



# Golden Grantmakers

## Resident Panel

Reflection & Learning Report  
2022-2023

islington  
giving

# About this report

This report documents the five-month process of five Islington residents coming together, supported by Islington Giving, to grant a total of £180,000 in funding for local projects providing activities and support to Islington's older residents.

The report begins with some background information and key learning. It is then divided into two main sections – Recruitment and Engagement, and Applications and Funding Decisions. Each section ends with a precis of what worked well and what could be improved, ending with a summary and what next section.

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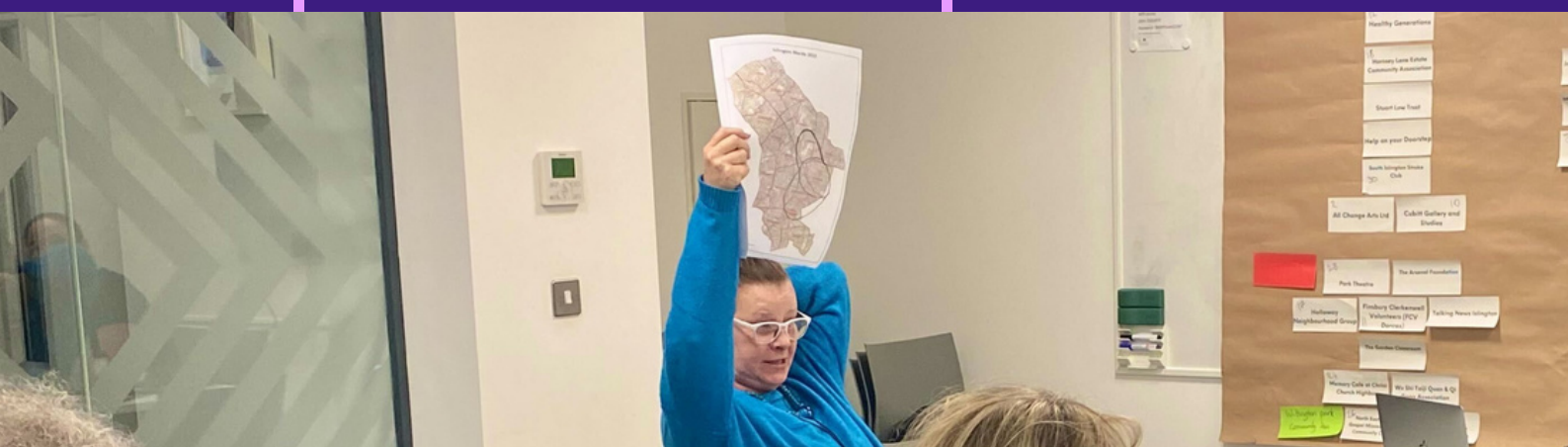
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# Background

**Islington Giving is committed to understanding and responding to local issues in partnership with those that live and work in the borough.**

Part of Islington Giving's identity is that everyone has something both to give and gain from their involvement and as it is part funded by local people, they should have a say in how money is spent. Resident-led panels are one way to achieve this as they can spread 'ownership' of Islington Giving by bringing local people into the heart of its work, and can help us to make more informed funding decisions in the process. Residents who use services generally know what makes a good service. Including their life-experience and insight complements the professional expertise of Islington Giving's programme team.

Islington Giving's flagship participatory grant making programme 'Young Grant Makers' has now run five successful annual programmes. In September 2020, Islington Giving continued to develop its approach to participatory grant making, recruiting a Family Panel of eight residents who met over four months, awarding £115,000 to ten projects that provide activities for families across the borough. A second Family Panel ran from September 2021, recruiting a further eight panel members who awarded a total of £155,075 to six projects.

Running seven panels over six years, Islington Giving has learnt much and adapted delivery each time based on feedback and reflection. Learning from the current Golden Grantmakers programme will help inform and further expand Islington Giving's approach to resident-led grant making.



# Why an older person's participatory grant giving programme?

Sitting within Islington Giving's Confronting Isolation priority and as one of Islington Giving's earliest flagship funding programmes, the Older People's 'Saturday Social's' programme has been delivered successfully by three long-term partners since 2013. A 2020 review evaluated the programme over the previous seven years concluding that it had evolved into much more than activities delivered on a Saturday. While there still continues to be good reason for providing Saturday activities – a time identified by older people where isolation increases due to a lack of meaningful activities – the programme has grown to offer much more: the incredible success story of North London Cares and the Cares Family, the expansion of All Change and Cubitt's work to encompass outreach to the most isolated residents living in residential care, alongside the growth of weekly activities and inter-generational work across all three delivery partners.

While the 2020 review celebrated the success of the programme to date, it also acknowledged that because it had not been open for other groups to apply to, going forward Islington Giving should ask residents directly what kind of support and activities they would like delivered locally. Having worked successfully with young people and parents, and learning from other organizations' work with older people, Islington Giving was keen to build on progress by exploring ways to involve older people in its grant making.

Islington Giving therefore extended the opportunity to older residents to participate in its grant making, giving them the power to identify and prioritise what was important to them, utilising their experience and knowledge and hopefully, to have some fun in the process.

Golden Grant Makers, 2022-23



**It showed me I can do things younger people can do.**



**It was a really great group.**

**I enjoyed working with everyone – we will miss each other!**



# Summary

In May 2022 the Islington Giving Grants Committee approved a devolved budget to a Panel of Islington residents of between £120,000 up to a maximum of £200,000 (which was dependent upon the amount of additional match funds raised). The final agreed budget was £180,000 comprising £50,000 match funding from The National Lottery Community Fund (£100,00 in total), £37,000 from the Mercers Company (£70,000 over two years) and a further £35,000 allocation from the 2022 Islington Giving budget (alongside its £50,000 match funding contribution). This accounted for just under 20% of Islington Giving's 2022 grants budget (totalling £947,250). Islington Giving's Grants Committee agreed that the Panel's decisions would be final, with no referral back to the Committee for sign-off.

The Panel were tasked with designing an open call that would build upon the evolution and focus of Islington Giving's Older People's programme to date. This has included increasing reach to ensure those least able to access activities – such as people with disabilities or those impacted by social or financial isolation – have the opportunity and support to do so (see box below).

Training and guidance, including assistance with designing the call, was provided throughout the process to help enable more informed funding decisions. As with most of Islington Giving's participatory grant making panels delivered to date, payment at the London Living Wage (£11.95) was offered. Panel members also had the option of choosing a reward instead of payment upon completion of the programme.



In 2020, people aged 65 and over in Islington made up 9% of the borough's population (compared to 12% for London as a whole and 19% for England). Although proportionally, this means the borough has a relatively young population, older people living in Islington tend to be less well off than in other areas. In November 2018, there were 7,520 older residents accessing Pension Credit in the borough. This is approximately 40% of pensioners, compared to 25% in London and 17% nationally. In addition, older people make up a significant proportion of Islington's social housing households who have a considerably lower income than the rest of the borough's residents. This makes it difficult to both afford and access activities that local older residents might wish to participate in.

## Key learnings



- More thought on panel recruitment – cast the net wide to attract Panel members – ensure diversity, go out to where older people are and build in enough time to go out again if the make-up isn't quite right.
- Think about how the process is promoted in relation to payment.
- Planning is key – knowing what you are going to do at every stage, but also expect the unexpected and be prepared to readily adapt.
- Continually question how the processes you put in place may exclude.
- Be flexible on timing so that it works for everyone – probably more frequent but shorter meetings would be better for older people.
- Think carefully what you are asking of Panel members as this may affect who engages (paid opportunities, a rigid, longer more spaced out or condensed programme?).
- Whatever the process, whoever is involved, create safe spaces to freely debate and challenge conscious and unconscious bias.
- Keep application processes (for Panel members and applicants) as simple as possible – think about alternative application methods.

- Strong criteria and a focused open call are vital as it will help guide through tough decisions – take time to do this and allow for more than one meeting to sense-check, then ensure everyone has a shared understanding throughout the process and certainly before it comes to making decisions
- Check-in regularly with Panel members through a main point of contact
- Document learning as you go. It helps capture thoughts and insights that can get lost
- No grant making is perfect – there are always trade-offs and that is ok.

## The Process

### Recruitment



No previous experience is necessary – we don't expect you to have done anything like this before. We want to meet residents who have ideas about what they would like to see and participate in and who want to get involved.

We are looking for people who:

- live in Islington
- are over 55 (with priority likely given to those who are over 65)
- have a desire / enthusiasm to effect change in their local community
- have some experience of the issues being addressed i.e. social or financial isolation, mental and/or physical ill-health, lacking access to quality services and activities at times and places that suit them.
- can commit to participating in the whole programme
- are interested in how funding decisions are made and willing to engage in detailed discussions
- are willing to work as part of a team to share ideas and reach a common goal.



A lot of work went into recruitment and supporting Panel members throughout the process to make sure they felt able and confident to engage. It was anticipated that a minimum of eight residents would be recruited to the Panel. Whilst recognising the Panel could not be fully representative of Islington's diverse community, the intention was to recruit residents that looked and felt like people living locally and that people who may not normally put themselves forward for such opportunities might apply.

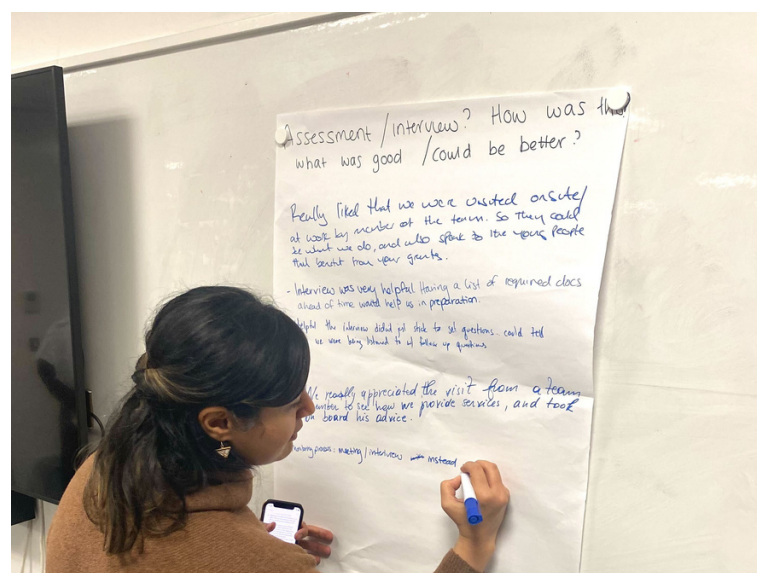
A three-page document was produced that outlined information about Islington Giving, the proposed programme and why we were recruiting to a resident Panel, who could apply, how to apply, the time commitment and details on how participants could be recompensed for the role (see appendix 1 below).

The call for Panelists was promoted through local groups with whom Islington Giving and Cripplegate Foundation have a funding relationship, encouraging them to signpost the opportunity to residents they work with who might not ordinarily put themselves forward. It was also promoted widely through Voluntary Action Islington's email group, social media channels and the Nextdoor web platform. To apply, residents were asked to complete a two-page expression of interest which was followed up with a phone conversation with the lead Programme Manager to discuss their suitability and to answer any questions.

Seventeen people were interested in becoming panel members (six men and eleven women) and conversations were held with 15. Six enquiries were received from residents with no direct links to local projects or Islington Giving/Cripplegate Foundation. One resident heard about the opportunity through a local Council partnership newsletter, another through Nextdoor and one other through a Twitter promotion.

For the three others this information was not gathered. Eleven expressions of interest were received, with most hearing about the opportunity and encouraged to apply through groups known to Islington Giving/Cripplegate. Four people who completed expressions of interest withdrew prior to the first panel meeting (two for health reasons, one due to work commitments and the other had a change of heart).

Seven Panel members (three male and four female) were recruited and no one was turned away. Two applicants (both male) attended the first panel meeting but then pulled out, one due to ill health and another because the programme simply did not feel right for him. Two panelists joined the programme after the second panel meeting when the open call had been agreed. All were recruited through local partners (Help on Your Doorstep helped recruit four of the seven, three of whom stayed the course, one heard about the opportunity through Cubitt Arts, one through attending a Talk for Health session at Cripplegate offices and the final person came via outreach at an Arsenal indoor bowls session – although this person dropped out at the first meeting). With four of the five panel members who stayed the course coming through local partners, this supports the need to work closely with trusted partners. However, while local contacts appear to be central to recruitment it is also important to open out the process beyond our trusted networks.



# Inclusion

While inclusion was at the heart of the design process, from the need to recruit a diverse Panel to making sure the funding opportunity was accessible to Islington's diverse range of community groups, it is fair to say that there were some challenging aspects across both these areas. While panel diversity is touched upon below, other areas relating to overall reach of the programme are discussed later in the report.

Four Panel members identified as White British, one White Irish, and one White other. One Panel member identified as non-White (Arabic). While there was clear interest in the opportunity from people with Black heritage – there were six enquiries about the opportunity from people with Black Caribbean or African ethnicities (35% of those enquiring), initial conversations were held with five, and four went on to complete an expression of interest form (36% of the total), only one took up the opportunity.

The reasons given for not wanting to participate for the three people that did express an interest but didn't go on to participate were due to health (for two) and work commitments. Three panel members were in the lower 55-65 age bracket, three in the middle 65-75 and one in the 75-85 age group. While one enquiry was made, no applicants over 85 applied to become a Panel member. Most Panel members were from Central and South of the borough with two from the North.

Whilst it will always be difficult for a small Panel of residents to be truly representative of Islington's diverse community, careful thought needs to be given to how and where the opportunity is promoted to ensure people of all ethnicities, gender and sexual orientation feel welcomed. Specifically in relation to the ethnic breakdown of panel members, a key learning point is the need to improve the recruitment process for future iterations of the programme.



Consideration could be given to setting an optimum number of participants with specific ethnicity and gender breakdowns and that perhaps the programme should not progress until this is met. Moreover, it is important going forward to identify more effective ways of recruiting residents from BAMER communities who were least represented on the panel. This could include intentionally over-recruiting from this demographic in the expectation that there is likely to be significant rate of drop-out, more extensive outreach or perhaps even breaking up some of the programme delivery to take place as outreach alongside local projects. For example, the call could be designed at outreach workshops that also build interest in the programme to recruit panel members. Outreach could also be used to help prioritise/score the applications and in the process, to gather a wider range of views.

As the previous Supporting Families evaluation noted, it is interesting, given Islington Giving's mission to tackle poverty and inequality, that its participatory grant making programmes do not formally capture the socio-economic background of Panel members. Despite not explicitly requesting this data it is estimated from working with the GGM Panel members over five months that a minimum of 80% are from lower income households. In this context, it should be noted that although representation on the Panel from BAMER communities was low, five of the seven initial panel members were from white working-class backgrounds. This is a demographic that is known to have high concentrations of social and financial isolation locally – both of which have been key priority areas for Islington Giving's Older People's Programme to date.

## Payment and the risk of

## 'over professionalising' the offer



Linked to the question of socio-economic status is the issue of how Panel members are recompensed for their participation on the Panel. Only one Panel member requested payment (which we make via our monthly payroll) with the remaining participants preferring to opt for a reward upon completion of the programme. In most cases this was related to their desire not to hinder their entitlement to pension credit payments. However, feedback from the group also suggested that payment could put people off from participating as it can feel too much like a job or that we had 'over professionalised' the offer, leading people to think we were looking for experience and it was therefore "not for me." Some felt that this was given too much prominence in promotional materials.

Related to the perception that the opportunity is of a 'professional nature' and therefore perhaps intimidating to some residents, more thought could be given when promoting the offer that 'office type work' is not a familiar experience for everyone and may put people off applying. This was reflected in one panelist's comments about being uncomfortable with ice breakers and her concern regarding "what people might think about my answers!?" In contrast however, the same person also stated that they liked coming to the 'nice' office environment and indeed, the process might well have helped at least two participants feel more confident about applying for jobs again.





## Engagement

The intention was to deliver a programme that was somewhere in between the Young Grant Makers and Supporting Families panels. Unlike Islington Giving's Young Grant Makers programme, where a core objective is to give young people real world work experience, Golden Grant Makers was not intended to be a skills building exercise, with the primary focus instead on good grant making and sharing power.

However, while not designed as a skills building exercise in itself, it was understood that more in depth support would likely be needed compared to the lighter touch process of the Family Panel. The programme design thus settled on six panel meetings (which ended up being seven) compared with four for the Family and 17 for Young Grant Makers Panels (none of which included meetings set aside for interviewing shortlisted applicants).

## External facilitation



As with the Family and Young People's Panels, external facilitation felt crucial to the smooth running of the process. The decision was taken to continue to work with the facilitator who previously ran Islington Giving's Family Panel as she has extensive facilitation and Participatory Grant Making (PGM) experience and understands Islington Giving's approach. The facilitator proved crucial to the process, working closely with the Programme Manager to keep the process on track even at the most challenging moments, of which there were a few. Importantly, external facilitation allows the Programme Manager to be free to listen and participate in the conversation. While this generally worked well it was at times challenging to get the balance right between participating in the conversation, helping to guide and provide important context but also stepping back and trying not to lead or overly influence the panel's decision-making role.

While there is no one size fits solution to this problem, on reflection, and as shall be explored later in this report, it was felt that on this occasion the decision to stand back and have minimal influence – with the facilitator doing a good job at enforcing this – might not have always been the right approach. This may particularly be the case for an older person's panel who may have less knowledge of how the sector has historically evolved to respond to emerging community needs and/or more recent work/academic experience including being part of a team, reading work papers or attending meetings that involve making formal decisions. While these are the people participatory grant-making programmes should be seeking to recruit, it does also present challenges.

Golden Grant Makers, 2022-23



**The facilitator guided me and nurtured us through the process, which at times was very daunting.**



**It has provided exercise for bits of my brain that haven't seen activity for a long time!**



## Islington Giving's remit and role

### 'in setting the tone

A group agreement was developed at the outset and continually referred to throughout the process. However, on reflection it was felt that as part of setting the context and scene, perhaps before residents are officially welcomed as Panel members, it would be useful to lay out some key values that guide Islington Giving's approach to funding and community engagement. This could be useful in helping potential Panel members decide if the opportunity is right for them but also be referred back to later in the process if the need arises.

### Delivery

Panel members committed to attending a maximum of eight meetings over the course of four months (initially this was set as six Panel meetings and two meetings for interviewing shortlisted applicants), with some additional reading time between meetings. Engagement remained strong throughout the process with the core group of five attending most, if not all meetings. They were clearly very committed to the process – including in their reading and assessment of applications outside of the formal meetings. Regular check-ins took place between meetings. When a Panel member missed a meeting, check-ins were used to update them on progress.

The timescale slipped marginally, mainly because one of the December panel meetings was cancelled due to the Programme Manager having Covid. This led to funding decisions being delayed by approximately two weeks. While it was always envisaged to shortlist then invite applicants to meet the Panel to discuss their projects in more detail, due to this slight delay, compounded by the high number of applications received, the additional time set aside for meeting shortlisted applicants was used instead to continue with assessments and decision-making. With one panel member feeding back that they would have liked to interview groups, primarily to help them “to develop interview skills” it appears that the programme was perceived by at least some panel members as a useful process for helping to develop softer skills.





The table below shows the revised delivery programme (see Appendix 1 for the original schedule):

<b>What</b>	<b>Time commitment</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>When</b>
1st Panel Meeting	3 hours	Understanding context and shaping the programme	4 October 2022
2nd Panel Meeting	3 hours	Finalising the open call	14 October 2022
3rd Panel meeting	3 hours	Training – how to assess applications against criteria / reading accounts / budgets	24 November 2022
Read applications	Depends on number of applicants	Panel members will have 14 days to read submitted applications	21 Nov – 5 Dec 2022
4th Panel meeting	5 hours	Reviewing applications and assess fit against criteria and priorities. Positives and negatives of each application and begin shortlisting process	16 December 2022
5th Panel meeting	3 hours	Continue shortlisting	12 January 2023
6th Panel meeting	3 hours	Final selection process	26 January 2023
7th Panel meeting	2 hours	Review and feedback session	9 Feb 2023

# What worked well

## 1 Promoting the role through trusted partners

The majority of people that applied and who were recruited to the Panel were signposted to the opportunity through organisations with whom Islington Giving/Cripplegate has a close relationship.

## 2 Having a named contact

There was constant, two-way communication with Panel members throughout the process for any questions, support and reassurance.

## 3 Engagement

Once the Panel was established, members remained engaged throughout the process.

## 4 Using an experienced external facilitator

She was key to helping us move through the meetings and to think about adapting the programme in response to new needs. She also challenged the Islington Giving team about how we participated, which was healthy. The panel also enjoyed working with her.





## What could be improved

**1**

### Time commitment

Balancing good grant making with ensuring the role is viable for residents to sign up to suggests more thought needs to be given to the time required of Panel members to fulfil this role. Feedback from Panel members was for shorter but more frequent panel meetings (i.e. two rather than three hours), with less time in between so that momentum would not be lost and learning more embedded.

**2**

### Diversity

More could be done to proactively reach unheard voices and to understand what the barriers might be to taking part. What this looks like in practice may depend on the specific funding programme and its aims but in this instance, as noted above, there was an identified gap in ensuring more people from BAMER communities were represented on the Panel.



## 3 Wellbeing

Reflecting on the process overall, more should be done at the outset when recruiting panel members to check in on wellbeing. The panel took the decision-making very seriously to a point where one person became quite anxious about saying no to applicants. Perhaps we need to be clearer that, even with support, the process is likely to be challenging as it entails lots of reading, analysis and difficult decision making. Consideration should be given to asking potential participants if they have any challenges around their mental wellbeing which might impact on their engagement and if there is anything we can do to support their inclusion.

At the first session of our Young Grant Makers programme, for example, we ask participants to write or say something...

about their learning styles, or anything that might be a barrier or a challenge. We could try a similar approach with this panel, allowing more time in the first session for this kind of conversation, either as a group or one to one. It might also be appropriate to consider asking participants to sign a disclaimer which would minimise risk to the Foundation. This could include an option to enable Islington Giving to notify the signposting organisation if there are concerns identified relating to individual wellbeing (if they were not previously in contact with another local group, Islington Giving could help make an appropriate referral). As one Panel member stated: "It was important to step away once a decision was made."



**It was important to step away**

**once a decision was made.**

## Islington Giving Staff &

## Programme Role



Further consideration should be given to where on the 'ladder of participation' Islington Giving sees its role. While this might be different for different programmes, there is a question as to whether and in which scenarios, Islington Giving staff should play a greater role in helping to steer the process including decision-making. This should be communicated at the outset alongside outlining the values that Islington Giving holds so that clearer boundaries are defined that can then be called upon and reaffirmed throughout the process should the need arise. It will also allow potential participants to make more informed decisions about what they are signing up to.

# Applications and Funding decisions

This section sets out how and what the panel funded, while exploring some of the challenges encountered. The first three-hour Panel meeting was dedicated to setting the scene, understanding local issues in the context of Islington Giving's remit and providing background to the current Older People's programme.

## The open call

At their second Panel meeting, after much discussion, it was agreed to invite applications for projects that: (see appendix 3 for the full open call).



*"enrich lives by supporting Islington's older residents to be actively engaged. We want to fund work that identifies local older people who are isolated and lonely and to build social, emotional and community support to reduce isolation, build connections and develop a greater sense of community."*

Golden Grant Makers, 2022-23

“

I enjoyed it. It was quite difficult at first,

but then looking back that was the easy part –

setting the criteria

In practice the process turned out to be more intensive than originally anticipated. This was largely due to the high number of applications received – more than any of Islington Giving and Cripplegate’s main programmes to date. Historically, Islington Giving funding has attracted around 20 applicants per programme (18 groups applied to the Mental Health Challenge Fund in 2016, 20 groups applied to Building Social Networks in 2017, 21 to the Supporting Families programme in 2021 and an average of 25 applicants over the first three Young Grant Makers programmes). In some ways the high number of applications should be seen as positive. This was the first open funding opportunity from Islington Giving to support older residents. To date, this area of support has always been delivered through a closed programme and one of the intentions of opening up the programme was to test the market in terms of better understanding the demand for funding. The response, with over 40 applications, is that there is indeed a resounding demand for funding local activities for older residents.

In practice, while the high number of applications was positive in enabling a wider range of projects to apply, this meant a lower prospect of success for applicants and created challenges in managing the process. With the risk of overwhelming Panel members with 40 full application forms, the process was adapted to reduce the amount of information provided, helping to focus on the core aspects of what projects were proposing to deliver.

Despite this, Panel members struggled to apply the open call criteria as the tool to assist them in shortlisting applications. It is therefore likely that a more refined and focused open call may have assisted them better in this task as well as potentially reducing the number of organisations applying overall.

However, high demand for funding may not solely be related to the open call being overly broad in remit. It may also reflect a trend in rising demand for funding; 35 applications were received in the recent Young Grant Makers programme and more applications to the Islington Council’s Community Chest were received in 2022/23 compared to the previous three years. Notwithstanding this, there is a need for more thought and engagement around not only how the open call is designed but also how it is used to narrow down and shortlist applications. Deeper participatory activities could be developed for assessing and talking through project ideas that rely less on reading and analysis of paper-based applications.





**It was really difficult, having to make decisions about who should get funding and who shouldn't. We spent a lot of time considering all of the options, but it has also helped me with decision making.**

**Golden Grant Maker, 2022-23**

The 40 organisations applying for funding requested a total of £1,038,000 ranging in grant size from £3,500 to £37,111. While over five times the £180,000 available, this would have been even more if further funds were not added to the budget. Eighteen applicants (45%) had never received Islington Giving funding previously, 94% of whom had never previously applied. Alongside evidence of demand, this demonstrates that the open call had good reach beyond Islington Giving's normal networks.

## **Flexibility as a prerequisite**

As touched upon above, key to successful delivery was the need to adapt the process, to be responsive to the Panel and to respond to changing circumstances as they arose. This included, due to the sheer volume of information, reducing the pressure on Panel members to read all the applications in full. Because the Panel was fairly small it was decided not to split Panel members into groups to assess different applications (a technique that has worked well for bigger panels). Instead, for the initial sifting exercise Panelists were given project summaries rather than the full applications.

With applications assessed by everyone, this ensured that all Panel members could take a view on every project. The plan was to then share the full applications once the number was brought down to a more manageable level. However, following the first sift it became clear that the Panel were becoming increasingly overwhelmed with the quantity of written information they were being asked to absorb and assess. As noted above, it had already become apparent that Panelists were struggling to apply the criteria of the open call to help guide their decision making.



**We could have spent forever researching each group and going into the details, but you have to balance between that and making decisions – which can be really hard.**

**Golden Grant Maker, 2022-23**



Even following the initial sift it was obvious that providing more information and detail at this stage was likely to further compound this situation. It was therefore decided, rather than provide more information through the full applications, it would be better to focus on attempting to drill down further on what the open call criteria meant to them, as well as revisit some of the earlier discussions that led to the design of the open call. This helped to move the process forward by unlocking some of the difficulties the panel experienced in trying to apply the open call to their decision-making process.

The Programme Manager took the time to read all the applications thoroughly and prepared summaries of all the applications. He also held responsibility for due diligence and in consultation with the facilitator, undertook the lion's share of work to adapt the process. This provided an important back-up measure, ensuring the Panel did not make assumptions or jump to the wrong conclusions resulting from not having access to all the information that was supplied. It also enabled the programme to remain on track and as robust as possible given the circumstances. However, as the Supporting Families evaluation previously documented, thought also needs to be given to programme staff time because certain crunch points and the need to adapt the process has resulted in working late into the night.

### **Red/Green scoring with comments section**

Scoring helped prepare for Panel meetings ensuring the three-hours could be used effectively. Building on learning from previous resident panels it was decided not to have an amber scoring option (in previous panels, we have found people tend to put too many applications into an amber category, as a way to not have to commit to a yes/no decision). This helped collate an overall picture of preferences for funding through individual scores and provided a platform for exploring thoughts and comments to facilitate more structured discussions at Panel meetings.



**We had to learn that the idea of the 'right choice' wasn't possible, and had to think about the 'best choice.'**

**Golden Grant Maker, 2022-23**

All five Panel members completed summary sheets with their scores and comments which helped ensure everyone's voice was heard while identifying where there was consensus and differing opinions. In their initial assessments, just under half (48%) of the Panel's votes were red and 52% green (21 out of 40).

However, some challenges were encountered when ensuring all projects benefited from an equal hearing. In practice, comparatively less discussion, analysis and debate took place for projects that scored strong reds or green and for those that were more evenly split, particularly those that moved from green to red as a result of others moving into green. Following the first initial sift, the Programme Manager played a key overview and scrutiny role to bring back into the discussion those projects that were at risk of being sifted out with little or no discussion (one of which ended up being recommended for funding and another that made it to the final shortlist of ten projects). In practice, there was perhaps less energy from the Panel to speak up and fight for specific projects than might have been expected. More thought could go into how to encourage discussion and debate around specific projects. In contrast to a more hands-off approach, this could include for example, programme staff being more proactive in helping Panel members to group certain projects, identify patterns and themes and then use this approach to further sift applications.

A bigger panel may also have helped, perhaps with panelists being more ready to argue for an application if they felt they had more backing from other colleagues. As one Panel member commented:

*"...disappointed that the panel didn't have more people which would have been good for us too, more diverse views, people not isolated with a single view on the panel".*

## Reach and Final Awards

The Panel agreed to fund eight projects (see appendix 1 for a full list of funded projects) totalling £180,000. There was a good mix in terms of size and scope of grant and project duration. Four projects were funded over three years, two over two years and two for one year. The smallest grant awarded was £7,113 for one year while the largest was £35,250 over three years. However, demonstrating the diversity of size and scope of funded projects, one-year projects ranged from the smallest grant awarded up to £15,250 while three-year grants ranged from £17,480 to the largest grant award.

Collectively all funded projects plan to reach a combined 1,560 Islington residents and involve 140 volunteers across the duration of project funding. Three of the funded projects provide specific elements of outreach; identifying, supporting and extending reach to older residents least likely or able to access services. This was an explicit element of the Panel's open call. At least three of the projects involved consolidating and expanding existing activities to offer more, or a greater diversity of activities. Four projects focused solely or included elements of targeted support to specific communities of interest (residents with dementia and their carers, men and women, and BAMER communities), while one of these projects also focused on celebrating diversity and promoting greater understanding of other cultures in a fun and engaging way.

### **Tension between universal and targeted support**

Despite funding a good range of targeted support (as identified above), it was apparent that throughout the process there was an underlying tension between a preference for funding universal offers and understanding the importance of the need for targeted support, particularly for those that might encounter barriers to accessing universal services...



This initially manifested itself across all forms of targeted support – including gender, support for specific BAMER communities and to a lesser extent, for those with disabilities and localised/neighbourhood level support. Considerable discussion took place throughout Panel meetings to understand and identify barriers that certain sections of the community face. The open call appeared to acknowledge this by specifically identifying the need for projects to extend reach to those least likely or able to access activities. However, the ability to apply this consistently when discussing which projects to prioritise remained a challenge. This was particularly the case for projects supporting specific ethnicities and to a lesser extent, projects delivered at a local i.e. neighbourhood level.

Area of targeted support	No. of applications received*	% of overall applications	No. of projects funded	% success rate	Proportion of funded projects
Locality/neighbourhood based	12	30%	2	17%	25%
Disabilities	10	25%	2	20%	25%
BAMER	7.5	19%	1.5	20%	19%
Gender	4.5	11%	1.5	33%	19%
LGBT	1	3%	0	0%	0%
Universal provision (i.e. not targeted)	18.5	46%	4.5	24%	56%

\*The overall totals are more than the actual number of applications received/funded because some projects target more than one area of support. For example, one of the funded BAMER projects also focuses on supporting people with disabilities and one of the projects supporting men will also be delivered in a specific locality. Where there is a 0.5 allocation this is in recognition that one element of one of the funded projects proposes to deliver a targeted support service for a specific gender based (Women) BAMER (South Asian) community.

The table above shows the number of applications received and awarded funding, broken down by specific areas of targeted support, compared to universal offers. With 46% of applications received and 56% of those funded, a clear preference from the Panel was shown towards funding universal provision. However, while universal offers represent just under half of all applications received and just over half of all projects awarded funding, the success rate (i.e. the number of funded projects compared to applications received for universal provision overall) drops to just under a quarter (24%).



In practice, the Panel could only make funding decisions on the applications that were in front of them. Therefore, while at first glance this may be perceived as a bias towards universal provision, the reality is, when compared to the actual number of applications received, the success rate for universal provision is far lower and more closely matches the success rate for funded projects that provide targeted support. For example, the success rate for gender specific projects is actually higher when compared to universal offers (11% of applications received, 19% of funded projects overall and a 33% success rate). Similarly, for applications focusing on support for those with disabilities (representing 25% of total applications) and support for BAMER communities (19% of applications), the success rate for both is 20%. The success rate, in other words, corresponds closely to the proportion of applications received for both these areas of targeted support. While the success rate for projects focusing on specific geographical areas of the borough was lower (17%) compared to the proportion of applications received (30% of the total), with two projects agreed funding this represents a quarter of all projects agreed funding. Finally, one application sought to provide targeted support to LGBT+ communities which the Panel decided not to fund.

Thus, despite an obvious tension throughout the process regarding what appeared to be a clear preference to fund universal offers, the Panel still funded a good mix of targeted and universal support. Proportionally, the success rates for targeted projects aligned fairly closely with the number of applications submitted against each area overall, albeit with some gains and losses for particular areas of targeted support and the largest loss, in terms of the number of projects funded compared to applications submitted being those offering universal access. This acts as evidence that through ongoing conversation, discussion and explanation, that often involved reverting back to the open call, such tension can, to a greater or lesser extent be overcome. This positive outcome is reflected in the final funding decisions that include projects targeting support at specific communities of interest – namely, BAMER communities, men and women, and residents living with dementia. Two projects were funded to support neighbourhood level provision (one of which targeted men). The other project targeting specific localities included one element that supported women from BAMER (specifically South Asian) communities, while the same project also increased geographical reach through the delivery of three distinct strands across different neighbourhoods, combined with an additional strand of delivery across all three localities.



While it would be unfair to say that all panel members struggled with the issue of targeted support or indeed that it was only those that identified as white British, it is certainly the case that more thought and reflection needs to take place to ensure greater understanding and support for targeted services. This supports earlier reflections that perhaps Islington Giving needs to be more assertive about its values at the outset of any future programme and more time should be taken to reflect on and to gain greater shared understanding of what the open call aims to achieve.

## What worked well

1

### The programme achieved what it set out to do.

Namely, testing the market to ascertain level of demand for projects seeking to support local older residents, of which there was a clear resounding demand for funding; providing a diverse range of fun, engaging and interesting activities for local older people; while extending reach to those least likely to access support locally.

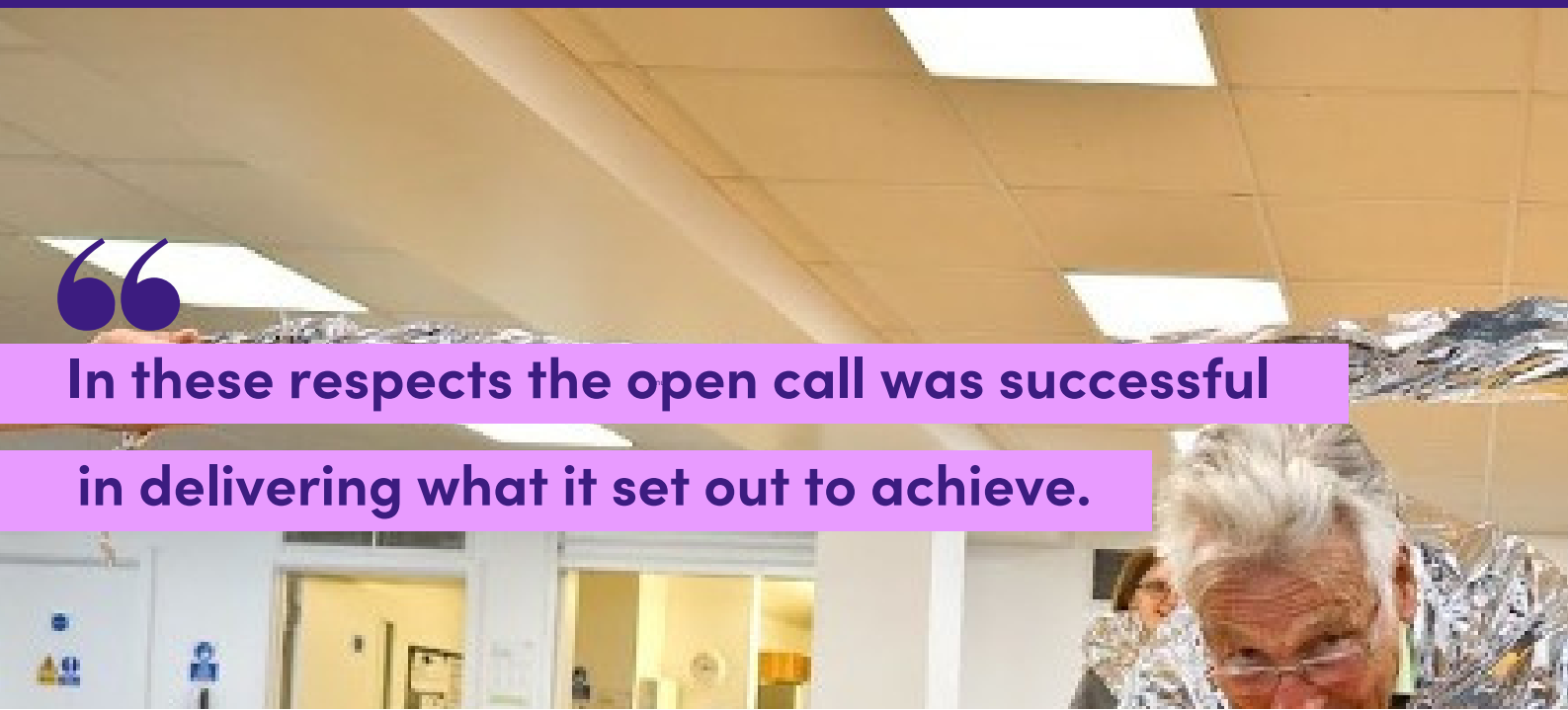
2

### Reach

The programme attracted funding applications from a range of local groups with proportionally more funding directed to projects focusing on specific genders and a good balance between universal and targeted support. Moreover, six and at least part of a seventh (81%) of the eight funded projects sought to explicitly extend reach to sections of the community they were either struggling to engage with or understood would struggle to engage with their specific offer.



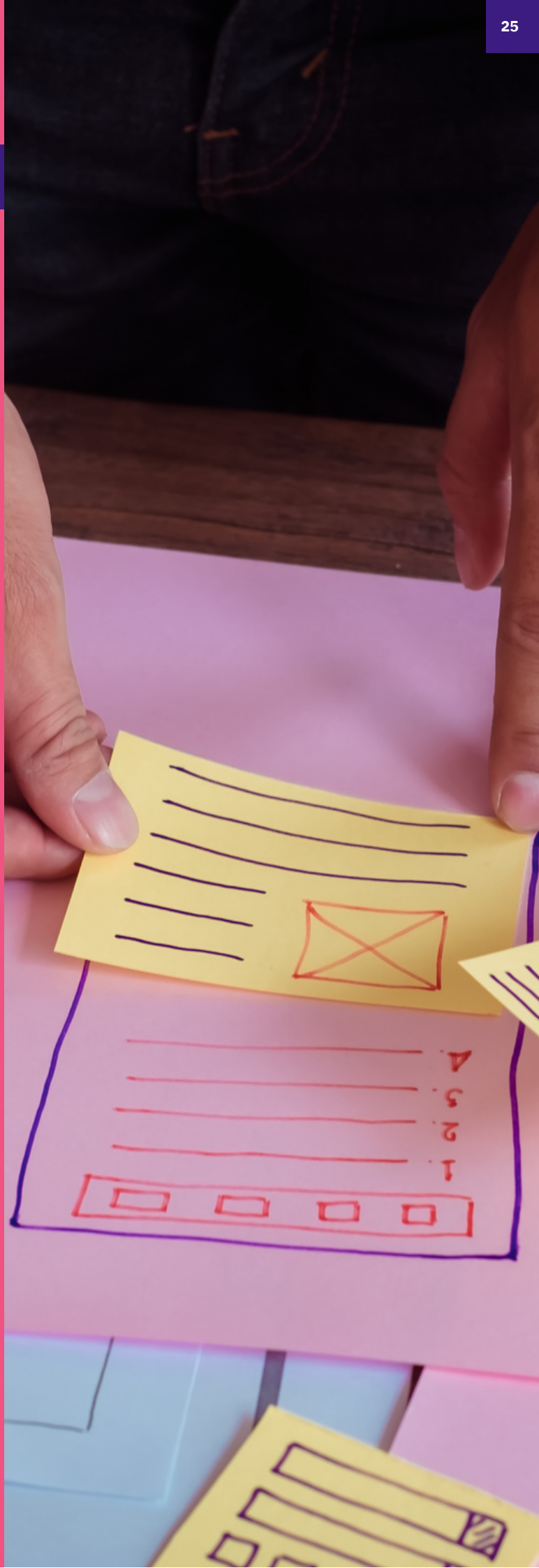
**In these respects the open call was successful in delivering what it set out to achieve.**



# What could be improved

## 1 The application form.

We need to think about the application process both from the point of view of groups applying and panel members. The large number of applications meant we had to summarise information for the panel. As a result, there is a question as to whether we should be asking groups to complete our current full application form if panelist will only see part of it. On the other hand, as mentioned, some Panel members struggled with the amount of information provided albeit they were provided with the absolute minimum information taken from the application forms.. Potential options include amending and/or shortening the number of questions, adding word count restrictions, creating a two-stage application process i.e. ask groups to submit an expression of interest for the first stage or ask applicants to make short videos explaining their project proposal. There is also a wider question regarding the type of information funders request and that only clear and relevant questions that are absolutely necessary for making good funding decisions are asked.





## 2 Scoring how decisions are made

Careful thought needs to take place when preparing for Panel meetings to ensure that projects at risk of falling off the radar are given due consideration when moving groups across the red/green scoring spectrum. This could include grouping all projects that move from green to red and sense check them against those that moved from red to green. Those at the far end of the red spectrum could also be grouped for further discussion to ensure that they are not passed over by default.

## 3 Reach

It is acknowledged that more work needs to be done to ensure greater understanding and buy-in across resident panels in terms of the value of targeted services, particularly those supporting BAMER communities. It is recommended to focus more resource on recruitment and in particular recruiting a more diverse Panel for any future iteration of an older people's panel.

## 4 More space to explore bias/lived experience.



While personal bias was covered at the second Panel meeting, some panel members continued to view the decision-making process through the sole lens of what could 'I' benefit from rather than what might be important for other sections of the community that may suffer from more, or other forms of disadvantage. As explained above, there was a degree of tension between universal and targeted offers. Inevitably this exposed some biases dependent on who was being targeted. While managing tensions and compromise are a natural part of the complexity expected when there are tough decisions to be made, panel members need to be aware of their personal bias and constructively challenged where bias arises. It was clear that at times a different lens was applied depending on which community of interest was being targeted. For example, the Panel were more comfortable targeting people living with disabilities than people from distinct ethnicities. While in hindsight, more time could have been spent unpicking this, it is also acknowledged that there are many complex intertwined issues that require further thought.

As previously noted in the evaluation of the Supporting Families panels, more work needs to be done with Panels to agree how to explore complexities around class and race. However, to enable more in-depth open conversations to take place where necessary, it is vital to create a safe space where people do not feel overly threatened when challenged. Furthermore, if concepts such as 'safe space' are used, it should be acknowledged that this also needs to align with the setting of clear boundaries and expectations at the outset of the programme. Again, a larger panel, with more diversity might also help here, with more people able to articulate their own lived experience.

# Summary

This report documents the process of working with five Islington older residents to design an open call and to decide which projects should be funded through Islington Giving's Older People's programme. It has also attempted to take an honest and open approach to some of the challenges faced throughout the process, take on board the learning and reflect on where improvements could be made for any future programme going forward. Some of the challenges and recommendations are specific to working directly with older residents but most are likely to be transferable to other participatory grant making programmes. Indeed, many of the challenges and recommendations are not unique to this programme, some of which, as has been identified, were previously documented through learning from previous Islington Giving participatory grant making programmes.

Despite the challenges encountered throughout the process it should be celebrated that Islington Giving delivered a successful older people's participatory grant making programme. Specific measures of success include the following:

- The outcomes met the open call objectives: Funding was awarded to projects that will make a positive difference to the lives of Islington's older residents – delivering a diverse range of fun, engaging and interesting activities for local older people while extending reach to those least likely to access support
- Panel members with lived experience took part in the programme.
- This includes people who wouldn't normally put themselves forward to apply.
- Panel members report satisfaction with the process, they felt that their time and contributions were valued and that the decisions were made by them.

Golden Grant Maker, 2022-23



**I never thought I would have an experience like this. I would never have put myself up there.**

- Panel members were recompensed for their participation in a way that was right for them (either paid a London Living Wage or received a reward on completion of the programme)
- Panel members made new connections, both with each other and within their local community, learnt new skills, knowledge and increased confidence and awareness of what they can achieve both individually and collectively and have a greater understanding of what Islington has to offer older residents as a result.
- The process attracted new groups that have not previously been funded by Islington Giving (with one of the funded groups never previously receiving funding).
- Islington Giving staff have gained vital new insights and knowledge.
- Learning from this process will help inform and continue to guide and embed resident led panels in Islington Giving's work.

*"It has made me think about things a lot more – what is available in the community, the way we view others, and has challenged some of my assumptions".*

*"It was a good experience, something very different. It was good to be part of something very practical, and has helped with decision-making outside of the project – which is a good thing at any age".*

*"After taking part in the Golden Grant Makers, I am going to get back into work. It's given me more confidence to talk to people – and something else to add to my CV!"*

*"I don't think age is a barrier to anything".*

Golden Grant Makers, 2022-23



## Low programme costs

Programme administration costs were covered through a grant from City Bridge Trust which meant that the agreed £180,000 budget could be fully allocated to grants. Other than staff time, which over the duration of the project was fairly intensive – estimated to be about 60% of one Programme Manager’s time over the four months of delivery (roughly equating to £10,000), programme costs were spent on external facilitation, salary costs for one participant who opted for payment at the London Living Wage, four participant rewards for those that chose not to opt for payment, lunch and travel costs. The table below provides a breakdown of these costs.

Programme cost	Amount
Programme Manager time – estimated at 60% of £16.5k (4 months salary)	£10,000
External Facilitation	£2,450
Participant rewards x4	£1124.29
Participant salary (28 hours)	£334.60
Lunch/refreshments	£95.60
Travel costs	£20.00
Total	£14,024.49

Given that awarding £180,000 of grant funding without a resident Panel would have taken Programme staff time to plan, assess applications and write recommendation reports, these additional costs (which amount to half the allocated £10,000 budget) were minimal, and when combined with the learning and positive resident experience, the programme represents excellent value for money.

# What next?

Islington Giving will take on board the following reflections and is committed to build on this learning and to refine processes as it progresses its participatory grant making journey.

## 1

### The Panel

- Further consideration of how and at what stage residents should be involved. For this programme, residents designed the open call and made funding decisions within a set strategic framework. Should we go back a stage so that a wider group of local people are also involved in designing the grant making process, should we go out to where people are, engaging with them more on their terms, could the process be designed differently so that different groups of residents participate in different ways/at different times?
- Extra care and thought needs to go into understanding and supporting panel members health and wellbeing. This should start at the recruitment stage – it was clear some people interested in participating could not commit to a long-term process due to health issues. However, wellbeing should be embedded in a whole process approach. It was clear for example that the amount of information panelists are expected to absorb as well as the methods in which residents are engaged and participate can have unintended negative consequences and this needs to be kept in mind when planning the process of engagement.
- Review timings of the programme and in particular the time required of Panel members.
- Proactively recruit underrepresented Panel members including people from BAMER communities, men, and people with disabilities. Build in the potential for longer recruitment processes if needed.
- Invest in external training to explore complexities around class and race with Panel members.



## 2

## The Application

- Review the application process to make it simpler for applicants, Panel members and staff.
- Ensure that the values that Islington Giving believes in are shared and agreed at the outset of the process with all potential panel members.
- Make sure the open call is clear and focused and has shared understanding by all Panel members.
- Think about ways to creatively reach/encourage new groups serving their local communities to apply.



Islington Giving will take on board the following reflections and is committed to build on this learning and to refine processes as it progresses its participatory grant making journey.

Programme Team, Islington Giving

For further information please visit:  
[www.islingtongiving.org.uk](http://www.islingtongiving.org.uk)

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  @isgiv

  Islington Giving

Islington Giving is a restricted fund of Cripplegate Foundation, registered charity number 207499



islington  
giving



# Appendix 1

## List of groups awarded funding

Organisation	Project Summary	Total Amount Awarded
Healthy Generations	Free, socially engaging activities to support older residents take control of their health and wellbeing	£15,350
HOYD	4 Good Neighbours based enrichment projects	£17,480
All Change	A programme of weekly mixed arts workshops, artist-residencies in community, day and residential care settings and intergenerational projects	£30,000
Cubitt	A two-year programme of over fifty artist-run creative workshops, exchanges and gatherings.	£32,415
Community Language Support Service	A programme of outreach and social events for housebound BAMER residents.	£19,652
Stuart Low Trust	A programme of outreach and buddy support to bring older people into their main programme of activities.	£35,250
Park Theatre	Towards a programme of support for carers and people in care homes and in the community living with Dementia through the therapeutic power of music and drama.	£22,740
Cook for Good	Towards a men's cooking club.	£7,113

# Appendix 2

## Information pack for prospective Panel members

### Golden Grant Makers Information Pack

#### Islington Giving

##### Summary

Islington Giving is committed to supporting residents as part of its work to tackle poverty, inequality and isolation in Islington.

**Islington Giving is looking for 8 local older residents** (we are likely to prioritise people over 65 but any resident over the age of 55 can apply) to come together **to make decisions about how a minimum of £110,000** of Islington Giving's grants budget can be spent to **support local groups to provide more opportunities for older people** to come together, have fun, build connections and tackle isolation.

Islington is a borough of stark contrasts – a place where great wealth sits alongside hidden poverty. Islington Giving was set up in 2010 to address these issues and create opportunities for people in Islington. It is a partnership that brings together residents, businesses, community organisations and funders to make a real difference in the Borough.

Islington Giving currently supports over 40 local projects across 3 core themes:

- Investing in Young People
- Supporting Families
- Reaching Isolated People.

All our work aims to open up opportunities for people to enjoy life and socialise, to build skills and possibilities and to make connections with each other and services.

##### Why resident grant making panels?

In recent years, we have asked groups of residents to help us make decisions about how we spend our money. Residents know what makes a good service. Your life-experiences complement the expertise of our programme team, so help us make better decisions.

Building on the success of Islington Giving's Young Grant Makers and Supporting Families Panels, Islington Giving is now asking local older people to join us in giving away £110,000 to local groups.

## Who can be involved?

Islington Giving wants to recruit 8 local older residents to shape the programme and decide on how to best spend the grants budget.

No previous experience is necessary - we don't expect you to have done anything like this before. We want to meet residents who have ideas about what they would like to see and participate in and who want to get involved.

### We are looking for people who:

- live in Islington
- are over 55 (with priority likely given to those who are over 65)
- have a desire / enthusiasm to effect change in their local community
  - have some experience of the issues being addressed i.e. social or financial isolation, mental and/or physical ill-health, lacking access to quality services and activities at times and places that suit them.
- can commit to participating in the whole programme
  - are interested in how funding decisions are made and willing to engage in detailed discussions
- are willing to work as part of a team to share ideas and reach a common goal.

Panel members will be selected on the above criteria. Consideration will also be given to ensuring there are a range of people with different skills and experiences on the Panel and to bringing voices to the Panel who are not usually heard.

## What would I be committing to?

- You will need to be available to attend up to eight meetings between October 2022 and January 2023, with some additional time for reading between some meetings.
- Together, the Panel will write a grant call, which tells charities what you are interested in funding.
  - Organisations will then apply and the Panel will read the applications and shortlist groups you would like to meet.
  - You will then help interview applicants before making decisions of which grants you want to make.

You will be fully supported by the Islington Giving programme team who will help everyone through the process.

**All Panel meetings will take place at Islington Giving's office - 13 Elliott's Place, London N1 8HX. Breaks and refreshments will be provided.**

## Will I be paid?

You will be reimbursed for any money spent on enabling you to take part on the Panels, for example travel expenses for you to attend meetings.

You will also receive payment at the London Living Wage (£11.05 an hour) for:



- attending up to eight Panel meetings
- 6 hours for reading and reviewing applications

Amounting to a total of 33 hours @ £11.05 an hour - £365 for your involvement.

Please note that this is the *maximum* amount you will be paid for your involvement based on attending all meetings. It also includes six additional hours allocated for reading and reviewing applications. The total amount paid may therefore be lower.

If you need additional support around reading, please let us know. We can offer support or find alternative ways for people to engage with the content. We encourage people with disabilities to apply and/or to talk to us beforehand.

Independent professional benefits advice will be offered to anyone concerned about the impact of payment on their benefits as will the option to receive payment in a different way, if an hourly wage proves problematic.

**If you are interested, or know anyone who might be interested, you or they can contact me on [patrick.jones@cripplegate.org.uk](mailto:patrick.jones@cripplegate.org.uk) or 0207 288 6948 to find out more.**

### **How do I put myself forward?**

If you are interested in being a Panel member:

- 1. Complete the expression of interest form by 16 September 2022** and send or email it to Patrick Jones – 13 Elliott's Place, London N1 8HX - [patrick.jones@cripplegate.org.uk](mailto:patrick.jones@cripplegate.org.uk). If completing the form might be difficult, please feel free to contact Anne Shewring or Patrick Jones on 020 7288 6940 to discuss your interest. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2.** The next step would be for us to have a phone conversation with you about your application – to find out a little bit more about you and answer any questions. This will give you and us the chance to see whether the programme is right for you.
- 3.** If we have more applicants than our 8 places we will use the information gleaned from your form and phone conversation against the criteria outlined above to select the Panel. If there are more people than places, with your permission, we will keep your contact details for future Panels.

Below is a timetable for the programme. We have yet to confirm exact meeting dates.

<b>What?</b>	<b>Time commitment</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>When</b>
1st Panel Meeting	3 hours	Understanding context and shaping the programme	Week of 3 October 2022
2nd Panel meeting	3 hours	Finalising the open call	Week of 10 October 2022
3rd Panel meeting	3 hours	Training – how to assess applications against criteria / reading accounts / budgets	Week of 21 November 2022
Read applications	Depends on number of applicants	Panel members will have 14 days to read submitted applications	21 Nov – 5 Dec 2022
4thPP Panel meeting	3-6 hours depending on whether to have one full day or two half day meetings	Reviewing applications and assess fit against criteria and priorities. Positives and negatives of each application and begin shortlisting process	Week of 5 December 2022
<b>5th Panel meeting</b>	<b>3 hours</b>	<b><i>Additional panel meeting if needed to continue shortlisting applicants to interview / decide on interview questions</i></b>	<b><i>Week of 12 December 2022</i></b>
6th Panel meeting	3 hours	Interview shortlisted applicants	Week of 9 January 2023
7th Panel meeting	3 hours	Decision making	Week of 16 January 2023
8th Panel meeting	3 hours		Week of 23 January 2023

# Become a Golden Grant Maker!

*Aged 55 or over? Live in Islington? Want to  
take an active role in providing more  
opportunities for older residents?*

We are looking for eight local older residents to come together and make decisions about which local projects and services to fund. In doing so, you will be helping us provide more opportunities for older residents to connect, have fun, improve wellbeing and tackle isolation.

## APPLY TODAY!

Please visit our website for more details and to express an interest. If you have any questions or need any support, please contact **patrick.jones@cripplegate.org.uk** or call **020 7288 6948**





# A call for project proposals by Islington Giving's Golden Grantmakers Resident Panel

## Application Guidelines

We are a group of Islington residents who have joined Islington Giving to shape this open call and make grant decisions that will benefit Islington's older residents.

We are inviting applications for projects that enrich lives by supporting Islington's older residents to be actively engaged. We want to fund work that identifies local older people who are isolated and lonely and to build social, emotional and community support to reduce isolation, build connections and develop a greater sense of community.

### Islington Giving's Golden Grantmakers Resident Panel introduces its call for applications to support activities for Islington's older residents

In developing this call we have considered our own knowledge and experiences of living in Islington and looked at research and data highlighting the needs and issues in the borough.

This document provides guidance for interested organisations. It is intended to help you (1) decide whether this call is right for you, and (2) frame the content of your application if you want to apply.

**Our focus is particularly on funding projects that proactively identify older residents who have limited access to wider networks because of social or financial isolation which is impacting on their physical and/or mental health.**

Projects must benefit Islington residents aged 55 or above. Activities can be delivered in groups or on a 1:1 basis by professionals and/or peers or a combination of both, but they must offer meaning and value to participants. There must also be an emphasis on identifying older people who are isolated or lonely and not currently accessing support or attending activities locally.

**We are particularly interested to hear how people with disabilities and older residents from Islington's black, Asian and minority ethnic communities will benefit from proposed projects.**

The overall budget for this call is £145,000. We hope to fund projects of different scope and scale and welcome applications for smaller projects. The maximum for an individual grant is likely to be around **£30,000**. Funding can be for one year or multiyear (up to a maximum of three years).

Therefore, if a project is funded at the higher level this could be as a one-year grant for £30,000, a two-year grant for £15,000 per annum, or a three-year grant for £10,000 per annum. We are also interested in funding smaller neighbourhood level projects with a mix of grants between £5,000-£15,000. This means we expect to fund up to three larger grants and between five or six smaller

one-off grants. We are likely to prioritise applications from organisations that are already embedded in Islington that can offer longer term benefits for Islington residents beyond the funded project.

## What we are looking for - our criteria

We are open to a range of project ideas and suggestions. Projects must:

- Be for older residents living in Islington who are aged 55 or over
- Be free to access
  - Offer a range of appealing and diverse activities that actively engage and enrich the lives of Islington's older residents
  - Provide an opportunity for older residents to connect, get together and feel part of a wider community
  - Focus on identifying and gaining the trust of older residents who are not currently accessing support or local activities. Projects must therefore have clear plans for how they will reach isolated people/communities and proactively engage people who don't know what support is available or may feel like 'it's not for them'
  - Understand and respond to resident need holistically. This means seeing the person as a whole and helping to support them with any unmet needs
- Build on people's strengths, improve wellbeing and increase local connections.

The Panel will prioritise projects that:

- Are delivered at a neighbourhood and/or community level where the most isolated residents are more likely to attend. This could mean funding smaller projects that are estate based or supporting specific underrepresented sections of the community alongside clear programmes for local outreach and engagement
- Are inclusive and culturally sensitive, ideally with staff and volunteers that people can identify with and are representative of the communities they serve
- Have established community links and work in partnership including to effectively signpost to other support and advice so as to ensure that the range of any identified unmet needs can be supported
- Can demonstrate long term benefits for the people they support and have plans for offering some level of continuity for participants when the funded project ends.

Proposals do not have to be for new or innovative projects. We will give equal consideration to tried and tested activities or approaches that can be further extended to different times or venues. We are particularly interested in funding projects that provide activities at times and places when other things might not be happening as it is at these times when feelings of isolation and loneliness are exacerbated. This might include evenings and weekends, particular localities or venues including care homes or sheltered accommodation.

We recognise that it is hard to plan as there are a lot of uncertainties and it is understood that flexibility in delivery timescales and methods may be needed. What does feel certain right now is that Covid-19 and now the cost-of-living crisis is increasing social isolation and financial hardship and this wider context should also inform project proposals.

## Your Outcomes

By funding projects through this call, we are aiming to make a positive difference to the lives of Islington's most isolated older residents. We are interested to hear from you about what outcomes your project hopes to achieve but projects must help residents to become more connected.

## Who can apply?

To be eligible to apply:

- Charities, Charitable Incorporated Organisations, Community Interest Companies or Social Enterprises/not for profit companies limited by guarantee can apply. You must have a management committee/Board of Directors made up of a minimum of three people, all of whom are unrelated, and who have ultimate responsibility for the organisation and its finances.
- Your organisation must have a governing document or constitution.
- Your organisation must have a bank account.
  - Your organisation must have a set of signed accounts from the previous financial year.

Islington Giving prioritises support for voluntary and community sector groups based in Islington. If you are based out of the borough you will need to demonstrate that you have excellent local knowledge and links. All decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis.

Please note that the programme will not fund:

- Statutory services
- Advancement of religion and religious groups, unless they offer non-religious activities and support to the local community
- Commercial or for-profit activities
- Work that has already taken place.

## How to apply

Complete an online application form. To access the form please click [here](#).

There will be a two-stage assessment process. Initial applications will be shortlisted by the Golden Grantmakers Resident Panel and it is likely that up to ten groups will be invited to meet with the Panel, along with an Islington Giving programme staff member (Islington Giving usually receives between 20 and 30 applications for each of its funding programmes). If you are shortlisted, the Panel will want to discuss your project in more detail, follow up on any points of clarification, and ensure they have a full understanding of all the elements of your proposal. The Islington Giving Golden Grantmakers Resident Panel will make all the final decisions on which grants to award.

## Decision making timeline

- Application forms should be submitted by **12 noon on Monday 21 November 2022**.
- Shortlisted applicants will be invited to an assessment meeting with the Golden Grantmakers Resident Panel and Islington Giving grants officers between **9 January – 20 January 2023**.
- Applicants will be informed of decisions to award grants by **Friday 3 February 2023**.

## If Your Application is Successful

Once you have been notified of the Golden Grantmakers Resident Panel's decision to fund your project you will be sent Islington Giving's terms and conditions – which you will be required to read and sign.

Full details of our requirements for feedback from your project will be agreed following confirmation of a successful application. Funded organisations will be required to keep



financial records of how the grant is spent and to provide feedback on progress and learning every 12 months and when the project comes to an end.

Successful organisations will also be asked to provide publicly accessible examples of their work (e.g. case studies, photographs, blog posts) and **must** be willing to act as ambassadors and supporters of the *Islington Giving* campaign, with imaginative ideas for how this can be achieved.

Please contact Patrick Jones – [patrick.jones@cripplegate.org.uk](mailto:patrick.jones@cripplegate.org.uk) –Tel: 020 7288 6948 if you have any specific questions.

### **About Islington Giving**

Islington is a borough of stark contrasts – a place where great wealth sits alongside hidden poverty. *Islington Giving* was set up in 2010 to address these issues and create opportunities for people in Islington. It is a partnership that brings together residents, businesses, community organisations and funders to make a real difference in the Borough.

*Islington Giving* currently supports over 40 local projects across 3 core themes:

- Investing in Young People
- Supporting Families
- Reaching Isolated People

Please see the *Islington Giving* website [www.islingtongiving.org.uk](http://www.islingtongiving.org.uk) for further details of our work.

**The deadline for applications is 12 noon on Monday 21 November 2022**

## Appendix 4

### Summary sheet template

Name of organisation	Name of Project	Summary of Project	No. of Islington people it will benefit	Amount requested	It meets the criteria because	It doesn't meet the criteria because	It is <b>Red</b> - don't fund. <b>Green</b> - fund because	Questions or doubts - missing info, more detail, or clearer explanations