



**CLARION**  
FUTURES

# Clarion Futures Digital Grants Programme

**Application Guidance  
Notes 2021**

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**Clarion Housing Group** comprises the country's largest housing association; a property development company, a charitable foundation and a repairs and maintenance service. As a result of a merger between Affinity Sutton and Circle Housing group in 2016, Clarion Housing Group owns and manages 125,000 homes across 170 local authorities.

As a business with social purpose we provide social and affordable housing to over 360,000 residents and invest in our communities by delivering one of the country's largest social investment programmes through our Charitable Foundation, **Clarion Futures**. Our mission is to provide social housing residents with the support, skills and opportunities to transform their lives and communities.

Clarion Futures has three key programmes areas, Jobs and Training, Communities and Money and Digital, which brings together all of the digital inclusion services.

***Clarion Futures Digital is committed to getting residents online; giving them the basic digital skills, motivation, and access to the equipment and connectivity needed to safely and confidently access online services on a regular basis.***

# Application form checklist

## Checklist of information you will need to complete your application

Before you begin your application, please find below some of the key details it would be helpful for you to have to hand:

- ✓ Your **charity or company number**, if you are a registered charity or company
- ✓ Key **organisation details** such as:
  - The year your organisation was established
  - Financials – income over the last financial year, annual income over the last 3 years and a record of any previous Clarion Funding received
  - Information regarding organisational structure such as number of staff, number of management committee members, number of volunteers etc.
- ✓ **Full overview of information** about your grant request including: aims of the project and activities, beneficiaries, volunteers, outcomes and impact etc.
- ✓ A clear and **detailed budget** – the application will require a breakdown of all project costs involved in delivering your project
- ✓ A saved copy of **supporting documents** such as:
  - A copy of your governing document (e.g. constitution, memorandum & articles or set of rules)
  - A copy of your most recent annual accounts record of income & expenditure, or if you are a new group, a spending plan and recent bank statement
  - A copy of your safeguarding policies
  - A list of the names and addresses of your management committee
  - A copy of your online safety policy
  - A copy of your public liability insurance
  - A copy of your covid-19 risk assessment.

Once you begin your application, you are able to save your progress and return to it at a later date if you do not have all the information required to complete the question. However, you are unable to submit an application until all of the information that is required is complete.

Please ensure that you've spoken to your **Regional Digital Inclusion Officer** at [futuresdigital@clarionhq.com](mailto:futuresdigital@clarionhq.com) before you submit your application.

# About the Clarion Futures Digital Grants Programme

Grants of between **£1,000 and £5,000** are available to organisations seeking to deliver innovative, well designed projects that support Clarion residents and the wider community to address digital exclusion.

The Fund is designed to support Clarion residents of all ages to get and stay online and to use the internet as an everyday tool, safely and confidently.

We are looking to fund projects and activities that **focus** on:

-  Supporting residents to discover the full scope of how the internet can assist them in their everyday lives, and to provide them with the skills and confidence to do so
-  Supporting residents to access the digital resources that meet their individual needs and circumstances
-  Building digital skills and confidence for all
-  Encouraging residents to use the internet with confidence so they are safe, and avoid risky and/or illegal behaviour

We are looking to fund projects and activities that **reach**:

-  Residents who have never used the internet before
-  Residents who may have previously used some online facilities but who may not be aware of the full potential to use the internet in their everyday lives
-  Residents with limited digital skills
-  Residents who do not have access to appropriate digital resources
-  Residents of all ages



## A note about our residents' digital needs...

Around 81% of Clarion residents consider themselves to be “online”, compared to 91% in private rented accommodation.

Of the 19% of residents without internet access, 25% said they did not know how to connect and a further 38% did not want to.

The digital resisters are in the 55 plus age group who remain one of the main target groups for our work. Just 16% identified cost as a barrier.

Our research shows that the lack of understanding and skills are the biggest barriers to overcome all of which can be tackled through flexible, individually tailored provision available through the Clarion Futures Digital programme.

# Who can apply?

**Not-for-profit organisations** including constituted community groups, registered charities, companies limited by guarantee, social enterprises or Community Interest Companies (CICs) are eligible to apply to the Clarion Futures Digital Grants Programme.

Organisations must meet the following **eligibility criteria** before submitting an application:

-  Delivering a project **primarily** aimed at supporting **Clarion residents**
-  Have at least **three (3) unrelated management committee** members
-  Have a **governing document**
-  Have an **organisational bank account** in the name of the constituted group with at least two (2) unrelated signatories
-  Have a record of income and expenditure or set of **accounts**  
*If you are a new group you will need a bank statement and an income and expenditure forecast*
-  Have a **safeguarding policy** if working with young people under the age of 18, or vulnerable adults
-  Have the relevant **insurance** in place, including public liability where required, before delivering activities
-  Have an **online safety policy** in place covering participants, tutors/trainers and volunteers  
*If you do not have this in place you will be obligated to develop a policy as a condition of funding*

Funding is aimed at projects which are actively seeking to support residents of Clarion housing and we expect to see delivery in and around Clarion neighbourhoods. Projects can support a range of beneficiaries including both Clarion residents and members of the wider community.

*If you are **not** working to benefit Clarion residents or you have no clear plan for how to benefit Clarion residents, you will not be eligible to apply.*

## A note about engaging our residents...

The Clarion Futures Digital Team will be available to help any community organisations and resident groups who would like to discuss their application, find out more about Digital Skills Training and digital volunteers, or for help developing a project idea. If you are unsure whether your project is operating in a Clarion Housing Area, the Clarion Futures Digital Team can talk to you about engaging our residents.

Please contact them at [futuresdigital@myclarionhousing.com](mailto:futuresdigital@myclarionhousing.com)



# What can I apply for?

Grants of between **£1,000 and £5,000** are available towards your **activity costs**, these can include, for example:

- ✓ Connectivity (mobile and fixed)
- ✓ Training resources
- ✓ Venue hire
- ✓ Insurance
- ✓ Event costs
- ✓ Volunteer expenses
- ✓ Equipment and computer software
- ✓ Refreshments for project participants
- ✓ Staffing costs – including sessional IT tutors with experience of delivering digital inclusion training, and reasonable project management costs
- ✓ Publicity materials

## Funding existing projects

We are able to fund existing projects and continuation funding of the same project. However, please ensure your proposal demonstrates learning and development from previous iterations of the project delivery and/or new and creative ideas. We are looking for proposals that respond to community need and can demonstrate addressing a demand for the activities.

## Funding equipment

We are able to offer equipment which can be loaned throughout the duration of your project (subject to availability). To find out more, speak to your local Digital Inclusion Officer or contact [futuresdigital@myclarionhousing.com](mailto:futuresdigital@myclarionhousing.com)

We are also able to provide funding for equipment provided that the full amount of the grant is not used solely to cover the cost of equipment, and the following criteria are met:

- a) A clear demonstration of need for the items
- b) The equipment will be used primarily for digital inclusion - the equipment may be used for computer training as well, but this will not be the primary use;
- c) The equipment must be made available for the community benefit and cannot be purchased to benefit an individual;
- d) There is somewhere safe and secure to store the equipment and it will be insured (you may apply for insurance costs)
- e) Equipment (hardware or software) that you are applying for cannot be obtained for free or at greatly reduced cost elsewhere. A couple of examples of suppliers of hardware and/or software at reduced costs are:
  - Tier1 online refurbish high quality laptops and desktops. They take machines in a working condition from large corporations and remove all the data, clean and grade them. Details can be found at [www.tier1online.com](http://www.tier1online.com)
  - If you are a Registered Charity, consider using the Technology Trust to source your hardware and software at greatly reduced prices. You can visit the TT-Exchange website to find out more and register your organization at [www.tt-exchange.org/getting\\_started](http://www.tt-exchange.org/getting_started).
- f) Equipment (in a useable state) must not already be available in the area - we are able to fund upgrades for existing equipment or where it needs to be made accessible to residents

# What cannot be funded?

We cannot consider funding for the following:

- Statutory organisations such as local authorities and schools
- Any party political activity
- Purely commercial ventures (for profit)
- Spending that has already taken place (retrospective funding)
- Individuals or projects run by individuals as opposed to an organization
- Activities promoting religious beliefs
- Activities where individuals are excluded on religious grounds, ethnicity, gender, sexuality
- If you have received a grant through the Clarion Futures Digital Fund, you are unable to apply for another grant from the fund for another 12 months
- Organisations with overdue or incomplete monitoring on a previous grant from Clarion, Affinity Sutton or Circle via any of their funding streams. If you or a member of your organisation management committee has an outstanding monitoring on a previous grant, please contact Clarion Futures to resolve this.

## Our funding priorities

We are interested in applications that can demonstrate an understanding of what is already going on in the community, and how the proposed project/activity will, for example:

-  Make the most of existing provision in an area, add value, i.e. by reaching new participants, those that may be missing out/are unaware of how the internet can assist them
-  Address a gap in provision, i.e. where there is no existing support in a specific area
-  Make the best use of other services, partnerships or networks and understands the Clarion Futures Digital offer and how these resources can be deployed to enhance the project
-  Demonstrate awareness of the changes in the operating environment. i.e. COVID-19 pandemic

Other priority areas to consider when planning your application:

<b>Awareness raising</b>	We would encourage applicants to demonstrate how they are linking with and raising awareness of other Clarion Futures programmes, activities and online services. For example, any linkage with Digital Champions, and/or other local Clarion Futures community assets, Digital Hubs, projects, services or programmes.
<b>Volunteering</b>	Volunteer involvement is encouraged, particularly where Clarion residents have the opportunity to volunteer and develop their skills in the process.
<b>Sustainability</b>	We are particularly interested in proposals that plan for the longer term and consider how activities could be sustained after Clarion funding has come to an end. For example, plans for Digital Champions or other volunteers to run parts of the project, fundraising plans, building the project into other local services etc.
<b>In-kind and match-funding</b>	This may include grants from other funders, free venue hire, donations and so on. Volunteer time can be included as in-kind support at the rate of £10/hour.

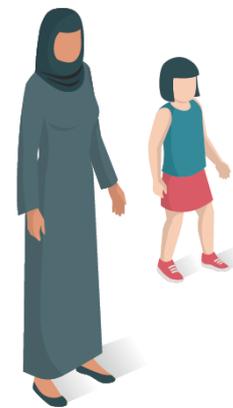
# Examples of funded projects

The grant supported the delivery of online informal 'coffee morning' sessions delivered over the phone during the pandemic. This resulted in the increased confidence of participants to access online services, and social media and zoom, to stay connected safely.



Delivery of eight digital safety sessions for 20 young people aged between 14 and 18 years old. Topics included loneliness, protecting your future, control, desensitisation, selfie generation and killer websites. Young people were also taught basic app building and design skills to present their learning from the course.

Weekly drop-in sessions were held across three Clarion community centres. The sessions provided support; skills-based learning and confidence building. Sessions focussed on supporting low-income families to use the internet safely and securely to manage household budgets and access welfare services.



The local voluntary service received funding for six training laptops and the delivery costs of 30 teaching sessions for Clarion residents and the wider community. Learning was supported by two digital volunteers with participants gaining skills and experience accessing online GP booking services, online banking and grocery shopping alongside internet safety sessions.

# How to apply

Applications must be submitted via the Clarion Futures online grants portal (Flexi-Grant). Applicants are required to register on the system before starting an application form.

<https://clarionfutures.flexigrant.com/login.aspx>

**Applications will open on a rolling basis from 28 April 2021; however, you must submit your application before the published deadline to be considered for the upcoming round.**

Applications not submitted will need to be redrafted via the online portal for the subsequent round. N.B. applicants will still have access to their forms but will be required to copy it into the form for the upcoming deadline.

Applications Open	Application Deadline	Decision Released	Project Start Date
<b>28 April 2021</b> Round 7	<b>26 May 2021</b> 12 noon Wednesday	w/c 05 July 2021	From late July 2021
<b>Round 8</b>	<b>04 August 2021</b> 12 noon Wednesday	w/c 20 September 2021	From October 2021
<b>Round 9</b>	<b>20 October 2021</b> 12 noon Wednesday	w/c 13 December 2021	From January 2022

## How do we make our funding decisions?

All applications submitted by the deadline will undergo an initial assessment by our Grants Team. All eligible applications which best fit the Clarion Futures Digital Grants Programme themes and priorities will be shortlisted.

Shortlisted applicants will then be contacted by the Digital Inclusion Team or the Grants Team to gather any additional information about your project and/or organisation.

Shortlisted applications will be presented to the Clarion Futures Digital Grants Panel who will assess each application based on the information provided in the application forms. The Panel will make funding decisions based on the programme criteria. Successful and unsuccessful applicants will be notified of the decision in writing, via email. Please note all funding decisions are made at the discretion of Clarion Futures Digital Grants Panel and are final.

# Reporting requirements

Groups in receipt of a grant will be required to complete an online grant report outlining how the grant was spent and highlighting the benefits for residents and other participants. Organisations must submit their monitoring form within six (6) weeks of the project ending.

A Clarion Futures Digital Inclusion Officer will be allocated to each funded project and will be able to offer support on monitoring and evaluating your work.

## Key areas to monitor when running your project

- The extent to which the project met the anticipated objectives
- The number of participants in the project, including the number of Clarion residents
- Learning gained when delivering the project, success stories and any unanticipated results/outcomes
- A case study of a participant in the project, showing how the project helped them (images and consent forms should be submitted)
- Collated feedback from participants on:
  - a) Whether they feel the project has helped them get online
  - b) How it has helped them in their everyday lives, i.e. how they are using it
  - c) How they intend to use the internet in the future
  - d) How people are now aware of and/or using the Clarion online offer (website/Facebook etc.) and their confidence in using it
  - e) Whether any further support is needed and if so, what type of support?

## Key data to capture when running your project

To help us monitor the impact of our grant funding we ask all grant recipients to record the following data (where applicable to the individual project). Your assigned Digital Inclusion Officer will support you with measuring and capturing the statistics.

-  Digital Skills Training Hours delivered
-  Number of Sessions/Interactions
-  Number of People/Learners trained
-  Number of Unique Learners
-  Number of Volunteering Hours

Further information, tips and templates for monitoring the impact of your work can be found:

**Inspiring Impact** | <https://www.inspiringimpact.org/>

Inspiring Impact supports people who work and volunteer for charities, funders, and social enterprises across the UK. We provide free online resources, peer learning networks, and grant funding, so you can plan, understand, and improve your impact.

**NCVO Knowledge Bank – Impact** | [www.knowhownonprofit.org/organisation/impact](http://www.knowhownonprofit.org/organisation/impact)  
Knowledge and e-learning for charities, social enterprises and community groups.

# Further help and resources

For support planning your project you are encouraged to contact the Clarion Futures Digital Inclusion Team on [futuresdigital@myclarionhousing.com](mailto:futuresdigital@myclarionhousing.com)

For support completing your online application form, queries regarding deadline, criteria and submitting your proposal can be directed to [grants@clarionhg.com](mailto:grants@clarionhg.com)

A sample application form is available from our website to support your proposal planning.