CUMBRIA YOUTH ALLIANCE

ENRICHMENT FUND

# ENRICHMENT FUND HANDBOOK

## Guide for Applicants and Professionals

**TO APPLY:**

**Visit CYA's website, The Enrichment Fund**

https://app.upshot.org.uk/signup/76b9e674/6cfb1c0472b7f142/

# Introduction/Funding

## What is the Enrichment Fund?

The Enrichment Fund provides financial support to care-experienced young people and is used in a way that helps the individual wether they want to try new things, learn new skills, and have experiences they might have missed out on. The fund can be used for activities related to health and wellbeing, education and training, employment support, and engagement in arts and culture. Whether covering costs for gym memberships, professional courses, work-related expenses, or creative pursuits. The Enrichment fund is led by young people and gives them power to decide where the money goes.

## How does it work?

- The Enrichment Fund is managed by a dedicated panel of care-experienced young people, Cumbria Youth Alliance and Cumberland Council.
- The panel review each application to determine if the applicant should receive funding based on their understanding of care-experienced young people's needs.
- Cumbria Youth Alliance (CYA) are responsible for running the Enrichment Fund, managing the application and decision-making process and processing payments once decisions have been made.

**For some it can be life changing, for others it is a life line**

***"This support has helped me get to work, build my confidence, and feel hopeful again."***

# Eligbility

## To be eligible to apply for the Enrichment Fund you must meet the following criteria:

- Have spent a minimum of 12 months in the care system
- Aged 16 - 26
- Be under the care or left the care of **Cumberland** Council
- Understand and agree to the responsibilites of applicants

# What can and can't be funded?

## How does it work?

- Activities related to health and wellbeing – e.g., Covering costs of gym membership
- Education and training- e.g., professional courses, laptop to access online training courses
- Employment support – work related expenses e.g. bus fees until they get paid or funding a bike to get to work
- Engagement in arts and culture or creative pursuits
- Help you develop new skills, education, or hobbies.
- Give you access to cultural or social activities.
- Provide experiences you may have missed out on.
- Have to be realistic and good value for money.

## What can't be funded?

- Everyday living costs (e.g., rent, bills, food) Unless there is a critical situation such as a young person being at risk of homelessness. In such cases, applications will be reviewed on an exceptional basis.
- Car insurance, as this is an ongoing bill. Applications may be considered in exceptional circumstances.
- Things that should be paid for by other services. (e.g. Can be funded through Cumberland Council financial policy)
- Gambling, alcohol, drugs or anything illegal
- Requests that don't clearly show how they will help the applicant
- Anything that's already happened or been paid for already
- Medical-related expenses, including but not limited to medicine/ procedure costs.
- Refurbished, second-hand, or pre-owned items cannot be funded through the Enrichment Fund.

**TOP TIP**

Have as much information as possible on your application, include all links or invoices for payment.

# Timescale and Process

**Emergency Applications Available**

1

### 1 - Submit an application

Up to 2 weeks, depending on when your application is submtted

Once you have submitted an application, your application is checked to ensure there is enough information and it is correct. It is then anominised ready for the panel meeting.

2

### 2 - Panel meeting

Panel meetings happen every 2 weeks, (Every other thursday)

Your application will be read out to the panel, who will then discuss this and decide on an outcome. Outcomes include approved, signposted or further information needed.

3

### 3 - Decision

A member of staff from CYA will contact you/ PA within 1-2 working days of a decision being made.

Once a decision is made, Cumbria Youth Alliance will contact the referrer and the young person with the outcome.

4

### 4 - Awaiting Payment

Once links/ information has been sent to CYA this will be sent to the finance department within 2 days

If approved, links for payment/ invoices will be sent to the finance officer at Cumbria Youth Alliance for payment to be made. Please be aware it may take time to be processed.

5

### 5 - Payment Made

Finance can face delays, please leave up to 2 weeks for payment.
A member of CYA staff will contact you once this has been paid for

6

### 6 - Complete

Please submit your feedback/ quote/ picture within 2 weeks of completing

Once complete, the applicant should provide feedback/ evidence of impact requested, this can include a quote, picture or videos.

Once payment has been paid, a member of Cumbria Youth Alliance will contact you. We may be able to provide delivery timescales but this is not guarenteed.

# Submitting an application

## What to include on my application?

- As much detail as possible!!
- Include links/ invoices
- Applicants must provide detail on how the funding will enhance their quality of life or standard of living and show that they cannot achieve this without the fund's support.

## How to apply?

- Applications are submitted through the Cumbria Youth Alliance website.
- https://app.upshot.org.uk/signup/76b9e674/6cfb1c0472b7f142/

## Applicant responsibilities:

- Provide/ confirm delivery address.
- Provide links to payment and/or invoices
- Treat CYA and council staff with respect and kindness at all times
- Applicants are responsible for providing feedback and evidence of how the Enrichment Fund has positively impacted them following receipt of funding.

## Can professionals apply on behalf of the young person?

Professionals may submit applications on behalf of young people, provided the young person is aware of the process. The professional must indicate on the form that it is a proxy application. However, the panel encourages direct input from the young person.

## Can you apply more than once?

Yes, young people can submit multiple applications. However, their application history will be considered when deciding whether to approve additional funding.

## Tracking:

- All applications are tracked to monitor frequency and purpose and if an applicant is found to be misusing the fund or avoiding financial responsibility, their application will be denied.

## Emergency applications:

- In emergencies requiring immediate funding, Cumbria Youth Alliance have the authority to make decisions on behalf of the panel.
- To request emergency funding when completing the application form and tick the box marked "Emergency." Note: Situations caused by neglecting to pay bills or fines in a timely manner will not qualify as emergencies.
- An emergency application means that they money needs to be paid in under two weeks or on a weekend.

**An emergency application means that if you are not provided the money there is a significant risk of you coming to harm or being put at risk** For example becoming homeless or lacking the means to pay from prescribed medication from the doctor.

# Decisions

Once your application has been discussed by the panel, a member of staff from Cumbria Youth Alliance will contact **the refferer and the young person** with the outcome and next steps. Outcomes can include:

## Approved:

- CYA will make contact to explain what has been approved and may request confirmation on items.

## Partial funding:

- This requires the applicant to source the remaining amount to encourage financial responsibility.

## Declined or signposted:

- If your application is signposted, it means there are alternative funding you can apply for.
- It can also mean that the enrichment fund does not fund what you have requested (for example household bills)
- If the referral is declined, the panel will offer suggestions or signpost to an alterative source of funding. A CYA member of staff will be in touch with the referrer to discuss this.

## More information required:

The panel may request more information before reaching a decision, to avoid this please put as much information as possible on your application.

## External funding:

The panel, alongside CYA and Cumberland Council, will assess whether alternative funding sources (e.g., Cumberland Council, debt services, Vicar's Relief) are available before approving applications.

## Evidence requests:

- The panel may decide/ request specific evidence that you should be provide to show how the funding has been used, evidence examples listed on page 10.
- If specific evidence is not requested, it will be generic evidence that you will need to provide.

**Payments will not be made directly to the young person.**

# Awaiting payment

## How are payments made?

- Payments are not made directly to young people.
- Funds are sent to the relevant service providers, suppliers, or organisations.
- This ensures the fund is used appropriately and encourages young people to take responsibility for managing their finances.

## How long does it take to receive funding? :

- Please be aware that there can be delays at this stage and payments can take up to two weeks
- The panel meets twice a month to review applications. To avoid delays, applicants should ensure their forms are thoroughly completed to minimise follow-up requests for additional information.
- Applicants will need to provide an invoice/ links so that CYA knows where to send the payment.

## How is the money allocated?

Funding is distributed on a first-come, first-served basis. This approach highlights the high demand for the fund and supports efforts to secure additional donations for future rounds of fundraising.

# Payment made

## Once payment is made:

- A member of staff at CYA will make contact once payment has been made. We may be able to provide delivery details/ tracking but this is not guaranteed.

# Complete

## Once complete:

- Applicants have the responsibility to inform CYA they have received items (if applicable)
- Applicants should then submit there evidence of how the fund has impacted them

**All applicants should provide evidence of how the Enrichment fund has impacted you/ your life**

# Evidence

**Examples of evidence can include:**

- A quote explaining how the Enrichment Fund has impacted you or describing the difference the funding has made to your wellbeing
- Thank you message
- Photographs of funded items or equipment or funded activities
- Videos explaining how the funding helped
- Voice notes sharing their experience
- Certificates of achievement or completion
- Activity attendance records, such as the Gym
- Event tickets or pictures from the event
- Artwork, photography, music, or creative work developed through funding
- Journal or diary entries
- Support worker observations or foster carer or PA feedback
- Before and after examples showing progress
- Impact story or case study

# Funding/ Updates

- Regular updates will be given to funders and supporters.
- The impact of the fund will be reviewed every year to see how it can be improved.
- These guidelines will be checked and reviewed every year to make sure they still work well and reflect what young people need.



# Panel meetings

**Meetings:**

- The panel is made up of care experienced young peolple aged 18-25
- The panel meets fortnightly to review applications and decisions.

**What do the panel do?**

- Make sure the fund is used in a way that helps care-experienced young people.
- Read and review applications.
- Decide who gets funding based on guidelines.
- Get support and training to help with decision-making.
- Decide what evidence should be provided to show how the funding has been used
- Members are expected to attend all panel meetings and must notify Cumbria Youth Alliance staff in advance if they are unable to attend.
- If three consecutive meetings are missed, your place on the panel may be reviewed. CYA staff will contact you to discuss your circumstances, and any decision regarding continued panel membership will be considered on an individual basis.

**Keeping things fair:**

- The panel members will make sure the money is managed properly.
- If a member of the panel submits a referral, they will not be present in the meeting in which their referral is to be discussed.
- If an applicant has previously made a referral, the panel will be made aware of their previous referral.

# Safeguarding:

**The safety and well-being of all individuals involved with the fund is paramount.**

**Members of the panel must:**

- Ensure that funding decisions prioritise the well-being of beneficiaries.
- Follow established procedures when concerns arise regarding misuse of funds or unethical behaviours.
- Speak to CYA or Cumberland Council staff if they have concerns for either themselves, panel members or referrals.
- Understand that mental health and trauma may be discussed throughout the meeting – members need to be aware of this but can speak with staff to disclose any issues they have or leave the meeting during these discussions.

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