

Comic Relief: Tech for Good 2021

Key questions and FAQs from applicants

Please also see <https://www.comicrelief.com/funding/funding-opportunities/tech-for-good-build-2021> or contact fundinginfo@comicrelief.com if you have any further questions.

What do you mean by 'Tech for Good'?

Here we are looking for projects creating, developing, adapting or improving a digital product or service. These will enable their service users to access the help they need in a way which works best for them. We will also fund projects which look at internal interventions that will change service delivery and the experiences and outcomes for target beneficiaries/social issue addressed.

It is not about digital inclusion, capacity, equipment or skills but the devices, tools and systems which enable people to access support or make progress in their lives.

Is this funding specifically to help me build an emergency digital response to respond to the third COVID-19 lockdown?

No. This funding will be disbursed in June so think carefully about what you're applying for and how it might stay useful in a shifting context. As a reminder, if you're at an early stage now, your product or tool will most likely not be ready to roll out or launch until early 2022.

Of course, we expect proposals to be influenced by learnings from the crisis response, the need for more digital services, and the increased demand caused by COVID-19.

Can you apply if you are based outside the UK?

This is a UK funding programme. Your organisation, work and target beneficiaries must be based in the UK. You will also be expected to work intensively on your digital project throughout the funding. This means it is unlikely to be viable if you are based outside the UK. We cannot fund projects working outside of the UK at this point.

We have already completed the CAST Explore programme, or the Catalyst Discovery fund, can we still apply?

Yes. The user research and scoping you will have been supported to complete as part of those programmes will be useful in your application to Build, where you will build on any next steps identified. However, it is in no way a requirement to have attended these programmes.

How many of the core issue areas outlined in the initiative page do we need to link to?

Comic Relief's four strategic themes are [Children Survive and Thrive](#), [Global Mental Health Matters](#), [Fighting for Gender Justice](#), or [A Safe Place to Be](#). We would also welcome applications addressing challenges related to disability and inclusion outside of the themes specified above, as we understand the critical potential of digital technology in tackling this.

Your application should clearly outline how your work will link to one or more of these themes. Stronger applications are likely to come from organisations with a track record of working and delivering in your chosen theme/s, with an understanding of your sector.

Do projects need to be user facing or can it be digital infrastructure behind the scenes that supports delivery?

We welcome applications which seek to use data in new ways to design and target services from an internal systems perspective. For example, this could relate to CRM systems or dashboards which may aggregate, analyse and visualise monitoring data that help you understand demand and how users are accessing your service. These types of applications need to make a strong case as to how their internal systems development will potentially change service delivery and (potentially) the experiences and outcomes for target beneficiaries/social issue addressed.

If we don't have a digital partner, how much should we budget for the digital partner?

We recognise and understand that for those without digital partners at this stage, the next phase of the budget will need to be developed in further detail on the basis of work done in discovery and so the rest of your budget can reflect this and be less well defined and detailed, with the cost of the digital partner estimated.

Costs spent on digital partners will vary across organisations and projects, but in general one to two thirds of your budget should be spent on agencies if you are contracting external support.

Can some of the funding be for the salary of staff, including staff other than the project lead?

Yes, applicants can include budget for all relevant staff members' time on this project as needed, for example senior stakeholders / sponsors (this is strongly encouraged), or staff involved in the development of policies e.g. digital safeguarding.

Please note it is important to budget adequately against staff time: for example, the project lead will be expected to engage with the digital support on offer, play back and share learnings at regular check in points, and work closely with the contracted digital partner to define and develop their digital solution. Previous social tech project leads have committed from 1.5 – 2 days to the programme.

Can the funding be used as part of a re-distribution of equipment programme from people who no longer need equipment to people who are isolated, or for other work to support digital inclusion?

The Tech for Good fund is not about supporting digital inclusion. Here we are looking for projects creating, developing, adapting or improving a digital product or service which enable their service users to access the help they need in a way which works best for them, and/ or those which look at internal interventions that will change service delivery and the experiences and outcomes for target beneficiaries/social issue addressed.

While in the current context improving digital inclusion is incredibly crucial, this area is not a current focus for the Tech for Good programme. There are many digital inclusion-specific funds and opportunities currently available.

Do you have any criteria for a minimum or maximum turnover?

For this Tech for Good initiative, the minimum annual turnover is £75k whilst the maximum annual turnover is £10million.

What do you mean by 'we will not fund internal monitoring and evaluation'?

Here we mean we are not going to fund organisations to develop an internal system for collecting monitoring data and evaluating their programmes, such as databases and CRM systems. There are also many platforms supporting organisations to collect data on their participants and outcomes which we are not looking to fund directly.

However, we welcome applications which incorporate monitoring and evaluation, as well as those which are designed to support beneficiaries directly. For example, many platforms/products/sites include metrics for success and this will include monitoring and evaluating progress. Furthermore, this might be key to their outcomes and success. Where they don't, we will also recommend projects include this and provide expertise over the duration of the funding. We will support you to give consideration to how you will monitor progress throughout the project and consider what success will look like at certain points along the journey.

As above, we also welcome applications which seek to use data in new ways to design and target interventions and this may relate to CRM systems or dashboards which aggregate, analyse and visualise monitoring data. These types of applications need to make a strong case as to how their internal systems development will change service delivery and (potentially) the experiences and outcomes for target beneficiaries/social issue addressed.

If we have a digital partner, who should own the IP (intellectual property) - us or the digital partner?

Please use this [conversation guide](#) to identify some of the key issues to discuss with your digital partner around intellectual property and data. Additionally, [this article](#) is a useful guide of what to look for when choosing a tech partner.

We do not have a view on who should own the IP - the not for profit organisation or a digital partner. It is up to the applicant to come to an agreement with any partner about the ownership of the intellectual property created through the grant - including for any code, data, coding and technology. This does not necessarily have to be in place at the point of application but we would provide some support and recommend this is agreed as soon as possible at the start of the grant.

We have other developments planned but they will not be ready when we submit an application - will this affect our chances?

If you are shortlisted, you will be invited to an assessment in March 2021, during which you can provide or explain any further or new developments. We would not expect you to put these on hold while you await the outcome of your application. For those who are successful, the goals for the funded period of development will be set by yourselves (with expert mentors) as part of the support provided and these should be relevant to your stage of development at that time.

Are there any restrictions on attracting other funding?

No there are not, but we will expect our funds to be used for a distinct piece of development work.

Can we still apply if we have previously received a Comic Relief social tech grant?

We will accept applications from previous Comic Relief social tech funded partners for a new project.

Previous Comic Relief Tech for Good or Tech vs Abuse funded partners can apply for funding for a previously funded project, if they can show that the new grant would build-on or advance what has

been developed so far - for example to allow scaling, advancing or considerable further development of their digital product or service.

Applicants in this case will have to provide clear evidence of need or demand for further development, based on user testing.

This funding call remains a competitive process and all applications received will be equally scrutinised and judged on their merits.

We are a current Comic Relief funded partner under another initiative - can we still apply?

Absolutely! We welcome applications from current funded partners as well as those who have previously or never received Comic Relief funding.

If we receive Tech for Good funding, would this prevent us from applying for other Comic Relief or Paul Hamlyn Foundation funding?

Tech for Good funding will not prevent you from receiving other funding from either Comic Relief or Paul Hamlyn Foundation. However we would need to assess your organisation's capacity to manage more than one grant as part of our assessment processes.

Are initiatives which improve capacity for Tech for Good work in organisations (user research, hack days) eligible on their own?

Unfortunately no. These activities must form part of a wider proposal and fit into a wider digital development piece.

What is the level of expertise provided by the support partner during the programme?

Projects typically need coaching around their strategy, theory of change, methodology, user research, prototyping and user journey mapping. However, we will ensure that we understand more specific support needs from organisations participating prior to launch, and tailor the support provided.

What are the chances of success and how many applications do you expect?

In 2019 we received 89 applications and funded 8, and in 2018 we received 119 and funded 13 - this year's applications are very hard to anticipate due to the shift in the digital landscape as well as the recent increase in early stage discovery funding for the sector.

We hope the increased knowledge and pre-application support available will help applicants decide on the right option for them and that those that we do receive are more relevant.

What should the video include? Do you have further guidance?

This is the key way for you to pitch your proposal for funding. Consider it as a video application rather than just a video supporting a written application.

The video should be no more than 3 mins long. It should explain your proposal and its strengths, and highlight the reasons why it should be supported. Remember we are looking to develop digital products and services leading to better, bigger and more ambitious services to your beneficiaries and service users.

We do not intend to specify exactly how the video should look but areas to be covered could include:

- Introducing your team, who will work on the project. Remember that the project lead will need to be engaged in the wrap-around programme of support, taking part in programme milestones and sharing learning regularly. Ideal leads will have a strong understanding of

your organisation's services, and be able to influence decision making e.g. changing the way a service is delivered.

- Defining the social problem, issue or challenge you are addressing, and who will benefit from your approach
- An overview of what early stage scoping and concept testing work you have done so far, including with users, and key take-aways and insights from this work. There will still be room and space to build on this work in the first few months of Tech for Good if you're successful, so please don't worry if these are not completely validated. You can also tell us about anything you don't know and need to research too.
- Being clear why you think a tech or digital solution is the best way forward for dealing with the identified problem, and why it would be meaningful in your organisation. We are looking for evidence that you're thinking about the best solution to the needs identified, whether that's developing something new, or re-using an off the shelf product.
- Demonstrating what you think the product or service might look like by the end of the 9 month funding timeline, taking into account any existing user research and analysis you have undertaken. (We know digital development takes time, so please feel free to be realistic in your assessment of this.)
- Tell us about how this would fit into your wider areas of work at your organisation.
- Tell us about any market scanning you've done in this area and what your service would/ does add to what's available.

Please remember that you must have and retain the written permission of anyone who appears in your video.

We will be judging the video on its content rather than the professionalism of its presentation. However, this is your main opportunity to communicate your proposal. Please consider the different opportunities provided by video to get across your proposal including animation, words on images, audio testimonies, still images, etc.

If you have accessibility requirements and you would prefer not to create/ submit a video, please upload a PDF attachment, or a link to an audio file, covering the above points

You should not attach the actual video file, but a link to youtube or another online platform where your video can be accessed.

Please note that your submitted video will remain private, and we will always ask for your permission to share it. You can upload it to Youtube as 'Unlisted' to keep it private to those with the link, DropBox, Google Drive, or any online storage platform, as long as it is accessible to those with a link.

We want to make a professional video for the programme but do not have the resources or partners in place yet - what would you advise?

Please rest assured we are not judging your video based on the professionalism (or number of red noses included). The intention is for us to get a sense of the team involved and to bring the idea to life a little more, beyond what is written in a summary - it's our chance to 'meet you' and an opportunity to showcase your work in development.

Which financial template should we complete? Should we use the 'project with partners' or 'project without partners' - there is a lot of information our Tech partner can't provide here (see the bottom of this page <https://www.comicrelief.com/funding/application-process>)

If you are applying as **one** organisation **with or without** a digital development / tech partner, please use the 'financial template for projects without partners'. The 'with partner' templates are designed for our larger and international grants which have complex partnership arrangements with other not-for-profit organisations. Furthermore, we do not need to assess the financial health of the tech partner. If you have a tech partner with a contractual or commissioning relationship, then only the lead not for profit organisation (which must meet the [eligibility criteria](#) and a list of organisation types are listed below) needs to complete the financial template (project without partners).

If you are applying as a partnership or consortium between multiple not-for-profits involved in service delivery, please use the template for partners.

Would you consider this idea for...? Can you help us identify a tech partner?

We will fund work at any stage of development. That said, we also expect you to have a little more than a good idea. We'd expect some user-centered research/user-testing to have been undertaken with clear evidence of need and demand (based on what people do/how they behave). These might help you understand more about this stage of development

<https://www.gov.uk/service-manual/agile-delivery/how-the-discovery-phase-works>

<https://www.gov.uk/service-manual/user-research>

Unfortunately we cannot help connect you with a tech partner at application stage, but if you do not have one our support partner CAST will support you to find a partner should your application be successful.

You can browse resources such as [Dovetail](#) to see a list of potential agencies, as well as review standard information including examples of pricing.

Once you identify potential partners, we would recommend that you use this [conversation guide](#) by CAST and NeonTribe to have a conversation with them about your plans.

Our project (an online information service for example) will take longer to complete than the funding available, would this be eligible?

We would not expect the work to end after the funding or necessarily be completed, but we are looking to fund organisations to make a significant digital step forward within the nine months of the funding. For those who are successful, the goals for the funded period of development will be set by yourselves (with expert mentors) as part of the start-up workshop. We expect all the projects we fund to continue beyond the life of the funding and that you will have started to think about sustainability. We will also be providing additional support on this as part of the kick off, get together days and dedicated mentoring provided as part of the funding.

Our work supports the charity sector to better use technology, is this eligible?

Tech for Good 2021 will prioritise services and products or any digital development which provides or leads to better services for beneficiaries. This is not primarily intended for those infrastructure and consultancy organisations supporting charities to improve their capacity to use technology. However, there are grey areas on this, particularly if the project is strongly focused on a specific community/locality.

How flexible are you on the video being 3 minutes long? Will you consider 3 mins 30?

We're being strict on a maximum of 3 minutes to make it fair to all applicants and will stop watching if a submitted video exceeds this length.

What type of support could we access? Could this cover developer costs?

Your funding should cover any developer time you need, supplied by a digital or commissioning partner.

Aside from this, we are working with a support partner to provide an intensive package of support for the cohort of funded partners, which will include 1-1 support, collaborative workshops with your peers on the programme, online learning sessions.

You will have access to a diversity of experts in digital design and development to help you with your work, as well as access to an interactive learning and development plan tailored for you that links to relevant and flexible support.

Which organisation types are eligible?

- UK registered charities including those registered in NI, Scotland, Jersey, Guernsey and Isle of Man
- Companies limited by guarantee
- UK Charitable incorporated organisations (CIO)
- Housing associations
- Universities
- Community interest companies (CICs) limited by shares or guarantee
- Limited liability partnership (LLP)
- Co-operative society/friendly society
- UK constituted organisation or trust (ie, could be unregistered)

NB for any of the above which are not registered charities, governing documents must outline the organisation's social purpose, demonstrate that any profit or assets are used for this social purpose, and show that an asset lock is in place.

Organisations that can't apply include:

- Hospitals
- NHS Trusts
- Schools/colleges
- Statutory bodies inc Local authorities
- Non-registered organisations without constitution
- Profit-making organisations where profit goes to shareholders and no asset lock in place

Can I speak to you about my proposal?

If you have any questions about your application or how to apply please contact fundinginfo@comicrelief.com. Note that the deadline is Midday GMT, 12th February 2021 and we can continue to respond to any questions about submitting your application until this point.