Shout! Fund Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

## General Overview

### What is the Shout! Fund?

The Shout! Fund is a grant fund for organisations that support young people aged 14 to 25 through independent, person-led advocacy. It focuses on helping young people make informed choices, speak up, and secure their rights. The Fund prioritises work with care-experienced young people, LGBT+ young people, and young people with learning disabilities or neurodivergence.

### What does Shout! mean by “advocacy”?

We fund advocacy that is person-led, independent, and rights-focused. This means young people set the agenda, and your role is to walk alongside them as they work towards their own goals. Advocacy might include helping someone understand their options, challenging unfair treatment, or being involved in decisions about their life. You don’t need to call your work “advocacy” to apply, but it should reflect these values.

### What types of advocacy does the Shout! Fund support?

Shout! supports independent, person-led advocacy that helps young people speak up, make choices, and secure their rights. This includes casework advocacy, where support is built through one-to-one relationships, as well as self-advocacy, peer advocacy, and group-based models. We’re open to different approaches, as long as your work reflects the key features of advocacy, like being rights-based, forward-focused, and shaped by the young person’s needs.

### Why is Shout! focusing on care-experienced, LGBT+, and learning disabled/neurodivergent young people?

We believe care-experienced, LGBT+, and learning disabled/neurodivergent young people are most affected by systemic failure, and whose experiences must shape how advocacy is understood, funded, and supported. Shout! focuses on them because they often face services that don’t fully recognise or respond to who they are. The Fund aims to support advocacy that affirms their rights, identities, and lived experiences. Shout is the first fund under our Building Independence programme. To find out more about the aims of the programme, please read [our strategy webpage](https://henrysmith.foundation/strategy/).

### Is there a specific age range Shout! is focused on when you refer to “young people”?

Shout! is mainly focused on supporting young people aged 14 to 25, especially during key transitions into adulthood. But we know that services don’t always fit neatly into age brackets. If your work includes people outside this range, you can still apply, as long as you can show a strong understanding of the needs of young people and how your support is tailored to them.

## Eligibility

### My organisation is registered as a community interest company (CIC). What do we need to provide to apply?

CICs are welcome to apply. You’ll need to show that your organisation has a clear charitable purpose and that any surplus is reinvested into your work. We may ask to see your governing documents and your most recent set of independently reviewed or audited accounts.

### What if our organisation doesn’t use the word “advocacy” to describe our work? Can we still apply?

Yes. You don’t need to use the word “advocacy” to be eligible. If your work helps young people speak up, make informed choices, and secure their rights, and reflects our key features of advocacy, we encourage you to apply.

### Our work supports a broader group of young people, not only care-experienced, LGBT+, or learning disabled/neurodivergent young people. Can we still apply, and what do we need to show?

Yes. You can still apply if a significant proportion of your work supports one or more of these groups. You’ll need to clearly show why your organisation is well placed to support them and how your advocacy work meets their specific needs.

### How do you define a ‘significant proportion’ when our work includes young people beyond the three priority groups?

We don’t have a fixed percentage, but we’re looking for more than occasional or incidental support. A significant proportion means that work with care-experienced, LGBT+, or learning disabled/neurodivergent young people is a clear and intentional part of what you do, not just one part of a much broader offer. You’ll need to explain why your organisation is well placed to support young people from these groups and how your approach to advocacy reflects their needs.

### If our organisation mainly serves adults, but we have a dedicated strand for young people that aligns with the Shout! Fund’s advocacy criteria, can we still apply?

Yes. As long as the work you are applying for is clearly focused on young people and meets the Fund’s advocacy criteria, you can apply. You’ll need to show how this strand of your work is tailored to young people’s needs and how it reflects the key features of advocacy [set out in the guidelines](https://henrysmith.foundation/grants/shout/).

### We’re currently funded by the Henry Smith Foundation. Are we eligible to apply to Shout!?

Yes, you may be eligible to apply to the Shout! Fund even if you are currently funded by the Henry Smith Foundation. However, if your existing grant has more than 12 months remaining, you should contact your Grants Manager to discuss your eligibility. If your current grant is in its final 12 months, you are welcome to apply.

### Our work includes peer support or mentoring. Can we apply if these are part of a broader rights-based approach?

Yes. Peer support or mentoring can be part of your work, as long as your overall approach is rights-based, person-led, and supports young people to speak up, make choices, and secure their rights. You’ll need to show how these elements contribute to a wider advocacy offer that fits with the key features [set out in the guidelines](https://henrysmith.foundation/grants/shout/).

### Can individuals apply for funding?

No. The Shout! Fund only accepts applications from UK-based not-for-profit organisations with a charitable purpose. Individuals are not eligible to apply.

### Are schools or statutory services eligible to apply?

The Shout! Fund is open to independent, not-for-profit organisations with a charitable purpose. We can fund advocacy services that work alongside statutory services, as long as the support remains independent and person-led. Schools and colleges are not eligible to apply directly. Please see [our guidelines](https://henrysmith.foundation/grants/shout/) for full details on eligibility.

### Is a partnership or consortium application permitted?

Yes, we welcome applications from partnerships or consortia, as long as there is a clear lead organisation that meets our eligibility criteria and will hold the grant. You should explain how the partnership works and how it will deliver advocacy that aligns with the Fund’s aims.

## Funding Scope

### What types of costs can be covered by a Shout! grant?

Our preference is to make flexible grants to your organisation, although we are open to discussing project cost grants if that suits you. We understand that not all of your work might fit with the Fund, but we are committed to supporting the organisational infrastructure that underpins the delivery of your advocacy work.

We are happy to fund core costs, including rent, utilities, and staff salaries, as well as costs associated with managing staff wellbeing. We believe that fair pay is an important part of strong, sustainable organisations, and we encourage applications that reflect this, such as including annual salary increases and supporting staff wellbeing.

### What do you mean by “accessible and inclusive,” and how should we show that our service is trauma-informed, gender-informed, and culturally-informed?

We’re looking for services that actively work to remove barriers, adapt to individual needs, and make all young people feel welcome, respected, and safe. This includes practical steps, like using plain language, offering flexible ways to engage, or avoiding the need for a formal diagnosis, as well as cultural awareness and emotional safety.

Being **trauma-informed** means recognising the impact of trauma and avoiding approaches that could retraumatise. **Gender-informed** services take into account how gender identity and expression shape young people’s experiences, and **culturally-informed** services understand and respect the diverse backgrounds of the people you support.

You don’t need to have formal accreditations. But you should be able to show what this looks like in practice, how your team builds trust, how your service adapts to different needs, and how young people shape how the work is delivered. We’re interested in thoughtful, grounded approaches, not buzzwords.

### What does it mean that the grant cannot be more than 50% of our projected annual running costs? How should we calculate this?

This means the amount you apply for must be no more than half of your organisation’s total projected running costs for the year the grant would begin. To calculate this, use your projected income and expenditure for that year. The maximum you can request is £60,000 per year, even if this is less than 50% of your total costs. For example, if your annual running costs are projected to be £180,000, you can apply for up to £60,000 a year across the four years.

### Our support programmes run in set timeframes (e.g., 8 or 12 weeks). Does that count as “regular engagement that isn’t time-limited”?

It can, depending on how your service works. We’re not asking for open-ended support, but we do expect young people to have regular contact over a meaningful period of time. If your programme builds relationships, allows time for trust to grow, and offers follow-up or continuity, it may still meet this feature. You’ll need to explain how your approach gives young people consistent, ongoing support while they’re involved.

### Can we apply for funding to scale up piloted advocacy work, even if we haven’t yet completed a full evaluation of it?

Yes. You don’t need to have a full evaluation in place to apply. But you should be able to reflect on what you’ve learned so far, how young people have shaped the work, and why you believe scaling up is the right next step. We’re interested in your thinking, not just formal evidence, although we will ask you to demonstrate how you know your support is working.

### Can funding be used for work currently taking place, or must it be used for new work?

Funding can support existing work, new initiatives, or a mix of both. The key thing is that the work aligns with the aims of the Shout! Fund. You’ll need to show how the funding will strengthen, improve, or sustain your advocacy support for young people.

## Application Process

### How do we apply for Shout!?

You can start by completing our short online eligibility quiz, which you can find here. If you meet the criteria, you’ll be given a link to submit an Expression of Interest (EOI). You can apply from Wednesday 23 July to Wednesday 20 August 2025. We’ll review EOIs and invite around 40 organisations to submit a full application.

### When will we find out if we’ve been invited to submit a full application?

We will let you know by Friday 5 September 2025 if you have been invited to submit a full application.

### Can we speak to someone about our application before applying?

Yes. If you’d like to talk through your idea before applying, you can contact us at [buildingindependence@henrysmith.foundation](mailto:buildingindependence@henrysmith.foundation) or call us on 020 7264 4970. You can also request a call back on [our webpage](https://henrysmith.foundation/contact-us/). We’re happy to answer questions or talk through your fit with the fund. Please note that we can’t read draft applications or offer detailed feedback on written answers.

### What information will we need to submit?

At the Expression of Interest stage, we’ll ask about your organisation, who you support, and how your advocacy work aligns with our key features of advocacy. You will also be asked to upload your most recently published annual accounts. If invited to submit a full application, we’ll ask for more details about your approach, staffing, outcomes, and learning. You’ll also need to upload your safeguarding policy.

### Do we need to submit a detailed budget with our application?

It depends on the type of funding. If you're being considered for restricted funding, we’ll ask you to submit a budget showing how the grant would be used. If you're being considered for flexible funding, we may not require a project budget from you. In both cases, we’ll discuss the grant amount and any budget requirements with you during a call once you’ve submitted your full application.

### Will we be notified if our application is unsuccessful, and will we receive feedback?

Yes. If your Expression of Interest is not successful, we’ll notify you by email and offer brief feedback in writing. If you’re invited to submit a full application and are then unsuccessful, we’ll let you know by Friday 28 November 2025 and offer feedback by phone.

### When will the funding start if we’re awarded a grant?

Successful applicants will be told by Friday 28 November 2025. The first payment will be made once we have all the required information and any additional conditions have been met.

### Is accessibility support available to help us apply to the Shout! Fund?

Yes. If you or someone in your organisation faces barriers due to disability, neurodivergence, language, or communication needs, we can offer financial support to help you apply. This includes grants of £250 at the Expression of Interest stage and £500 at the full application stage (if invited). You can find how to apply for more information [in the Shout! Fund’s guidelines](https://henrysmith.foundation/grants/shout/).

### How will you ensure a fair spread of Shout! Fund grants across different regions and communities? Will our location or organisation type affect our chances?

Your location or organisation type won’t affect your chances on its own. We’ll prioritise organisations that support at least one of our priority groups: care-experienced, LGBT+, and learning disabled or neurodivergent young people. We’ll make sure the full diversity of the Fund’s focus is reflected in the grants we award. We’re also aiming for a good spread of grants across the four nations of the UK (England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales).