

**HENRY SMITH
FOUNDATION**

The Maternity Equity Fund

Supporting trusted community organisations to
improve maternity equity

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Today's webinar

- Who the Fund is for, what we'll fund, and how to apply.
- Questions go in the Q&A tab (chat is off). Upvote questions you'd like answered.
- The session is being recorded slides, recording and an updated FAQ will follow within five working days.
- This is a Maternity Equity focussed fund

Why this fund, and why now

Strategic focus

The Getting Started Programme prioritises babies and children experiencing inequity, so they have the foundations they need to thrive in the early years.

Fund purpose

Child development starts at conception. The Fund aims to improve maternal and child outcomes by tackling persistent and avoidable maternity inequities, from conception to birth.

The bigger picture

Maternity inequity has been documented for 30+ years. Maternity and birth outcomes are worsening for everyone. Government focus is an opportunity to influence voluntary and community-led solutions.

Who we want to support

We particularly want to support organisations working alongside:

- Black communities
- Asian communities
- Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities
- Communities experiencing high levels of deprivation, including rural communities
- People experiencing multiple and complex disadvantage

We're looking for organisations that:

- are trusted by their communities
- already deliver relevant work
- provide trauma-informed and culturally safe support
- meaningfully involve lived experience
- can demonstrate impact in ways that are proportionate to their size
- are committed to learning and collaboration



What we will fund

Examples include:

- are trusted by their communities
- Health literacy and informed decision-making
- Improving access to maternity care
- Continuity and trusted relationships
- One-to-one support
- Peer support
- Practical and pastoral support

Are you eligible?

Your organisation:

- > A UK-registered charitable organisation — charity, CIO, not-for-profit CIC with an asset lock, or other not-for-profit charitable body.
- > At least one year of audited or independently examined accounts.
- > Annual income between £20,000 and £1.5 million in your most recent accounts.

We won't fund:

- > Work that falls outside the scope of pregnancy and birth.
- > Research, campaigning or statutory service delivery. Projects that are not focused on reducing maternity inequities.
- > Organisations that cannot demonstrate relevant experience, trusted community relationships or readiness to deliver.
- > Work outside the UK.

Key details

Organisations will be asked to use at least £2,500 - £5,000 of the grant on staff wellbeing each year (depending on size of organisation).

Flexible funding – flexible grants for charitable organisations to deliver and strengthen their work.

Organisations whose work includes postnatal services can apply. However, funding will be restricted to preventative project costs only.

Organisations can only submit one application for this Fund.

Henry Smith Foundation will work with organisations to provide capacity building, learning, support, and relationship-building beyond the grant funding.

More than money

A relationship with a Grant Manager, annual check-in calls, a mid-grant visit, and learning exchange with other funded organisations.

£61,700*

*£61,600 in year one and £61,700 in years two and three

£185,000

Total grant per organisation

3 years

Flexible funding

35

Organisations invited to full application

Feb '27

Decisions communicated

20

Organisations funded

How to apply

1

Eligibility quiz

Complete a short self-service check on our website.

You will be given access to the Expression of Interest form if eligible.

2

Expression of Interest

Complete a brief form on our portal. Your answers will help us, and you, judge the fit for this fund.

After we have reviewed your Expression of Interest you may be invited to make a full application.

3

Full Application (by invitation only)

Complete a form with more detailed questions on our portal. We will assess your application and complete an in-depth check of your documentation.

4

Assessment call

Have a pre-booked call on Teams with us for approx. 1hr.

You will be asked questions around safeguarding, and any other points that need clarification from your application.

Key Dates

1

Eligibility & EOI

Opens:
Thursday 3 September, 9am

Deadline:
Wednesday 14 October, 5pm

2

Full Application

Opens:
Friday 6 November, 9am

Deadline:
Wednesday 4 December, 5pm.

3

Assessment Call

Window:
Monday 7 December to
Friday 18 December 2026

4

Outcome

Decisions:
Mid February 2027



What makes your application strong

We are looking for organisations that can demonstrate:

- trusted community relationships
- existing delivery
- meaningful lived experience
- safe, trauma-informed practice
- culturally safe support
- evidence that is proportionate to your organisation

We are interested in understanding your work, not how professionally your application is written.

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