

Main Grants Programme 2019 - 2022 Assessment Sheet

Section 1 – Core Information

Name of applicant
Eco Communities CIC

Is the applicant eligible to apply for a main grant	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
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Reasons for ineligibility or any further comments

Is the application for Core or Project funding	Core <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Project <input type="checkbox"/>
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Which main grant theme is being applied for	
x	Strong and cohesive communities
x	Communities that care
	Access to advice
	Widening access to sports
	Widening access to sports

Annual amount requested
£70,000

Application Form Question 25.	Details of any funding from Lewisham Council within the last 3 years?
Assembly funds – total of £5,700 across three wards (Evelyn, Ladywell and Crofton Park).	

Section 2 - Deliverables

Application Form Question 7	<p>Tell us the issue you are seeking to address.</p> <p>Please ensure you are clear why this issue is Lewisham specific and why you feel the need is not met by the existing assets in the community whether they be people, services (both commissioned and non-commissioned) or available funding.</p>
Score	2
Comments	<p>Very limited articulation of need.</p> <p>There is some reference to isolation but beyond this the need is simply implied through a description of what the buildings may be used for.</p> <p>Overall this answer simply describes what Eco's buildings might be used for and some of the benefits that may be realised through their use but does not address the question.</p>
Word count (400)	379

Application Form Question 8	<p>Tell us the assets you will be seeking to engage and mobilise to assist you.</p> <p>These assets could include individuals, groups, buildings or any or specific strengths that already exist within your community including the lived experiences of those within it.</p> <p>Tell us the other organisations working in this area and how you will avoid duplication and add value.</p>
Score	1
Comments	<p>This answer lacks scope and depth.</p> <p>There is reference to 58 partnerships and some mention of the types of organisations but no detail or specifics.</p> <p>There is no reference to engaging local individuals as volunteers or the use of other assets in the community.</p> <p>Given the unused word count it could be expected that further details would be provided.</p>
Word count (400)	142

Application Form Question 9	<p>Please tell us what you will seek to achieve over the next three years both with and without the funding you are applying for.</p> <p>Please include details of how many extra people you would expect to work with, the outputs you will deliver and the outcomes you will seek to achieve.</p> <p>Please tell us how your service differs from those that are already delivered or commissioned by the council.</p> <p>You should state the level of funding that you would anticipate attracting during this period both with and without Lewisham's core support.</p>
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	<p>As you are applying for Core Funding this section should set out your ambitions as an organisation and what Lewisham's funding will help you achieve rather than simply what 'we are paying for.'</p> <p>NB – this details in this section will form the basis of the monitoring of your organisation although the exact details will be agreement with once the grant has been awarded.</p>
Without core funding from Lewisham:	
Comments	<p>The response is that existing services will be significantly cut back if no core funding is received.</p> <p>It is unclear in the response what is currently provided although there is reference to 'buildings' throughout the application.</p> <p>The answer simply describes increased charges with no indication of positive provision that may be delivered without the funding that has been applied for.</p> <p>A priori knowledge within the council is aware that these include community libraries and it is unclear why the lack of core funding would lead to what is described as 'vicious cost-cutting' as there is no funding currently provided as part of the agreements to run these buildings.</p> <p>Again, limited use of the available word count.</p>
Word count (500)	119
With core funding from Lewisham:	
Score	2
Comments	<p>A limited answer that gives some indication of what the building might be used for in the future but limited detail as to how far these options have been fully explored or agreed.</p> <p>Positive ambition relating to the buildings being made available for free and for them to become dementia friendly.</p> <p>However, there is a lack of clarity as to how groups would be prioritised for free space or what steps would be taken to ensure Dementia Friendly status.</p> <p>There is a lack of clarity about what the funding will actually pay for.</p> <p>Again there word count is very low so the lack of detail is disappointing.</p>
Word count (500)	196

Application Form Question 10.	Please state how far your service offer is scalable. Please indicate below what percentage of your requested amount would still be feasible in terms of service delivery. Please tick all that apply
75%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
50%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comments on value for money of revised offers	As with the general service offer it is difficult to ascertain exactly what would be on offer and how this would be facilitated.

Application Form Question 11.	User profile – this table is copied directly from the application form	
PROTECTED CHARACTERISTIC	PLEASE TICK ✓	FURTHER DETAIL
Age	✓	Our building cater for every age.
Disability	✓	All our buildings are DDA compliant
Gender	✓	We cater for all genders
Gender reassignment	✓	We have always supported LGBT and have held events in the libraries
Marriage & civil partnership	✓	We cater for all types of marriages and partnerships
Pregnancy & maternity	✓	We have Antenatal classes in our buildings, and offer baby books and when born we have many baby bounce session.
Race	✓	We cater for all races
Religion & belief	✓	We cater for all Religions and beliefs
Sexual orientation	✓	We cater for all Sexual orientation

Application Form Question 11b	If your proposed programme will be aimed exclusively at one specific community please explain the reasons for this. NB – this could be a community of interest or a geographical area not listed above.
Comments	N/A

Application Form Question 12	Please set out how your proposed programme will engage those who do not traditionally access services. This engage should relate to both the protected characteristics but also other groups.
Score	2
Comments	There is no analysis of which groups do not currently access services or why. There is a general acceptance of the need to do more promotional activity but this is

	<p>limited to mainstream and social media channels. There is little reference to seeking to engage particular groups other than reference to events during LGBT and Black History months.</p> <p>Again, word limit not utilised.</p>
Word count (300)	146

Section 3 - Track record, finance and governance

Application Form Question 13	<p>Collaboration and delivery: your track record of working in partnership and delivering quality services.</p> <p>Please use this section to outline the partnerships you have developed over the last three years. Please detail who you have worked with and what you have achieved.</p> <p>Please also details the three service achievements during this period of which you are most proud.</p>
Score	3
Comments	<p>This section has details of a range of very positive partnerships and events that have happened in the library buildings.</p> <p>The range of partners is impressive as are the types of activities. The engagement of local individuals to volunteer in the libraries is particularly impressive.</p> <p>However, the majority of partnerships appear to be fairly transactional in nature and relate to the use of the buildings for activities rather than long term service development.</p> <p>This is a much more positive part of the application form but it fails to specifically highlight the three key achievements as requested and lacks the depth to score the highest marks.</p>
Word count (500)	456

Application Form Question 14	<p>Resources: your track record of attracting resources both financial and human.</p> <p>Please complete the below tables detailing your track record of the following over the past three years:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • funding applications both successful and unsuccessful • other fundraising activities • volunteer engagement <p>Please add extra rows as required.</p> <p>Please use the space below the tables to provide further details as required (200 words max).</p>
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Total number of funding applications in last 3 years	Level of funding requested	Outcome/level of funding received
16	£620,377	£390,089

Number of fundraising activities undertaken in last 3 years	Level of funding achieved
14	£495,449

Number of volunteer engagement activity undertaken in last 3 years	Approximate number of volunteer hours delivered
Volunteers in libraries	133,670

Score	3
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Comments	<p>The level of volunteer hours is very impressive and is the main reason for the high score. The number of hours is significant and it is assumed that these are spread across numerous libraries and so serve a range of different communities.</p> <p>The level of financial resources secured are also significant although a large proportion of these are gained through contracts, sales and consultancy work so not fundraising in the traditionally sense.</p> <p>The funding applications are still almost exclusively focused on the statutory sector with limited expansion to the wider funding community.</p>
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Application Form Question 15	<p>Overall financial health: Please complete the below table and answer the following questions.</p> <p>What is your reserve policy and current reserves status as a percentage of your turnover?</p> <p>We would expect organisation who are more than three years old to have a minimum of 10% of their annual turnover in reserve.</p> <p>If you are seeking funding and do not meet this threshold please provide a detailed account of why and what you intend to do to bring your reserves to an adequate level.</p> <p>Regardless of your reserve position please explain how your organisation is financially viable.</p>
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The below table is copied directly from the organisation's application form

Year	Income	Expenditure	Surplus/deficit
Oct 2018 /Sept 19 (forecasted)	£350,000	£290,000	£60,000
Oct 2017/ Sept 18 (anticipated)	£310,000	£300,000	£10,000
Oct 2016 /Sept 17	£259,108	£258,047	£1,061
Oct 2015 /Sept 16	£288,381	£308,617	-£20,206
Oct 2014/ Sept 15	£295,550	£299,103	-£3553

Score	2
Comments	<p>The organisation has no reserves at present although it is stated that this is due to investment in Lewisham assets.</p> <p>It is unclear whether the anticipated surplus includes the funds applied for through this application and the answer at question 9a presents significant concerns regarding sustainability should this funding not be agreed.</p> <p>Reference to increase in income from October 2017 contains no explanation so it is difficult to assess the sustainability of this. This is also directly following the period of the</p>

	latest accounts so it is not possible to verify.
Word count (250)	98

Application Form Question 16	Shared values: Please use this section to demonstrate your commitment to these (London Living Wage, equalities, being Dementia Friendly, ending Modern Slavery and sustainability) and plans to develop these commitments.
Score	1
Comments	Not a Living Wage Employer – 33% of staff currently below LLW. No reference to other highlighted areas although 2 buildings are dementia friendly and all are Jimmy Safe Havens.
Word count (250)	73

Application Form Question 23	Board Statement: Please include a statement from your Board regarding its overall approach to managing the organisation. This should include the details of the most recent skills audit and how the key posts on the Board are recruited to.
Score	1
Comments	Not clear that there is an effective governance system in place. There are only 3 members of the management committee all of whom have been appointed in the last few weeks. The posts of Chair and Treasurer are held by the same individual who appears to be the Director/CEO of the organisation. The latest submitted accounts show all Directors apart from the current Director/Chair/CEO resigning during that period. Overall Board statement lacks any substance.
Word count (250)	62

Has the organisation met all other requirements of the application?		
	Yes	No
Does the organisation have a Board of at least 5 with all major posts filled		x
Is the organisation currently compliant with filing requirements?		
Does the organisation have a reasonable awareness of opportunities and threats?	x	
Does the organisation have all the requested documents available?	x	
Has the organisation attached their accounts for 2017/18 – or most recent set of management accounts if formed after 2017?	x	
Relevant quality assurance systems in place	?	
Comments	There is currently no quality assurance system in place but the organisation is currently considering PQASSO.	

Overall comments/Recommendation

Overall score: 17

Overall a weak application from an organisation that currently receives council funding and manages a number of council assets.

The majority of answers are very short and lack depth.

There are some positive areas relating to track record and the engagement of volunteers in the libraries is very impressive but overall the application lacks a coherent vision and service offer.

There are questions regarding financial sustainability and governance that require examination regardless of the funding decision.

Not recommended for funding.