grant recipients shall closely monitor the delivery and success of the project throughout the grant period to ensure that the aims and objectives of the project are being met.
 - No grant shall be paid unless and until the funder is satisfied that such payment will be used for proper expenditure in the delivery of the project.
 - All terms and conditions will be included in the grant funding agreement.

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6. Grant Funding Process



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7. Application Checklist

	Yes	No
Are all sections of the grant funding application form fully completed including the front sheet?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has the application been carefully proof-read?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you fully demonstrated how your proposal will contribute towards improved outcomes for people seeking asylum and/or new granted refugees during the 28 day move on?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you fully complied with the grant guidance and criteria?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has your application been signed by an authorised representative of your organisation or partnership/consortium?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
For partnership/consortium applications have you attached your service level agreement?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do all the figures add up?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you attached the required supporting documents as listed in Section 5 of the application form?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are you able to submit the bid to the Leeds City Council by the deadline?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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8. Frequently Asked Questions

a) Can I request funding for more than one year?

Yes, funding through the programme is available for 18 months until June 2025.

b) Can I request funding for less than one year?

Yes, funding can be requested for short term projects for a minimum of 6 months.

c) When will I find out whether my application has been successful?

We hope to be able to notify applicants of the outcome of the Grant Funding Process by w/c 30th October 2023.

d) If my application is unsuccessful, is there an appeals process?

Feedback will be offered to all applicants but there will not be a formal appeals process.

e) Who will decide if my application is successful?

Applications will be assessed, and recommendations made by a panel of representatives from Leeds City Council Migration Team, Commissioning colleagues from Adults and Health Directorate and Communities, Housing and Environment Directorate.

e) How will my project application be assessed?

Project submissions will be assessed on the applicant's ability to demonstrate the achievement of desired outcomes as set out in section 3 of the guidance.

f) Can the Grant Funding be used to support core costs, including staff management and overheads?

Project management fees should not exceed 10% of the total project costs.

g) Do I have to apply for the full amount available within the Grant Funding?

No. You can apply for any amount between £5,000 and £50,000. **However, we expect to award most grants in the region of £30k-35k, with only exceptional applications** that demonstrate a significant contribution to priority areas or proposal which are delivered in partnership will be considered for the maximum grant allocation.

h) Will I be required to provide monitoring information?

Yes. All successful projects will be required to submit quarterly monitoring information and retain evidence of expenditure and achievements of outputs and outcomes. End of project monitoring will be a requirement. Further information will be provided detailing the requirements and a monitoring form will be issued with the grant agreement.

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i) If my project is successful, how will I receive the grant?

The payment terms are as follows: 50% of this grant funding will be paid in advance. Upon satisfactory receipt of quarterly monitoring the final 50% payment will be made halfway through your project delivery. Grant recipients shall closely monitor the delivery and success of the project throughout the grant period to ensure that the aims and objectives of the project are being met. No grant shall be paid unless and until the funder is satisfied that such payment will be used for proper expenditure in the delivery of the project. All terms and conditions will be included in the grant funding agreement.

j) How do I submit my application? Can I submit my application form electronically, or do I need to submit a signed original by the deadline?

Please submit your application form with attached supporting documents by Monday 16th October at 12:00pm (noon) by email to migrationteam@leeds.gov.uk

k) Can I access any help to complete my application form?

As staff in the Migration Team will be assessing applications, it will not be appropriate for this team to provide detailed support around the specifics of your application. Officers will be happy to provide more general guidance about the Grant Funding process up until Monday 9th October 2023, any queries can be submitted by email to migrationteam@leeds.gov.uk. Other sources of advice may be available within your own partnerships/networks.

l) Is there a match funding requirement?

No, however if you are able to access match funding this will be considered.

m) I have never delivered grant funded activity before. Will my lack of experience prevent my application from being successful?

Applicants that can demonstrate they have a good track record of delivering activities to these targeted client groups will score more highly at assessment stage. You may wish to consider collaborating with a more experienced partner if you feel this might be a barrier to success.

n) Will collaborative projects be considered?

Yes, collaborative projects will be considered and are encouraged through this funding programme.

o) Do I have to be part of a Partnership to apply for funding?

No, applications from individual organisations will also be considered.

p) Can I apply for both revenue and capital funding?

No. Only revenue funding is available through this programme.

.... Don't even ask!

- X Can I submit my application after the deadline?
- X My proposed project activity does not contribute to the requirement of this grant funding, should I submit anyway?
- X I haven't had time to fully complete the application form, will it still be considered?

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9. Glossary of terms

People seeking asylum	Refugee Council define a person seeking asylum as - ‘A person who has left their country of origin and formally applied for asylum in another country but whose application has not yet been concluded. Wherever possible, we prefer to describe someone as a person seeking asylum as we feel that the term asylum seeker is dehumanising’.
Initial accommodation	The UK government define initial accommodation as – ‘housing that can be full-board, half- board, or self-catering. It is usually in a hostel-type environment or can be a hotel. It is for asylum seekers who would otherwise be destitute and need accommodation urgently before their Section 95 support applications have been determined [...] The amount of time people stay in initial accommodation can vary before moving onto dispersal accommodation.’
Contingency accommodation	<p>As defined by The House of Commons Library – ‘The use of contingency asylum accommodation - particularly, hotels and former military barracks - has recently increased. This has been due to issues with some asylum accommodation contracts and, more recently, measures to limit the risk of spreading Covid-19’.</p> <p>In Leeds, hotels are used as contingency accommodation for people seeking asylum. They are intended to be used as a temporary measure.</p>
Dispersed accommodation	The UK Government define dispersed accommodation as – ‘Longer-term temporary accommodation managed by accommodation providers on behalf of the Home Office’. A person seeking asylum will normally be able to stay in dispersed accommodation until their asylum claim has been fully determined, although it may not always be possible to stay in the same property.
Newly granted refugee	The UK Government states - ‘If you are granted asylum in the UK you are recognised as a refugee under the 1951 Refugee Convention and are allowed to remain in the UK for 5 years (limited leave to remain).’
28 day move on period	NRPF Network explains - ‘Section 95 support will be withdrawn if a person is granted leave to remain. A 28-day notice period will be provided to enable the person to make a claim for benefits and access housing assistance from their local council. This is often referred to as the ‘move on’ period’.
Destitute asylum seeker	<p>Section 95(3) of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 Act provides that a person is destitute if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • they do not have adequate accommodation or any means of obtaining it (whether or not their other essential living needs are met) or • have adequate accommodation or the means of obtaining it but cannot meet their other essential living needs <p>City Of Sanctuary UK describes destitution as ‘Something that can affect individuals at every stage of the asylum process. Sometimes a refused asylum seeker cannot return to their home country and have no papers to travel anywhere else. However, they are not allowed to work nor do they have access to public funds [...] Others are left destitute between refusal and appeal.</p>

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Streamlined asylum process	As defined by The Home Office - The Streamlined Asylum Processing model 'is intended to be used for the processing of manifestly well-founded claims awaiting an initial asylum decision. Streamlined Asylum Processing will give decision-makers increased flexibility over the process of making asylum decisions, in the interest of making the accurate and high-quality decisions as quickly as possible, for example without a personal interview where a positive decision can be taken based on the evidence available'.
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10. Key resources:

Leeds Migration Partnership	Network of migrant third sector organisations working on the migration agenda (sign up to the weekly blog)
New to Leeds	New to Leeds exists to help new migrants to Leeds to find their way around, and to help them to understand how to access support.
Help in Leeds.com	This directory is intended to be a resource for asylum seekers, refugees, people they know, and people who are helping them. It is advised to confirm information with services before providing any signposting information.
Learning English in Yorkshire and Humber	Directory of ESOL provision and conversation classes
Leeds Adult Learning	Offers a range of first step courses for adults. Many courses are free subject to personal circumstances - check with the course provider for details.
Leeds Faith Organisations	This map displays faith organisations in Leeds
Migration Yorkshire	Migration and integration in Yorkshire and Humber: find out about policy; statistics; research; local services for asylum seekers, refugees and migrants;