



Mental Health and Physical Activity Toolkit

Guide 10:
Funding and
sustainability





About this guide

We've put together this guide to help you find funding for physical activity projects aimed at people experiencing mental health problems. We've also included tips to make your projects and activities successful and sustainable.

Who is this guide for?

Anyone working or volunteering in sport, physical activity or mental health.

If you have little to no experience of funding, start by taking a look at the resources listed in our [tools and support](#) section.

What does this guide cover?

Click on the headings below to go straight to the information you're looking for.

03 Types of funding

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Types of funding

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Types of funding

There are two types of funding: unrestricted and restricted.

Unrestricted funding

Unrestricted funding can be used for any purpose. There are no, or very minor, restrictions on how you can use the money. Organisations usually use unrestricted funds for operating costs or for a specific project.

Unrestricted funding includes:

- Trading (income raised from charging for services)
- Donations, fundraising and crowdfunding
- Sponsorship and corporate funding.

Trading

When you charge a fee for your physical activity services, you can offset your costs. This means any profits you make can then be reinvested into your project.

Here are some of the ways you can raise money from trading:

- **Charge for sessions.** This will help to make your project more sustainable in the long term. For example, Mind's [Get Set to Go](#) physical activity programmes found participants felt paying £3-5 per session was reasonable. Other Get Set to Go programmes used a phased approach. They started offering sessions for free, moved on to subsidised sessions before charging a fee that covered the full costs. Some programmes provided bursary schemes for people in financial hardship.
- **Work with personal health budgets.** These are an amount of money to support a person's health and wellbeing needs. How

someone spends their budget will be planned and agreed between the person and their local NHS team and written into a 'support plan' (watch this [NHS video](#) for more information). The [Get Yourself Active webpage](#) has information about how you can support people to use their personal budget to help them get active.

- **Provide consultancy services and support.** If you're a physical activities provider, you could offer local businesses in-house sports days or active team-building events. If you're a mental health service, you could review their mental health policies and procedures or deliver training.
- **Rent out your space.** You could offer your venue and facilities to other organisations when you're not using them.

Donations, fundraising and crowdfunding

- **Donations.** Local people and businesses may donate money to support your project. To encourage donations, you'll need to demonstrate the positive impact your work has on people's lives (see [Guide 7: Measuring the impact of your physical activity and mental health service](#)).
- **Fundraising activities and challenges.** Organising and taking part in events, such as [Lancashire Mind's Mental Elf Fun Run](#), can be a great way to raise money and awareness of your project in the local community.
- **Crowdfunding.** This involves raising small amounts of money from a large number of people, usually through a website. In return, the people who invest receive rewards or incentives, such as gifts or free or discounted access to the services.

Case study

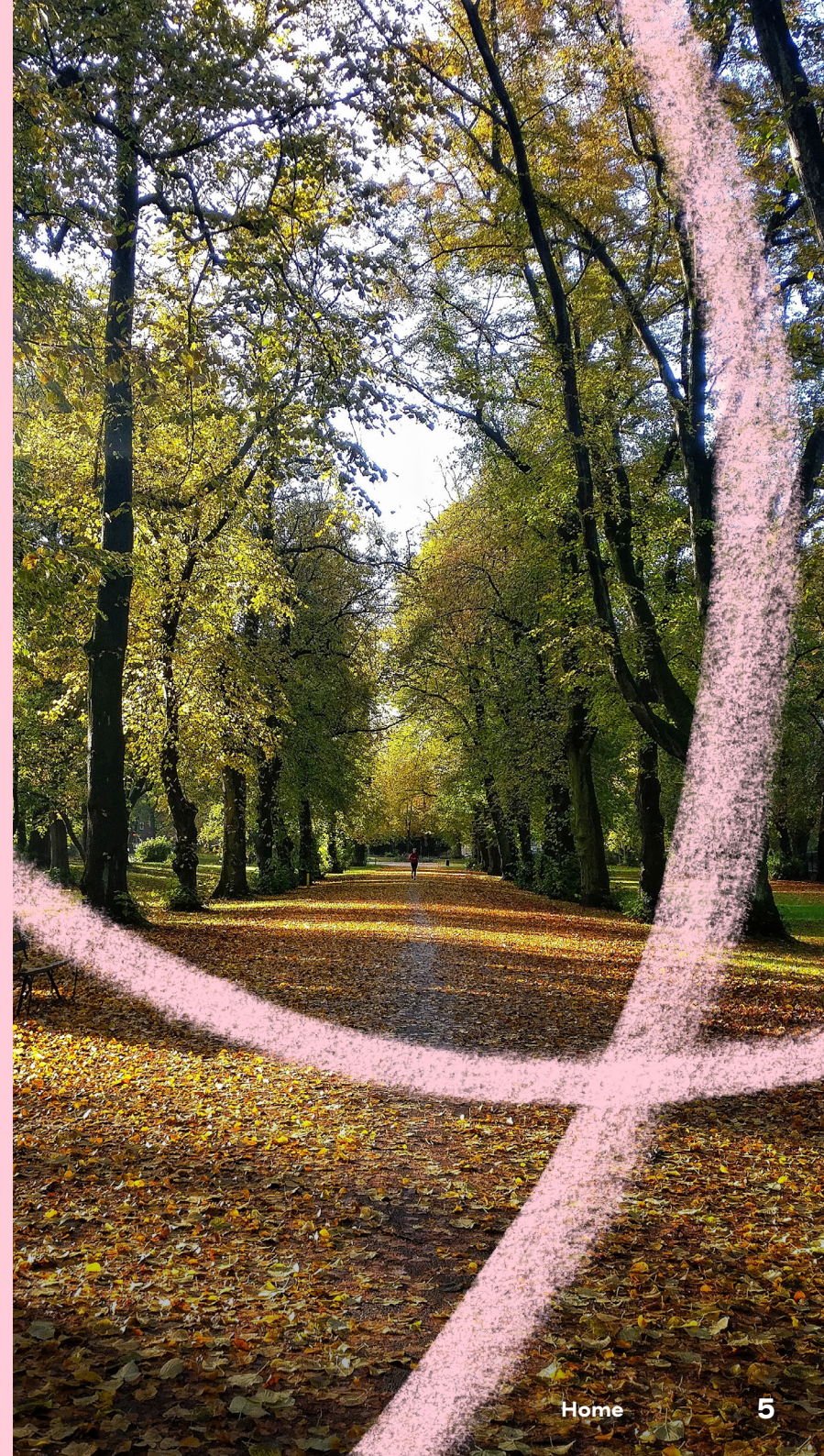
Lancashire Mind's Mental Elf 5k fun run

Every Christmas, Lancashire Mind hosts a Mental Elf fun run. Open to people of all fitness levels, participants can run, skip, hop or jog their way across the finish line. The event raises funding through sign-ups, sponsorship and sales of branded sweatshirts.

For Mental Elf 2020, Lancashire Mind moved the event online. Participants took part in a range of activities including running, walking, cycling, outdoor swimming, horseback and even a danceathon to travel the distance from Lancashire to Santa's home in Lapland. The virtual challenge not only tripled the amount raised in 2019 but nearly doubled the figure raised across the event's seven-year history.

Their top tips for planning fundraising events:

- Establish partnerships with local organisations. Some organisations may be in a position to sponsor an element of your event, whilst others may be able to make a product donation or give their time or skills.
- Make sure all your documents are well organised and easy to understand. Then if the event lead isn't around, someone else can easily pick up the work.
- Have fun with it. Planning this kind of event can be stressful. Make sure it's a positive experience for your staff and volunteers by including some fun activities for everyone involved.



Unrestricted funding (continued)

Sponsorship and corporate fundraising

Local businesses may sponsor your project or host corporate fundraising events for you. To find people and organisations that might be interested, make a list of local businesses and research their values, corporate social responsibility (CSR) commitment and any charity fundraising they've done in the past. You may find there are businesses in your area looking for opportunities to fund local programmes.

In return for their support, you could offer free consultancy services (see [Trading](#) above).

Top tips:

- Research the organisation to understand the nature of their work, previous partnerships and charity work along with positive and negative press stories.
- Create a shopping list of opportunities that can be funded. For example, £100 pays for 15 get active at home packs, £1,000 pays for 12 people to access a 12 week physical activity programme.

Restricted funding

Restricted funding can only be used for activities you've agreed with the funder and there are specific limits and restrictions on how the funding can be used. Most funding will have time limits and need to be spent by a specified date. Occasionally funding will be 'permanent' and can be used whenever you want.

Restricted funding includes:

- Local commissioning contracts
- Grants (see [Finding funding and grants](#)).

Local commissioning contracts

When we talk about 'commissioning', we mean the process used to plan, purchase and monitor health and care services¹. Local organisations, such as clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) and local authorities (councils), commission organisations to provide health and care services.

When you're looking for funding for your project, consider local commissioning opportunities – particularly given the proven mental health benefits of being physically active (see [Guide 2: The relationship between physical activity and mental health](#)).

¹ The Kings Fund (2019). [What is commissioning and how is it changing?](#)

Tools and support

- The [Chartered Institute of Fundraising](#) – information, [events and training](#) about fundraising, and a [YouTube channel](#)
- The [Fundraising Regulator](#) – advice on fundraising best practice
- NCVO’s [Fundraising methods webpage](#) – information, guidance and good practice examples on different types of fundraising
- [Just Giving](#) – fundraising [resources](#) and [case studies](#)
- Sport England’s [Other ways to generate funding webpage](#) – covers the different types of funding available to local services
- [Sport England’s project with three local authorities](#) – looked at local commissioning and the contribution sport and physical activity services can make
- Club Matter’s [Generating income webpage](#) – guidance on how clubs can source additional income as well as make it more sustainable
- [Sported’s membership](#) – join their free network and get monthly bulletins with funding opportunities, as well as support from the Sported team
- [Participate](#) – supports people and organisations to develop and grow their ideas into sustainable projects and enterprises.





Finding funding and grants

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Finding funding and grants

With so many different types of funding and grants available, it can be hard to know where to start. This section will help you find a funding opportunity that's right for you.

Funding may be specific to a local area or region, or available nationally. Websites that can help you identify pots of funding and grants for a range of categories and areas include: [Grants Online](#), [Lottery Good Causes](#) and [London Sport Funding Search Tool](#) (this is nationwide, not just London).

Below is a list of funders with grants open to:

- voluntary or community groups and organisations, such as sports and community clubs
- not-for-profit organisations
- registered charities
- community interest companies (CICs).

Funder	Grants available
Sport England	Sport England provides a range of grants that are open at any one time. Visit their funding page for more information.
The National Lottery	Community Fund – £300 to £10,000 Community Fund – over £10,000
Comic Relief	Comic Relief provides a range of grants that are open throughout the year. Visit their funding opportunities page for more information.





Applying for funding – tips and tools

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Applying for funding – tips and tools

Applying for funding can be a competitive business. It's time-consuming too. Here are some tools and tips to help you.

Checklist: Before applying for funding

Don't rush into writing an application. First make sure you're eligible for the funding and you have all the information and evidence you need. This checklist will help you with this.

Question	Your response
Your answers to questions 1-5 can be used for multiple funding applications.	
1. Why are you applying for funding?	
2. What is the challenge or need you're trying to address with your project?	
3. What are you going to deliver to overcome this challenge?	
4. What resources do you need to make this happen (financial and non-financial)?	
5. What outcomes are you trying to achieve?	

Question	Your response
Questions 6-8 are specific to each funding application	
6. Are your outcomes the same as the funder's?	
7. Are you eligible for the funding? Check the application guidance to make sure that you/your organisation can apply.	
8. Are you clear on the funder's objectives? Read the funding guidance and make sure you know what they're looking for.	

Top tips for writing an effective funding application

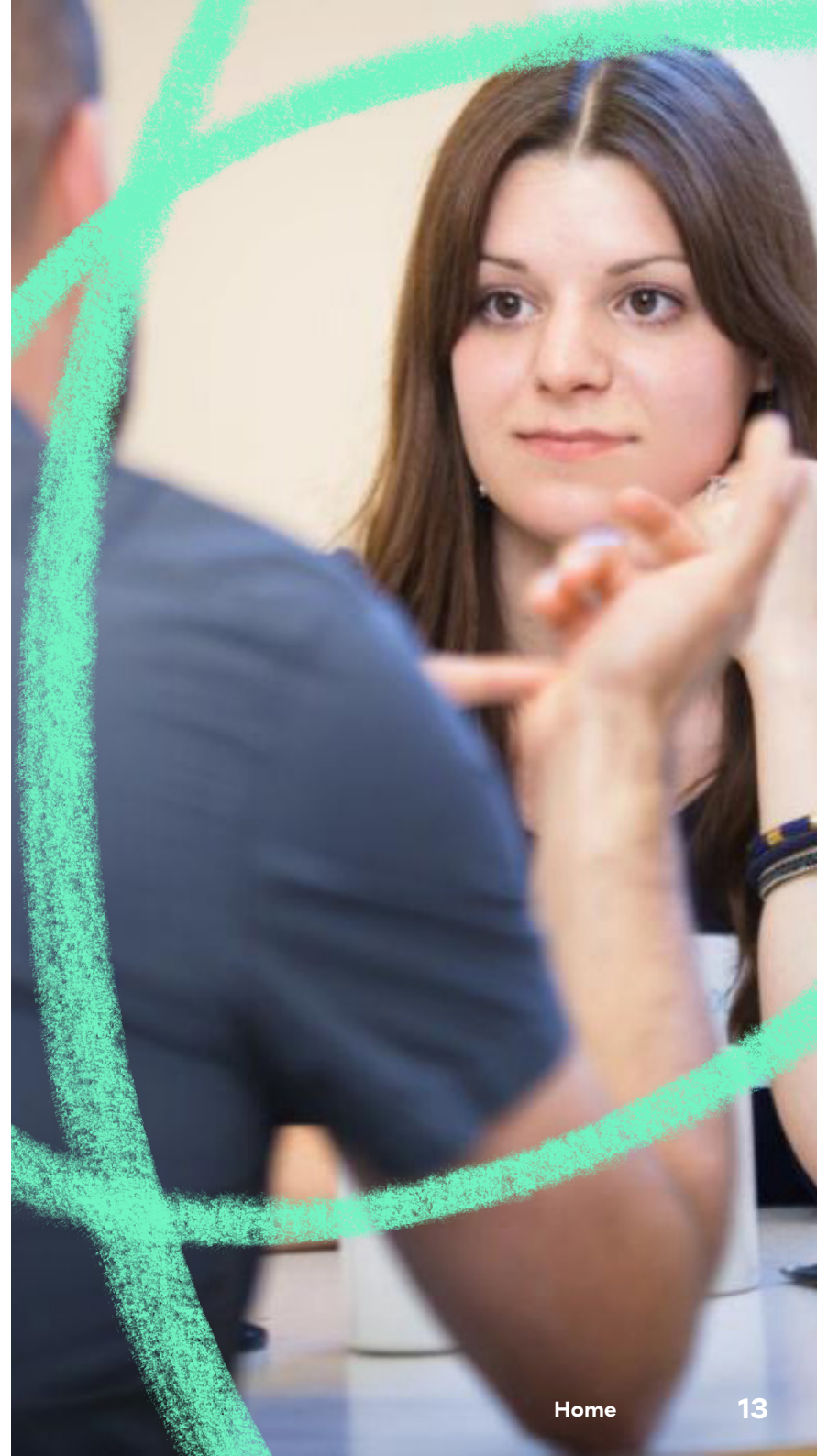
There are three key ingredients to a good application. You'll need to:

1. Give evidence why is your project needed?
2. Explain your 'outputs' what exactly will you deliver?
3. Demonstrate your 'outcomes' what impact will your project have?

1. Give evidence

A successful application will demonstrate why the project is needed and the challenges it will address (see step 2 in the [Checklist: Before applying for funding](#)). You can do this in the following ways:

- If you're sourcing funding for a project that is already up and running, give evidence of the impact it has had on people's lives (see [Guide 7: Measuring the impact of a physical activity and mental health service](#)). If the project is new, the funders may want to see evidence that you have talked to people who will benefit. Include quotes from potential participants, personal stories, survey findings and insight from interviews or group discussions in your application.
- Support this evidence with local, regional and national data (see [data sources](#)).
- Showcase how your activity may help with some of the key challenges in the local area, such as mental health, physical health, crime, poverty and homelessness.
- Demonstrate how you have consulted and involved people with lived experience of mental health problems in the design and development of your project (see [Guide 4: Making physical activities inclusive to people experiencing mental health problems](#)).



Data sources

Source	Type of data
2011 census data	A range of demographic and socio-economic information. The findings from the next census will be released in 2022.
Mental Health and Wellbeing Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) profile	Data on a range of mental health metrics including prevalence, risk and care provision. For similar information on Scotland, see the ScotPHO Profiles Tool . For Wales, go to the National Survey for Wales .
Mind's statistics webpage	Key statistics about mental health problems.
Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government's Indices of Deprivation tool	Data on deprivation rates at a local level in England. For similar information on Scotland, see Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation . For Wales, go to the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation .
Office for National Statistics (ONS)	Local data including: average income , personal wellbeing and suicide registrations .
Sport England's data page	A range of tools and statistics such as: Active Lives , Active places and Local Area Insights . Sport England has also published a report highlighting the social and economic value of community sport and physical activity .

2. Explain your 'outputs'

When you apply for funding, you need to showcase what you plan to deliver – and how this will address the need and the challenges you've identified. Use this tool to help.

Question	Considerations	Your response
What activities will you deliver?	Think about why you've picked these activities.	
Who will the activities be targeted at?	Are you aiming your project at a specific audience (for example, a particular age group or community)?	
Who is going to deliver these activities?	Think about why they are best placed to deliver these activities. Do they have mental health expertise or have they completed mental health training?	
Where will the project be located?	Why is it located there (for example, are there high rates of mental health problems or lack of mental health support in the area)?	
When is the project due to start and finish?	Or will it be ongoing?	

Question	Considerations	Your response
How often will the activities occur?	Weekly, fortnightly or monthly? Why have you chosen this frequency?	
Who will be involved in the project?	Partners, people with lived experience of mental health problems? How often will they be involved?	

Assume the person reading your application knows nothing about your project. Explain your ideas clearly. Avoid jargon and acronyms. If you do use any acronyms, spell them out the first time you use them. This helps make the application more accessible.

3. Demonstrate your ‘outcomes’

Your application needs to clearly explain the proposed outcomes of your project. Outcomes are the changes and effects that have happened as a result of your project, programme or activity. Use this tool to help you show these outcomes and the impact your project will have. Relate these back to the need and challenges you talked about in section 1 [‘Give evidence’](#).

Question	Considerations	Your response
What are your anticipated outcomes for the project?	Include mental health, physical health, social and community outcomes. Also consider indirect impacts on participants’ family, friends, support workers or carers. It’s important to be realistic with the outcomes you want to achieve. Funders will be put off if they can see your outcomes aren’t feasible.	
Do these outcomes relate to the aims and outcomes the funder wants to achieve?	This will be highlighted in their funding or application guidance.	
How are you going to measure these outcomes?	For help on how to do this, see Guide 7: Measuring the impact of a physical activity and mental health service .	



Tips to make your project sustainable

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Tips to make your project sustainable

To give your project the best chance of being successful long term, you'll need to think about how to make it sustainable from the start. Focusing on sustainability will also help you with funding, as most funders will ask about this in their application.

Top tips

- **Think about your long-term vision.** Write down where you want the project to be in six months, a year and a few years. This will help you identify what you need to achieve your long-term goals.
- **Involve people with lived experience of mental health problems in the design and development of your project.** This is a key element of creating a successful project (see [Guide 3: Involving people with lived experience of mental health problems in the design and delivery of your work](#)).
- **Establish partnerships with organisations that can support you.** Partners may be able to promote your project, and provide expertise, knowledge and in-kind support (for example, reduced rates on venue hire, equipment and coaches or instructors).
- **Diversify your income.** Think about the different ways you could finance your project (see [Types of funding](#)). For example, you could:
 - charge for activities
 - create a crowdfunding or fundraising webpage
 - host fundraising events and challenges (walks, running events, bucket collections)
 - apply to local businesses to be their charity of the year or approach them for pro bono support for your project
 - look into sponsorship opportunities.
- **Work with volunteers.** Volunteers can be a great asset to your project. Programmes such as [parkrun](#) showcase the power of volunteers and the benefits they bring. Remember, volunteers are giving their time free and should not be exploited or expected to do the same work as paid staff. It's essential to set expectations and boundaries with volunteers, while always valuing and respecting their contribution to your project and ensuring you provide them with ongoing training and support (see [Guide 6: Engaging volunteers in a physical activity and mental health service](#)).



Have a question or would like more information?

You can find more information at mind.org.uk.
Or why not take a look at the other guides in our
[Mental Health and Physical Activity Toolkit](#).

If you have any further questions, please contact
our Physical Activity team at sport@mind.org.uk.

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