

Brighter Lives Grants Programme: Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is the overall aim of the Brighter Lives programme?

A: Brighter Lives is focused on helping Christian organisations to respond to the long-term impact of Covid-19 on people's mental health, through greater training, resources and support.

Q: Who can apply for a Brighter Lives grant?

A: Churches, cathedrals and Christian denominational bodies, and Christian charities in the UK and the Republic of Ireland are eligible to apply. Churches will normally need to be part of a denomination that is a member of Churches Together in England or the equivalent in Scotland, Wales and Ireland, or belong to a local ecumenical 'churches together' group.

Unfortunately schools and other educational establishments are not eligible to apply, but can apply for grants for other purposes through our general grants programme. Further details are available [here](#)

Q: What kinds of projects are Brighter Lives grants available for?

A: Grants are available for work which falls within one or more of these categories:

1. Supporting existing or emerging specialist services provided by churches and Christian charities for people struggling with mental health issues, focusing on the most vulnerable who may struggle to access support elsewhere. For example, counselling or similar therapeutic services, which could be delivered in-person, online or by phone.

Please note:

- By 'specialist services' we mean services run on a professional basis, delivered by trained, and appropriately qualified staff or volunteers. Unfortunately we cannot provide funding for more informal groups, services or ministries not run on this basis
- By 'emerging services' we mean services for which you already have clear and well-progressed plans to commence operation. Your application will need to show the progress you have made, and how a grant will help the service to get started and deliver benefit

2. Enabling Christian organisations to train, equip and resource churches and Christian charities in:

- Enhanced mental health awareness and/or mental health first aid;
- Providing appropriate mental health and wellbeing support groups and services

3. Programmes to support the personal mental health and wellbeing support of clergy and other key church leaders/workers

Q: What kinds of project costs are Brighter Lives grants available for?

A: In general, Brighter Lives grants are available to help fund:

- Capital costs, such as adaptation of buildings and the purchase of equipment clearly necessary and justified primarily for the purposes of delivering projects which fall within one of the categories above
- Revenue costs, such as staff costs (Salary costs and direct expenses of employing new staff and/or extending contracted hours of existing staff for eligible projects), counselling subsidies, staff and volunteer training costs, volunteer expenses,

development of resources and training materials/programmes, and delivery of training. Costs for up to one year from the start date of the new work or project set out in your application are eligible. The costs must relate to work that falls within one of the eligible projects categories above.

General 'business as usual' running costs, including broadband and utilities are not eligible for funding.

Full details are available in the project budget document, which you will need to complete and submit with your application. This document is available [here](#).

- Q:** We don't seem to be eligible for a grant through Brighter Lives. Can you support what we want to do in the area of mental health and wellbeing in any other way?
- A:** If you need funding to improve your building and buy equipment that will help you with what you are seeking to do, you may be able to apply through our General grants programme. More information is available [here](#). We have also provided some great advice and resources on our website that will help churches and charities wanting to offer improved mental health and wellbeing support. You can find these resources [here](#).
- Q:** Can we apply for a specific grant amount?
- A:** No. We ask you to provide us with the cost of your project and a budget, using a [standard budget form](#). If your application is successful, a grant will be awarded based on the eligible costs of your project and (where applicable) the level of need in your community (which we will assess based on applicable deprivation indices).
- Q:** Do we need to have raised any funds towards the cost of our project before applying?
- A:** Yes. We normally like to see that you have raised a minimum of 30% towards your project costs before you apply, though we will consider every application on its own merit, and may still be able to award a grant if you have not achieved this level of funding. However, we will rarely fund the total cost of a project, so you should ensure your application sets out a realistic funding plan, and where possible, shows a contribution towards project costs from your existing resources.
- Q:** We've recently had a grant from Benefact Trust under a different programme. Can we still apply?
- A:** Yes, you can apply for funding under the Brighter Lives programme even if you have received a grant from Benefact Trust within the last two years, as long as the Brighter Lives application is for a different project. We may ask you to send us a report for any project previously funded to help us see how our grant has helped you to achieve your project aims.
- Q:** Is there a deadline for applications?
- A:** Applications will be considered on a rolling basis and there is no fixed deadline while funds for the programme are still available.
- Q:** How soon can we expect to know the outcome of our application?
- A:** We normally aim to respond to applications within 3 months.
- Q:** How can we apply for a grant?
- A:** All applications must be submitted via our online application form. Just visit [this page](#) and click on 'Apply now'. You don't have to complete your application in one session as you can save your progress and return to the application when you are ready.
- Q:** Is it possible to see the application form questions before starting the process?

- A:** Yes. The first page of the application form process provides a link that will enable you to read through the questions before you start your application.
- Q:** How can we get some guidance on planning our project?
- A:** Guidance and tools for project planning, reporting and impact evaluation tools, as well as advice on applying for funding, publicising your project and much more are available on our [advice and resources hub](#).
- Q:** If we are successful, will you expect us to promote news of our grant in any way?
- A:** Yes. As a condition of receiving a grant, we will ask you to acknowledge the grant on your website, in your Annual Report and in any publicity about the project for which the grant was awarded. We'll also send you publicity resources, and a certificate to display.
- Q:** What are your reporting requirements if we are successful in our application?
- A:** Successful applicants will be asked to complete an online report form one year after the award of their grant, reporting on the extent to which the outcomes set out in their original application have been achieved.
- Q:** Where can we get further help and advice if our question hasn't been covered?
- A:** Please e-mail us at info@benefacttrust.co.uk and we will respond as soon as possible.