

The Henry Smith Charity

founded in 1628

**Advocacy for People
with Learning
Disabilities and/or
Autistic People
Grant Programme**

**Programme
Overview**

Programme Overview

This document provides an overview of The Henry Smith Charity's grant programme to support organisations providing advocacy services to people with learning disabilities and/or autistic people.

We have consulted with a wide range of stakeholders and advocacy sector representatives in shaping this programme and we are aware that funding for non-statutory advocacy has become increasingly scarce in recent years, as funds have been diverted to meet narrow statutory remits. Our aim for this programme is to redress this balance and enable more people to access independent advocacy that is broader in scope and offers greater flexibility. We also see the programme as an opportunity to support the sector in building an evidence base to demonstrate the impact of independent advocacy.

In this document we have provided some background to The Henry Smith Charity and this programme, setting out the funding available, eligibility criteria and outlining the application process.

The Henry Smith Charity

The Henry Smith Charity is a large independent grant making trust. We distribute over £30m of grants per year to organisations that work with people to reduce social and economic disadvantage. Most of our grants are made through our two main grant programmes: Improving Lives and Strengthening Communities. These are responsive grant programmes supporting organisations delivering services directly to beneficiaries. The criteria for both these programmes can be found on our website (www.henrysmithcharity.org.uk/explore-our-grants-and-apply/).

Under the Improving Lives programme we fund a range of projects supporting people with learning disabilities and/or autistic people, including through the provision of advocacy. If your organisation is not eligible for this specific programme, you may be eligible for the Improving Lives programme and we would encourage you to read our programme guidelines and contact us with any questions (020 7264 4970). A list of our current grants in this area can be found on our website (www.henrysmithcharity.org.uk/recently-awarded-grants/?_sf_s=disability).

Grant Programme Focus and Aims

The Advocacy for People with Learning Disabilities and/or Autistic People programme provides grants for small to medium sized charities (up to £3m annual income) to deliver high quality independent advocacy services in high need areas.

We are seeking expressions of interest from established providers of independent advocacy for people with learning disabilities and/or autistic people. Our focus is not on one particular type of advocacy but rather on provision that is flexible and long-term, offering continuity and, potentially, support with multiple issues. We are therefore open to funding all types of non-statutory independent advocacy through this fund (e.g. one-to-one advocacy, self-advocacy support, peer advocacy). This could also include specialist projects for particular groups such as advocacy for parents with learning disabilities. We are particularly interested in funding organisations that can evidence involvement of people with lived experience of learning disability or autism, co-production, or use of feedback from people who have accessed your services to improve provision.

Successful applicants will be able to demonstrate a clear understanding of independent advocacy, strong ability to manage an advocacy service independently, and knowledge of rights and associated legislation relevant to their client group. They will ideally hold an advocacy quality mark or work to an established framework, e.g. [the advocacy charter](#) (England and Wales) or [Independent Advocacy Principles, Standards & Code of Best Practice](#) (Scotland), and advocates should be appropriately qualified, trained and supervised. Organisations will have strong local connections and partnerships, with both the statutory and voluntary sectors.

Although group models of advocacy can be supported under the programme, we will ask applicants to demonstrate evidence of outcomes for individuals. These outcomes should be in line with those expected of an independent advocacy service e.g. increased choice and control, access to rights and entitlements. Outcomes should include short, medium and longer term impact, with the latter potentially including wider changes in the community. Organisations should be working with established and embedded monitoring and evaluation tools that are suitable to the needs of their client group.

Examples of short term outcomes could include: the immediate issue is resolved or a crisis is averted, e.g. a person retained their tenancy agreement, a care provider withdrew notice, the person received appropriate help from another agency. Medium term outcomes could include: the person is more confident in advocating for themselves, they have a better understanding of their rights and responsibilities e.g. as a tenant, they are aware of how to approach other agencies as needed. Longer term outcomes could include: the person experiences increased inclusion in their community and is more able to live a broader life in accordance with their own choices e.g. employment, activities in their local area, relationships.

NB The focus of this programme is specifically on advocacy rather than advice services or befriending/peer support groups.

The key objectives of the fund are:

- To support organisations to provide high-quality non-statutory independent advocacy, either through continuing existing successful work or introducing new or enhanced provision
- To bring about positive outcomes for people with learning disabilities and/or autistic people in the short, medium and longer term
- To convene a network of grant holders and support these organisations to bring about wider change in their local areas
- To gather outcomes evidence to demonstrate the impact of the independent advocacy sector

What you can apply for

- In total we have **£1.75m of grant funding available**
- Applicants can apply for grants of **up to £180,000**
- The programme will provide funding for **up to 3 years** (we would expect grant holders to request funding over 3 years unless there is a clear and convincing rationale for short term funding)
- **Grants will be made to individual organisations.** Grant holders will have responsibility for service delivery and reporting on the grant

Who can apply for a grant?

- Organisations must have an annual income of under £3m
- Organisations must be working in England, Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland
- We want to fund established organisations (by this we mean at least 18 months old and have published their first set of annual accounts) that have a track record. We are looking for applicants that have the necessary expertise and are well placed to deliver this work
- We primarily fund registered charities but are willing to make grants to other types of not for profit organisations, such as Community Interest Companies (CICs) or constituted community groups
- We are looking for organisations that are willing to engage with us as a funder and the other organisations funded through this programme to share knowledge and learning about best practice
- Organisations must have experience of delivering independent advocacy for people with learning disabilities and/or autistic people
- Organisations with an application currently pending under another Henry Smith Charity grant programme are unable to apply, but current grant holders can apply
- Organisations must not be holding more than 12 months' running costs in reserves (we define this as net current assets plus any investments)
- Your request per year should not equal more than 50% of your current income

Application process and Expression of interest

Expression of interest

If your work meets the criteria for the programme set out above then we would encourage you to submit an expression of interest. The key questions for expressions of interest are listed below. We are also requesting some additional information about your organisation status, finances and policies. The full form for submitting an expression of interest can be found on our website (www.henrysmithcharity.org.uk/strategic-grants-advocacy-for-pwld-grant-programme-overview)

Key Questions

1. Give a brief description of your organisation. (300 words)

2. Who is your work designed to support and what are their needs? (500 words)

Please describe:

- Local context e.g. numbers of people with learning disabilities and/or autistic people in the area and services available to them
 - Information on the needs of people accessing your service and the challenges they face
 - Any gaps in provision that your service fills, or that the work you are proposing will fill
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3. What are you seeking funding for? (200 words)

Please briefly describe:

- The types of advocacy provided and the types of issues you provide support around.
 - Typical length of support and frequency of engagement
 - Any changes to service delivery that would be enabled by this funding e.g. increase in beneficiary numbers or length of support available
 - Who delivers the service(s)
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4. Please describe how you ensure that the advocacy services you provide are of a high standard. (500 words)

This should include:

- Any involvement of people with lived experience in your organisation or service design
- Any partnership working or relationships with key local stakeholders
- The type of outcomes you support your service users to work towards

- Any quality marks, accreditations or frameworks you hold or use to support your service delivery
- Any training or qualifications held by your advocates.

Bear in mind that providing concise information will be of benefit at this stage. Expressions of interest will be considered on their individual merit, based on how well they meet the programme objectives.

Application process

- The deadline for expressions of interest is the 15 November 2021
- Shortlisted applicants will be asked to complete a more detailed application and will be visited by a member of The Henry Smith Charity team. Due to the Coronavirus pandemic, visits are currently taking place virtually
- We cannot fund all expressions of interest that meet the criteria. Expressions of interest will be considered on their individual merit against the aims of the programme and the criteria above
- Final decisions will be made in March 2022. All grantees will be expected to begin service delivery with 6 months of this date
- If you would like to discuss an application with us in more detail please contact:
administration@henrysmithcharity.org.uk
- Expressions of interest should be submitted via our website

Evaluation and support

As well as making grants, we will be working with a partner organisation to evaluate the programme and to support grant holders both individually and as a collective, to bring about change in their local areas and in the sector.