



Press Release
December 2009

THE VOLUNTARY ACTION FUND HELPING SCOTTISH COMMUNITIES FROM THE GRASS ROOTS UP.

The Voluntary Action Fund Scotland's leading independent grant-making body investing in small voluntary and community based organisations throughout Scotland has announced its funding priorities for 2010-2011 for its Community Chest grants programme.

Voluntary Action Fund operates a number of funding programmes furthering the legacy of grass roots grant making and robust practice it has established over the last 28 years aimed at promoting the inclusion of those most excluded within their communities. Its Community Chest programme aims to help improve local communities and the lives of people most in need. Applications are welcomed from small community and not-for-profit groups who can apply for a small grant up to £1,000 to fund general activities or a specific project.

Each year the Voluntary Action Fund targets different regions throughout Scotland this year it particularly welcomes applications from groups based within North Ayrshire, South Lanarkshire and West Dunbartonshire. As well as being eager to fund groups in the target geographic areas, The Voluntary Action Fund is especially keen to hear from groups who work with disability or health related issues, provide childcare or whose beneficiaries face exclusion due to their ethnicity, disability gender or sexual orientation.

A key benefit of the fund is the opportunity to be involved with a range of training events. Free training is offered to all groups applying for a grant on topics such as charity law, making successful funding applications, managing money and measuring success.

Previous recipients of Community Chest funding have included, Art Trek Artists of Glasgow, where a grant of £1,000 provided funding to run an 8 week arts workshop for people with learning disabilities. Inverness based HAPIS received a grant of £1,000 to contribute towards the running costs of the group, enabling the group to offer free counseling sessions to mothers and families affected by Post Natal Depression. Other projects include funding for after school clubs, a drop in centre for people affected by mental health issues, a meeting place for elderly people and a Youth Café.

Chris Smith the Community Chest Grants Officer said "The small pots of funding we can provide through the Community Chest programme really will make a significant difference to people's lives, whilst also sustaining and developing the activities of the community groups involved. We're excited to see what varied and inspired applications we'll receive throughout the year and the difference the Community Chest funding will make to the communities of Scotland".

Applications for the Community Chest programme are welcome throughout the year with the next deadline being the 31 December 2009. Groups wishing to apply for a Community Chest grant can download an application form and guidance notes from the VAF website at www.voluntaryactionfund.org.uk. Alternatively call 01383 620780.



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Notes to editors

Voluntary Action Fund is Scotland's leading independent grant-making body investing in voluntary and community based organisations throughout Scotland. The funding and support VAF provides enables community based organisations to undertake projects that challenge inequalities and overcome barriers to being involved in community life.

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They include:

The Volunteering Scotland Grant Scheme (VSGS)

The VSGS provides grants for up to three years for projects that attract harder to reach volunteers. The philosophy behind VSGS is simple: that with dedicated resources, organisations can develop and sustain high quality volunteering opportunities for people who need more support to get involved, and that with this extra resource of volunteers, the organisation can enrich its services. VAF has recently awarded grants to 62 organisations. Twenty three of the awards are for small grants of less than £5,000, while the remaining 39 are for more substantial projects over one, two or three years.

The Community Chest (CCP)

The CCP is a new grant programme launched in 2008 aimed at small community groups across Scotland. The Community Chest provides grants of up to £1,000 to help small community groups with an income of under £25,000 fund their activities. The aim of the Community Chest is to help build the capacity of groups in Scotland to deliver their activities. Groups in receipt of a grant will also have the opportunity to attend a number of free workshops covering topics such as charity law, making successful funding applications and managing money. VAF is particularly keen to support community groups from geographic areas where it has been traditionally difficult to receive applications. These areas are reviewed regularly.

The Equality Grants Programme (EGP)

The EGP incorporates 4 separate streams funded through the Scottish Government Equality Unit. The programme aims to combat inequality, foster integration, promote dialogue and understanding between communities: Race Religion and Refugee Integration Fund, Grants through the Gender funding stream, Grants through the LGBT funding stream, Grants through the Disability funding stream.

Each funding stream has specific outcomes and grants are for a maximum of 2.75 years from 2008 to March 2011. In addition to managing the grants programme, VAF provides investment support and capacity building to funded organisations.