



Finding funding for your physical activity project

Resources to help you with your funding

We provide a range of resources to help you find, apply, secure and sustain funding for physical activity and sport in London. Some of these are in the form of written bitesize guides, to help you with a specific stage in the funding process. When using this guide 'From idea to funding application,' you may also want to use it alongside any or all the following resources:

- [Finding funding for your physical activity project](#)
- [From idea to funding application](#)
- [The Do's and Don'ts when writing a funding application](#)
- [Writing a funding bid – top tips](#)
- [Developing a strong evidence base to support your funding application](#)
- [Applying for facilities funding](#)
- [Securing sponsorship](#)
- [Funding guide for individuals](#)

Introduction

This document provides some introductory guidance for those trying to develop and fundraise for a physical activity project, as opposed to a 'traditional' sports project. We outline the types of physical activity projects that can receive funding, who the key funders are, and provide considerations when developing the project.

Context

With concerns around the health implications of physical inactivity, and recognition that in order to address issues like this there needs to be an 'alternative offer' to core sports, recent years have seen a growth in funding for a wider range of physical activity offers alongside 'core' sport, and more dedicated projects that focus on non-traditional physical activity. It is now quite feasible to gain funding for Parkour, skateboarding, gym sessions or fitness classes.



What types of physical activity projects can be funded?

There are, broadly speaking, three core focus areas that organisations can access funding for. These are as follows:

Physical activity opportunities for those that are inactive

With increasing attention devoted to the 'obesity crisis' and inactive lifestyles amongst young people, a whole new area of opportunity has developed for physical activity funding to be gained to support inactivity and develop 'active lifestyles'. As a result, Sport England have increasingly had to demonstrate their ability to meet Government outcomes in this area, and have therefore progressively focused greater attention on inactive people (with participation measured through the Active Lives Survey). With that has come a gradual loosening of the nature of the activities that can be funded, and more 'alternative' provision funded.

London Marathon Trust are now equally focused on inactivity and are very committed to providing capital funding to support 'non-traditional' activity. For the first time, they are also starting to develop revenue programmes to operate alongside capital funding.

Opportunities for those with specific medical conditions

Another opportunity is what can broadly be termed the 'preventative agenda', where funding is allocated to supporting those 'at risk' from specific medical conditions into physical activity. At a local level, this might, for example, be a local fund to provide activity for people with COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease) or a high BMI (body mass index). At a national level, examples include Healthy Hearts grants available through Heart Research UK, in partnership with Subway.

Opportunities for specific demographic groups

Linked to the inactivity agenda, there are opportunities for physical activity funding for specific demographic groups. The largest array of opportunities is for disabled people, who statistically are far less likely to be active than the general population of their area. Funding opportunities can be local, regional or national, with two national examples being the Paul Bush Foundation and the Barbara Ward Children's Charity. Sport England have also recently launched a number of funds focused on demographic groups, including older people and low-income families.

Who are the funders of these projects?

There is a vast array of opportunities available, from very niche funds (e.g. targeting those with a specific medical condition) to very open opportunities. To search for any funding, make sure you take advantage of London Sport's online funding tool, where you can search by key criteria to understand the opportunities available: <https://funding.londonsport.org/>



Some example funders are:

Local Authorities; Public Health Departments; Health and Wellbeing Boards; Clinical Commissioning Groups – these are the networks that manage public health funding locally, at a borough level. Occasionally they administer and distribute grant funding (e.g. Lambeth and Southwark Happiness and Wellbeing Grants), but more often they commission services against their borough priorities. It is therefore worth establishing what your local public health priorities are, and finding a contact within the Local Authority public health team.

Sport England: Funding has shifted considerably, with much more flexibility on the nature of the activity that can be funded than under previous Sport England strategies. Sport England has an emerging health team, and any Sport England funded-projects will now have to address areas such as behaviour change as a matter of course.

Trust funds – Numerous funders offer regular opportunities in this area. Just some example trust funders taken from [London Sport's Funding Search Tool](#) are detailed below:

- **Mrs Smith and Mount Trust:** average grant is approx. £3,500. As well as a focus on core target groups, the fund currently has a priority around health in the Community. This category is for registered charities with an annual income of less than £500,000, working to improve people's health
- **The Clara E Burgess Trust:** Small grants intended to support projects which will benefit the health and wellbeing of children and young people, in particular by the provision of facilities and assistance to enhance education, health and physical wellbeing, with a priority on children under 10
- **London Catalyst Grants:** Up to £3,000. Special Interest Grants: support thoughtful projects or service developments that can tackle health inequalities and the limiting effects of ill health, disability and poverty. Small Grants: to support health and community projects in areas of need
- **The Steinberg Family Charitable Trust:** provides grants to charitable organisations undertaking health related projects in the UK
- **The Denise Coates Foundation:** health and wellbeing is one supported area, with no minimum or maximum grant amount.

Physical activity: some considerations

For generic considerations when developing a project and looking for / applying for funding, it is useful to read our guidance documents:

[From idea to funding application](#)

[Developing a strong evidence base to support your funding application](#)

[The Do's and Don'ts when writing a funding application](#)



This section highlights a couple of areas that are likely to need some consideration, over-and-above the guidance in the documents highlighted above.

Delivery

If you are developing a physical activity and sport project, it is important to undertake a risk assessment. When targeting and providing physical activity interventions for inactive people, there is added risk, and a significantly enhanced risk when supporting those with diagnosed medical conditions.

This is a complex area and needs careful consideration as part of the project design. For example, you may want to introduce a Physical Activity Readiness Questionnaire' (or PAR-Q) and ensure that you recommend the participant gains permission from their GP if they have a more serious condition such as a heart or cardio-vascular condition. You should also consider the use of specialist instructors trained to Level 4 under REPS (the Register of Exercise Professionals). This is the highest level of industry recognition and level 4 instructors will have the specialist knowledge to be able to support those with medical conditions to be active.

Monitoring and evaluation

Physical activity projects often present significant challenges in demonstrating achievement, as the outcomes associated with health gain are difficult to measure in a rudimentary way. Do ensure that you are not too ambitious in the suggested outcomes that your project will achieve, as you will need to demonstrate that you can measure progress towards these outcomes.

One useful way to ensure your project can be monitored is by establishing a logic model as part of the planning process. For an introduction to designing a logic model, the following video is useful to watch: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bZkwDSr_Us

For some very useful guidance in this area, ensure that you consult the National Obesity Observatory's Standard Evaluation Framework for Physical activity interventions, first published in 2012. This can be found here:

http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20170110171012/https://www.noo.org.uk/core/frameworks/SEF_PA



For further information

If you need further support in this area, then London Sport may be able to help. Contact Caroline Brooks, Funding Manager, in the first instance – caroline.brooks@londonsport.org.

Search for available funding

Our free online funding search tool is available for you to search for the latest funding available to you.

[Search for funding now](#)

Explore physical activity and sport data and insight to support your funding application

Our free online insight and data tool is available for you to explore the latest physical activity and sport data and insight in London to support your funding applications.

[Find insight and data to help here](#)

Any questions?

We hope you found this guide useful and best of luck with your funding application. For any questions related to this guide or about our funding support, please contact us below.

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