**Together We Begin**

**Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

Please read the Fund Guidelines first.

### **1. Eligibility**

**Is the Together We Begin fund open to organisations across the UK?**

Yes, we welcome applications from organisations based in England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. Your organisation must be formally registered with a charitable purpose, and your work must support families with children aged 0–5 and/or during pregnancy living in the UK.

**Our organisation is registered as a Community Interest Company (CIC). Do we need to provide anything additional to apply?**

CICs are welcome to apply. You will need to demonstrate a clear charitable purpose and that any surplus is reinvested into your work. We may request your governing documents and your most recent set of independently reviewed or audited accounts.

**We are currently funded by The Henry Smith Foundation. Are we eligible to apply to Together We Begin?**

Yes, you can still apply. Please speak with the Programme Team first.

 gettingstarted@henrysmith.foundation

**Can individual support workers apply for funding?**

No, we do not fund individuals. Applications must come from eligible organisations, as described in the fund guidelines.

**Can we submit multiple applications?**

No, only one application per organisation is permitted for this fund.

**Is a partnership or consortium application permitted?**

Yes, but you must clearly explain how funding would be efficiently used across organisations to achieve the fund’s aims and objectives. One organisation must act as the named lead for the application and award.

### **2. Scope of Work**

**What do you mean by ‘home-based support’?**

Home-based support refers to services or interventions delivered in a family’s home rather than in a nursery, children’s centre or other space.

**Our work also supports families with children aged 5–8, not only in their early years. Can we still apply, and what do we need to show?**

Yes, you may still apply if a significant proportion of your work is with families with children under five and you believe you are delivering the objectives of the fund. If successful, we may restrict the grant to early years purposes only.

**Our local authority’s child poverty percentage is below the 24.9% threshold, but we work in a pocket of deprivation where child poverty is higher. Can we still apply?**

Unfortunately, not. This funding is focused on areas with the highest numbers of children living in poverty. Please check our website in January 2026 for future opportunities.

**Can we apply for funding to scale up a pilot element of our work, even if we have not fully evaluated it yet?**

Yes, but please be aware that we will prioritise work that can demonstrate impact.

**Is there a minimum number of families we are expected to support?**

No. You should determine the appropriate number based on the support you offer and the communities you serve.

### **4. Application Process**

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

If you are invited to submit a full application form and are unsuccessful, full feedback will be provided. Expressions of interest that don’t make it through to the second stage of the application process will receive feedback reasons, but they will be more generic due to the volume of EOI’s that we expect to receive.

**Can we speak to someone about our application before we apply?**

Yes, we encourage you to contact us before submitting your Expression of Interest. We are happy to discuss your plans and help determine whether this funding is a good fit for your organisation. Email gettingstarted@henrysmith.foundation or request a callback. Alternatively, phone 020 7264 4970

**If we are awarded a grant, when would the funding start?**

We expect you to draw down the grant within six months of grant award notification.

**Can I use AI to help complete my application?**

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is becoming more common in our work and lives. AI tools, like ChatGPT, can be powerful aids, offering new ways of working that save time, improve accessibility, and support creativity.

We understand that some people may want to use AI when writing their applications. Please refer to our AI guidance for more information.

### **5. Fund Expectations**

**What do you mean by “peer support models”?**

Peer support models refer to approaches where people with lived experience - often parents, caregivers, or family members - provide guidance and encouragement to others facing similar challenges.

**What do you mean by “strengths-based approaches”?**

A strengths-based approach focuses on families’ capabilities, resources, and potential, rather than solely on perceived challenges or deficits.

**What counts as “long-term” regarding the family relationships and support we provide?**

Long-term support refers to sustained impact or engagement over time. This typically means support lasting 6–12 months or longer and often spanning several years.

**What do you mean by “we're committed to funding work that is responsive to need, inclusive and accessible”?**

We want to see that your organisation has:

* Inclusive organisational policies and practices, including:
* Recruitment and outreach that reflects the diversity of the communities served
* A zero-tolerance policy for discrimination
* Training and support for staff and volunteers on inclusive practices
* A strong safeguarding policy and practices
* Collect and use data (formal and informal) on service user diversity across key areas such as:
	1. Race and ethnicity
	2. Disability
	3. Gender identity
	4. Socioeconomic background