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Glasgow Communities Fund: research with the Third Sector

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1. Background and methods

The Glasgow Communities Fund

The Glasgow Communities Fund (GCF) is a grant fund established by Glasgow City Council to support Third Sector activities and services in the city. The current fund is worth £47.7 million over 30 months¹, with grants covering the period from 1 October 2020 to 31 March 2023.

The aims of the fund, as set out in the 3 September 2020 report to the City Administration Committee, are to tackle poverty and inequality through:

- building the skills, capacity and resilience of individuals and communities, and
- supporting activities and services that will enable and empower communities to become involved in the social, economic and cultural life of the city.²

The GCF replaced the Integrated Grant Fund (IGF), following a commitment in the Council Strategic Plan 2017-2022 to “Review how we fund Third Sector and community groups to reflect a partnership approach and simplifying procedures”.³ The new fund was intended to allow a greater number of organisations to apply for funding, born out of concerns that the IGF was essentially ‘closed’ to new organisations. The closure of the IGF, which had run since 2010/11, was announced in 2017. However, IGF funding was extended beyond the 2015-2018 award period in 2018/19, 2019/20 and for six months of 2020/21 (prior to new GCF grants being made).

Timeline of the 2020 GCF

A number of stakeholder engagement events were held in March and April 2019, as part of the development of the new fund. These were attended by representatives of almost 300 Third Sector organisations in Glasgow. Approval of the overall aims, budget, and funding allocation to different geographic sectors (specifically, the decision that the budget would be allocated 30% to city wide services and 70% to the three geographic sub-sectors within Glasgow) was agreed at the City Administration Committee in August 2019.⁴

The GCF was opened to applications on 18 September 2019, with a closing date of 20 October (later extended to 25 October). However, of the 506 applications received, Council Officers identified 125 (25%) that were incomplete and/or submitted late. After initially rejecting these applications, the Council announced on 23 January 2020 that it was granting an extension to allow organisations to resubmit corrected applications by 31 January 2020. The deadline for funding decisions being made was also subsequently extended by six months (at a committee meeting on 12 March 2020), with awards based on a start date of 1 October 2020, rather than the original date of 1 April. As a result, IGF funding was extended for a further six months (as noted above).

Eligible applications were assessed by Council officials, and funding decisions agreed at the City Administration Committee and Sector Community Planning Partnerships in early September 2020, with

¹ £57.7 million was initially to be made available over a 36 period, but due to delays in assessing applications, £10 million was reallocated from this fund to provide 6 months additional support to projects funded through the Integrated Grant Fund.

² Accessed 8 September 2021 at <https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/councillorsandcommittees/viewDoc.asp?c=P62AFQDNDXDNDX2UZ3>

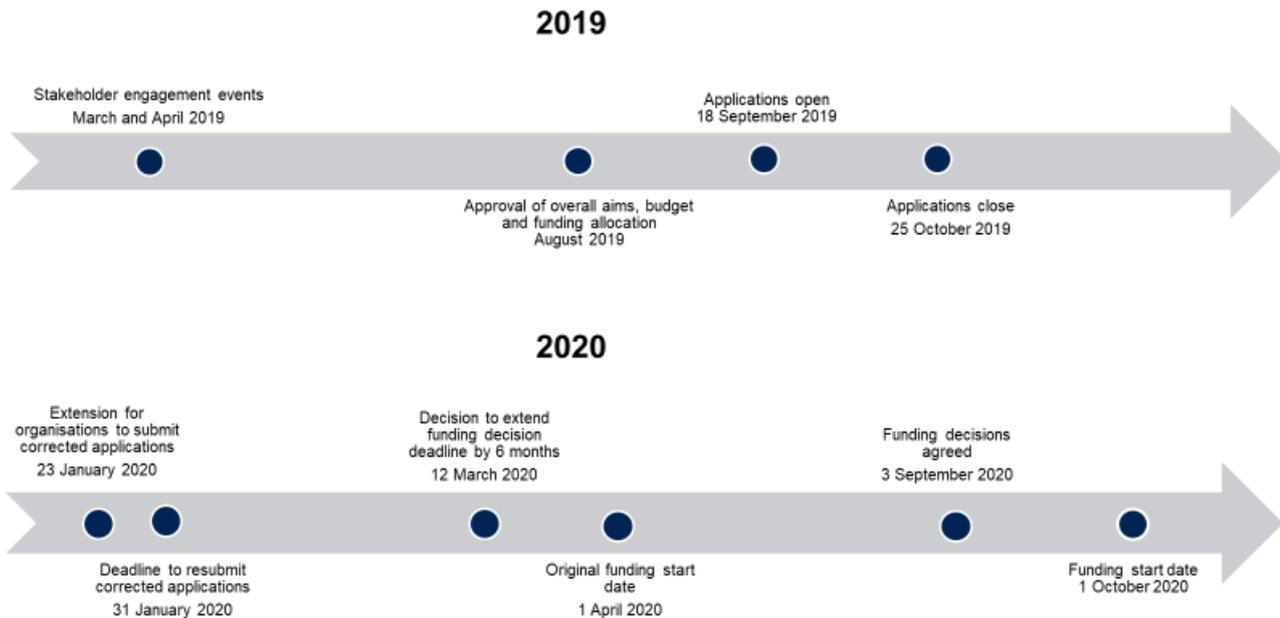
³ Accessed 8 September 2021 at <https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=40052&p=0>

⁴ Minutes and report accessed 8 September 2021 at

<https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/councillorsandcommittees/submissiondocuments.asp?submissionid=94449>

award letters and packs issued later that month. Successful applicants were asked to provide updated project budgets (in light of the fact that, as discussed below, all successful applicants were allocated only part of the money they had applied for) and delivery plans. They were also required to set out any changes required as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Figure 1.1 - GCF 2020 summary timeline



Applications received

Following the extension granted to organisations that had submitted incomplete or late applications, the Council received 506 applications, of which 487 were eligible and 19 applications were deemed ineligible. Five of the 487 eligible organisations subsequently withdrew their applications. Half (243) of eligible applications were from organisations who had not previously been in receipt of funding through the IGF for the period 2019-20. The vast majority of applications requested funding for the full 2020-23 period.

The total value requested across these applications greatly exceeded the £55.7 million budget for the GCF - applications were for a total of £135.5 million for the period 2020-23. As £10 million had already been reallocated from the GCF to cover the IGF extension from 1 April - 30 September 2020, the actual amount requested was close to 3 times the amount the Council had made available through the GCF.

Funding decisions

Applications were assessed by Council Officers, who scored applications against six areas - organisation/governance, project development, project delivery, project outcomes and impact, organisation and project finance, and sustainability - using information included in the application form and budget template. Each area was given a score of 0-5.

Of the 487 eligible applicants, 43% were considered in the city wide pot (which was allocated 30% of the total GCF budget) and 57% as being sector specific. The average weighted assessment score given to

city wide projects was higher than that given to applications for the three geographic sectors.⁵ In combination with the higher ratio of projects bidding to available funding for city wide projects, this meant that some organisations that were not funded in the city wide pot had higher scores than some applications that were funded in the three geographic sectors.

In light of the high volume of applications, and the fact that the total amount of money requested was higher than the budget the Council had allocated to the GCF, the Council took the decision that all projects recommended for funding would only be recommended for part-funding (i.e. that each successful applicant would only be offered part of the amount they had requested in their application form). The Council's rationale was that this would enable them to fund as wide a range of recommended projects as possible, within the available GCF budget.

In total:

- 258 organisations that submitted eligible applications (53% of all eligible applications) were granted funding. 224 organisations were not funded and five subsequently withdrew their applications.⁶
- 74 grants (36% of 208 applications) were made to organisations assessed under the city wide part of the GCF. 133 were not recommended for funding, and one organisation subsequently withdrew.
- 184 organisations (66% of 279 applications) were funded under the geographic sector allocation of the GCF (including 16 organisations that were funded in more than one of the three geographic sectors). 91 were not recommended for funding, and four organisations subsequently withdrew their applications.

In terms of the funding allocated to each of the three specific geographic sectors:

- 66 grants (73% of the 90 submitted) were made to organisations that covered the North East area (including organisations that covered the North East and another sector). 22 eligible applications were not recommended for funding, and 2 subsequently withdrew their applications.
- 64 grants (74% of the 87 submitted) were made to organisations that covered the North West area (including organisations that covered the North West and another sector). 22 eligible applications were not recommended for funding, and 1 subsequently withdrew their application.
- 70 grants (56% of the 125 submitted) were made to organisations that covered the South area (including organisations that covered the South and another sector). 53 eligible applications were not recommended for funding, and 2 subsequently withdrew their applications.⁷

In terms of the main client groups supported by projects funded through the GCF, across the 258 funded projects:

⁵ See details in report to the City Administration Committee, 3 September 2020, accessed 8 September 2021 at <https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/councillorsandcommittees/viewDoc.asp?c=P62AFQDNDXDNDX2UZ3>

⁶ Note that these figures, and those included in subsequent bullets, are based on data on applicants provided to Ipsos MORI by Glasgow City Council. 26 organisations that were unsuccessful in their GCF applications were subsequently allocated some funding by Glasgow City Council through the Transitional Support Fund.

⁷ Note that the number of grants made across sectors sums to more than the 258 organisations that received funding, as a number of organisations received funding from 2 sectors (e.g. North East and North West).

- 68 (56% of eligible applications) were projects classed as primarily supporting children and young people aged under 25 and/or families
- 52 (54% of eligible applications) were projects classed as primarily supporting 'Communities of Interest' (particular equalities groups, such as LGBTI+ people, disabled people, women, and people from a minority ethnic background)
- 19 (59% of eligible applications) were projects classed as primarily supporting adults of working-age.
- 17 (50% of eligible applications) were projects classed as primarily supporting vulnerable adults (such as those with addiction issues, affected by homelessness, or experiencing mental health issues)
- 11 (46% of eligible applications) were projects classed as primarily supporting older people
- The remaining 91 projects (51% of eligible applications) were not classed as targeting any particular sub-groups.

Rationale for this research

The roll out of the Glasgow Communities Fund has attracted considerable public controversy, with questions raised at Council and in the local media about both the process and outcomes of the Fund. In September 2020, the Council committed to reviewing the approach taken to the Fund so far, and in April 2021 it published a scoping paper setting out the terms of a review of the GCF.⁸ The twin aims of this review, as described in the scoping paper, are:

- To look back and identify the lessons learned from the approach taken through the development and introduction of the Fund in October 2020 and
- to look forward in order to provide recommendations, based on the learning and current context, for the next round of the Fund from April 2023.

The research that underpins this report is a key element of the review. It is intended to provide an independent account of the views of applicants and wider stakeholders in the Third Sector, and to complement ongoing work being conducted by both Glasgow City Council and the Social Recovery Task Force to inform the Council's recommendations about the future shape of Glasgow City Council funding.

Research objectives and questions

The main aims of this research reflect those of the review itself - to identify lessons learned, and to look forward to options for the next round of funding in 2023, based on the experiences and views of the Third Sector stakeholders who took part in this research. More specific research questions that informed the development of this research were:

- What elements of the GCF do applicants and Third Sector stakeholders think worked well (and should be replicated)?

⁸ Accessed 8 September 2021 at <https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/councillorsandcommittees/viewDoc.asp?c=P62AFQDNDXZ3NT81NT>

- What elements of the GCF worked less well – and how could these be improved in future funding rounds?
- What should be the purpose of a fund like the GCF? What kinds of services should it fund? What (if any) services should not be funded in this way – and how should they be funded instead?
- What should be the priorities for the next fund (in terms of types of services / beneficiaries / policy areas)?
 - Should the fund as a whole / elements within it be more tightly defined (e.g. ring-fencing of funds for specific services / service types)?
 - Should the fund be open to all organisations, or should it be limited in some way (e.g. only specific sectors, large vs. small organisations)?
 - Should there be a minimum / maximum grant size?
 - Should there be minimum standards for funded projects – e.g. in relation to equalities, inclusion, climate change, governance?
- What funding models would best help support a vibrant Third Sector and an effective partnership working relationship between the Third Sector and GCC? Are there examples of models that could be drawn on for future funding?
- How can the Council and elected members ensure they take a strategic approach to allocating resources to address inequalities and unmet need across the city? What would the key considerations be? What – if anything – would need to change compared with their current approach?
- How should the impact of GCF funding be monitored and evaluated?

Methods

The research took a mixed method approach, combining an online survey of the Third Sector in Glasgow and qualitative research to explore views in more depth. The qualitative research included a combination of focus groups and in-depth interviews with a mixture of successful applicants, unsuccessful applicants, and organisations who did not apply to the GCF. In total, 241 Third Sector respondents took part in the survey, and 55 representatives of Third Sector organisations took part in either a focus group or in-depth interview discussion.

Online survey

The online survey was developed by Ipsos MORI Scotland, in consultation with Glasgow City Council and representatives of Glasgow Third Sector Interface Network (GTSIN). It was open to be completed from Monday 28th June to Friday 6th August 2021. The survey was aimed at the Third Sector in Glasgow, including those who had not applied to the GCF, in order to gather as wide a range of views as possible about GCF and future funding options. Responses were anonymous - respondents were not asked for either their name or their organisation's name, in order to help ensure that they felt able to give honest responses.

Third Sector organisations could access the survey via two routes – an individual link, which was emailed by Ipsos MORI to those who had applied to the GCF using email addresses provided by Glasgow City Council, and an open link, details of which were disseminated by Glasgow City Council and GTSIN via their networks. The majority of responses to the survey (167 of 241) were generated via the individual links emailed by Ipsos MORI. Two survey reminders were circulated during the fieldwork period.

In total, 241 Third Sector respondents took part in the survey, including 51% (n = 124) who had received funding through the GCF, 34% (n = 81) who had applied but were not funded, and 10% (n = 25) who did not apply to the GCF. A further 5% (n = 11) were either unsure or preferred not to say whether they applied to or were funded through the GCF.

It is not possible to calculate a precise response rate for the survey, as we cannot rule out multiple responses from the same organisation. However, if we assume that organisations submitted only one response, then responses to the survey represent 41% of all applicants (209⁹ / 506), including 48% (124 / 258) of organisations who received funding through the GCF and 33% of those who applied but were not funded (81 / 248¹⁰).

Estimates of the number of organisations that comprise the wider Third Sector in Glasgow vary, but Glasgow Council for the Voluntary Sector (GCVS) estimate that there are over 3,000 charities, services, social enterprises and voluntary groups.¹¹ Non-applicants from the wider Third Sector are thus clearly extremely under-represented among survey respondents - findings from the survey on their views should be read with this in mind.

In terms of other characteristics of the organisations from which responses were received:

- Among respondents from organisations who had applied to the GCF, 33% had applied for under £100,000 in total, 39% for £100,000-£249,999, and 27% for £250,000 or more.
- 61% of respondents were from organisations that had previously received Integrated Grant Funding (a slightly higher proportion than across all applicants, where, as noted above, around half had previously been in receipt of IGF).
- 50% were from organisations that delivered city wide services, 18% from the North East Sector, 15% from the North West Sector, and 20% from the South Sector. This compares with 43% of all applicants who were assessed as city wide, 18% from the North East, 16% from the North West, and 26% from the South. In other words, city wide organisations were slightly over-represented and organisations from the South slightly under-represented in the survey sample.
- Most respondents were from organisations that operate in Glasgow only (71%, vs 29% from organisations that also have services in other parts of Scotland or the UK).

⁹ 124 respondents who had received funding + 81 respondents who had not received funding + 4 who said they had applied but did not say whether they were funded or not.

¹⁰ The figure of 248 is based on eligible applicants that were not funded (224) + ineligible applicants (19) + withdrawals (5), from the GCF data provided to Ipsos MORI by the council

¹¹ <http://www.gcvs.org.uk/about/glasgows-voluntary-sector/>

- In terms of income, 27% reported organisational incomes in Glasgow of under £100,000, 39% reported incomes between £100,000 and £499,999, and 22% reported incomes of £500,000 or more (12% either did not know or preferred not to state their organisational income).
- And in terms of staffing numbers, 22% had 2 or fewer paid members of staff in Glasgow, 22% had 3-5 paid members of staff, 33% had 6-20 paid members of staff, and 23% had more than 20 paid members of staff.
- Respondents also reflected a wide range of different service types and service users, as shown in Table 1.1, below.

Table 1.1: Services provided / service users served by respondents' organisations

Which of the following areas does your organisation primarily focus on? (Note: respondents could select multiple categories)	%
Children and Young people's services	41
Community learning and development	35
Health and social care, including mental health	35
Arts and cultural activities	27
Volunteering, employability and personal development	26
Family support	23
Older people	19
Food / nutrition	13
Buildings / Facilities (including managing buildings for community use)	13
Disability support / advocacy	12
Race equality	12
Housing and/or homelessness	12
Drug and alcohol support	9
Women's sector, including Violence Against Women services	8
Financial / legal advice and information	7
LGBTIQ+ equality and support	7
Justice	6
Third Sector infrastructure and development	5
Faith groups / faith-based support	5
Other	5
Don't know/prefer not to say	*
<i>Base (sample size)</i>	<i>241</i>

The survey collected background information on respondents' organisations, including whether they were in receipt of IGF funding prior to 2020 and whether they applied for and received GCF funding, before asking about their views of various aspects of the GCF process, and on potential options for the

future of Council funding for the Third Sector in Glasgow. It also included an open question asking for suggestions for improvement. The full questionnaire is included in Annex A.

Focus groups and in-depth interviews

Nine focus groups were held between 14 July and 5 August 2021. Five individual in-depth interviews and two paired in-depth interviews were also conducted with individuals who could not make the times the focus groups were scheduled for. Participants included 22 successful applicants, 24 unsuccessful applicants, 7 people from organisations that did not apply to the GCF, and 2 participants who were commenting from a wider Third Sector support perspective. The aim of both the focus groups and in-depth interviews was to explore issues covered by the survey in more depth and to allow participants to reflect on future funding options.

Participants were recruited via GTSIN, who asked their Third Sector networks to share contact details of organisational representatives who were willing to be contacted by Ipsos MORI about taking part in discussions. This approach was designed to ensure a variety of sectors and geographic areas were represented across groups. Participants reflected a wide range of different service types and service users, including: advice provision; the women's sector; equality organisations (including organisations working with minority ethnic groups, LGBTI+ groups, and disabled people); mental health support; children, young people and family services; older people's services; community learning and development; Third Sector infrastructure support; community buildings/facilities; arts and culture; community sport; employability; volunteering; and support for homeless people.

Each focus group had up to six participants (a limit of 6 was set based on the researchers' previous experience of conducting video focus groups, which strongly indicates that including higher number of participants unduly limits the ability of participants to contribute as they would wish). Separate groups and interviews were held with successful applicants, unsuccessful applicants, and non-applicants, to try and help ensure that people were as comfortable as possible sharing their experiences.

Groups and interviews were all held on Zoom (with the exception of one interview, conducted by phone at the participants' request). Groups lasted around 90 minutes and in-depth interviews around 45-60 minutes. All groups and interviews were moderated by members of the Ipsos MORI research team. Discussion guides were designed by Ipsos MORI, in consultation with Glasgow City Council. A professional notetaker transcribed the discussion within each group, for use in analysis, in combination with the researchers' own notes and audio recordings of the discussions.

Report structure and conventions

The remainder of this report is structured thematically, with findings from the survey and qualitative research combined within sections. The structure is as follows:

- Chapter 2 explores understandings and perceptions of the aims of the GCF, including how it compares with its predecessor fund, the IGF
- Chapter 3 discusses Third Sector views and experiences of the GCF process, including views on communications around the fund, the application form and process, decision-making and feedback, and monitoring and evaluation
- Chapter 4 looks at future options for the GCF and funding of the Third Sector in Glasgow, focusing on suggestions from the Third Sector about improvements and possible changes to the operation and structure of funding.

Where the text comments on differences in responses to the survey between different sub-groups (e.g.

successful and unsuccessful applicants to the GCF), these differences are statistically significant (at the 5% level) unless otherwise stated.

Qualitative research methods aim to capture diversity and depth of experience, rather than to understand the prevalence of a particular view or experience. As such, when findings are based on qualitative interviews or focus groups, rather than the survey data, quantifying language (such as 'all', 'most', or 'a few') is avoided as far as possible. In order to protect participant confidentiality, quotes are not attributed to specific organisations. Where relevant, differences in opinion between groups of participants - for example, those who were allocated GCF funding and those who were not - are drawn out in the report. However, it is important to note that many of the views expressed cut across groups, regardless of whether they had been successful in their applications or not. The phrases 'successful applicants' and 'unsuccessful applicants' are used as shorthand in this report for organisations that were allocated GCF funding and organisations that applied but were not allocated funding. The use of 'successful' and 'unsuccessful' as shorthand to distinguish respondents whose applications were and were not funded is not in any way intended to reflect the relative merits of organisations' applications.

Scope and limitations

The combination of survey findings and qualitative research allows us both to comment on how widespread particular views are likely to be (based on the survey data), and to provide a more in-depth account of the potential reasons for particular views (drawing on the qualitative research). However, as with any research, there are limitations to the data collected that should be kept in mind when interpreting the findings.

First, while the response to the survey from GCF applicants (41%, if we assume that each organisation only submitted one response) was reasonable for an online survey, we cannot rule out the possibility that those who did not respond differ substantially in their views from those who did respond. Similarly, while participants in the qualitative research represented a wide range of organisations delivering different types of services to different groups, it is possible that those who were motivated to take part in this research held stronger views about the GCF than those who did not volunteer to take part. However, while differences in views between those who did and did not take part in this research cannot be ruled out, the consistency of many findings between the survey and the qualitative research indicates that the views reported are far from being outliers, and represent the views of a significant proportion of applicants to the fund.

Second, as noted above, there were very few survey responses from Third Sector organisations who did not apply to the GCF. Similarly, while the approach to recruiting participants in the qualitative research ensured a mix of successful and unsuccessful applicants, it was less successful in recruiting participants who had not applied to the GCF. As such, the report can only give a tentative indication of the kinds of reasons people gave for not applying - it cannot provide a robust estimate of which of these reasons were the most common, and there may be other reasons for not applying to the fund that are not captured here.

It is also important to note that both the survey and the qualitative research captured some very strong views and intensity of feeling about both the process and the outcomes of the 2020 GCF. It is possible that others who were involved in the GCF might have different views on exactly what happened during the 2020 funding process or why particular events occurred. However, the purpose of this report is to present the views and experiences of the Third Sector. Understanding these views and experiences, from the perspective of the Third Sector, is an essential first step in ensuring that future plans for funding

reflect the original aims set out in the Council's Strategic Plan of ensuring 'a partnership approach and simplifying procedures'.

Finally, it is worth noting that there was an expectation that the Review of the GCF would take into account the views already expressed to the Council in writing by the Third Sector, some of which was shared with the Ipsos MORI research team. In addition to correspondence with the Council/Councillors, this included a report by the LGBT Voluntary Network on their assessment of the impact of the GCF on LGBTI+ organisations,¹² and the 'Better Relationships, Better Outcomes' report produced as part of the Social Recovery Task Force's work. The latter report looks at the relationship between public bodies and the Third Sector in Glasgow and covers many themes that overlap with both this report and the remit of the wider Review of the GCF in developing recommendations for improving that relationship.¹³

¹² <http://equalityupdates.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Glasgow-Communities-Fund---Impact-on-LGBTI-organisations-December-2020.pdf> - last accessed 22 September 2021

¹³ [Better Relationships, Better Outcomes: Third Sector Review and Recommendations | Glasgow Council for the Voluntary Sector \(gcvs.org.uk\)](#) - last accessed 8 September 2021

2. Understanding and views of the aims of the GCF

Summary of key points

- Most survey respondents (74%) felt that the information provided about the purpose of GCF had been 'very' or 'fairly' clear. Similarly, 78% felt information about eligibility criteria had been clear.
- However, unsuccessful applicants were more likely to feel information had been unclear in both respects - 37% said information on the purpose of the fund had been unclear (compared with 10% of successful applicants), and almost identical proportions felt that information about eligibility had been unclear (37%/9%).
- Participants in the focus groups and interviews appreciated the intention of the GCF to 'open up' Council funding to a wider range of organisations than had been funded through the IGF. However, there was less consensus - in both the survey and the qualitative findings - over how successful it had been in achieving this aim in practice, although on balance more survey respondents felt it had succeeded in opening up funding than felt it had been unsuccessful.
- In spite of an awareness of the aim of 'opening up' Council funding beyond IGF recipients, there was an ongoing impression that the GCF and IGF remained essentially the same schemes with different names, and that neither fund had developed in a particularly coherent or strategic manner.
- A perceived lack of 'joined up thinking' between the GCF and wider Council strategy and goals was a recurrent theme. This was reflected in a lack of certainty among survey respondents as to whether or not the fund had succeeded in helping the Council deliver on its strategic priorities for 2020-23.
- Survey respondents were also divided over whether the Fund had met its other objectives, such as addressing inequality and helping the Third Sector to meet unmet needs across Glasgow. More respondents felt that the Fund had been unsuccessful than successful in promoting partnership working between the Council and the Third Sector.
- Respondents who had not been allocated funding were more negative than those who had been funded about the impacts of the GCF. Respondents from organisations with lower annual incomes were also less positive than respondents from organisations with higher incomes.
- Among the small numbers of survey respondents and focus group participants who were from organisations that had not applied for funding, the main reasons for not applying were: thinking they would not be eligible, not having heard of the fund, and the perceived level of administration that would be involved in applying.

As discussed in Chapter 1, the overarching aim of the GCF was to tackle poverty and inequality in Glasgow. It was hoped that it would 'reflect a partnership approach' to addressing these challenges between the Council and the Third Sector, and that it would open up Council funding to a wider range of Third Sector organisations. This chapter discusses Third Sector perceptions of the aims of the Fund and considers the extent to which they think the GCF has succeeded in meeting its key objectives.

Perceptions of the aims of the GCF

The online survey of Third Sector organisations in Glasgow asked how clear they thought information about a) the purpose and b) the eligibility criteria for the fund had been. Overall, 74% of respondents felt that information provided about the purpose had been 'very' or 'fairly' clear, while 78% felt information about eligibility criteria had been clear. However, unsuccessful applicants were more likely to feel information had been unclear in both respects - 37% said information on the purpose of the fund had been unclear (compared with 10% of successful applicants), and almost identical proportions felt that information about eligibility had been unclear (37%/9%).

Smaller organisations were also more likely to feel that the purpose and eligibility criteria had been unclear - for example, 33% of organisations with annual incomes under £100,000 felt information about the eligibility criteria had been unclear, compared with 13% of those with incomes of £500,000 or more. There was no difference in perceptions of the clarity of information about the purpose or eligibility criteria between those who had and had not previously been in receipt of IGF funding, however.

Discussion of the aims of the GCF in the focus groups often related to how it was intended to improve on the IGF. Participants were aware of the intention to 'open up' Council funding to a wider range of Third Sector organisations and welcomed this aim:

"GCF was more accessible (than IGF) – they widened access to all the voluntary sector. We could apply – it was a new opportunity for people to get funding. It's really good than an organisation who would never normally have access to this funding can do. Glasgow City Council's funding is usually really closed... this was opened up to smaller and medium sized organisations – lots of grassroots organisations applying."

(Interview 4, successful applicant)

However, as we discuss later in this chapter, there was far less consensus on whether this aim had been achieved in practice.

At the same time as there was an understanding that the GCF was meant to open up funding to more organisations, there was also an ongoing impression among some participants that the GCF and the IGF were essentially the same schemes with different names. And in terms of clarity of aims and purpose, neither scheme was viewed as having developed in a particularly coherent or strategic manner.

"(They are) Pretty much the same... They put more money in it, but it looked the same at the end. Although they promised a new thing at the beginning. There was no thinking behind it, financially or strategically."

(Group 3, successful applicant)

"Both funds were terribly designed and were not strategically designed. Both of them failed if you asked them to deliver either for the Council or Third Sector."

(Interview 2, unsuccessful applicant)

With respect to the aims of the GCF specifically, there was a strong perception that these were insufficiently joined up with current Council strategy. Two overlapping points were expressed in explaining this view. First, there was a belief that the Council had been insufficiently clear and consistent in articulating the aims of the fund and how they were intended to link with Council strategy. Second, it was argued that the decision to fund Third Sector services through a 'discretionary fund' made it almost impossible to ensure the Fund actually delivered what was needed to meet specific Council strategies.

Specific concerns were raised about a perceived disconnect between Council funding for Third Sector advice services and the delivery of the Council's financial inclusion strategy (which was seen to rely on services that had not received funding through the GCF). However, a perceived lack of 'joined up thinking' between the Fund and wider Council strategy and goals was a recurrent theme, which also cut across areas such as sustainability and equality. It was also suggested that a number of more specific priorities had been identified in early meetings with the Third Sector, but that these had not then been reflected in the final GCF application process.

"It (the GCF) didn't seem to know what it was trying to fund, that's the impression I got."

(Group 1, successful applicant)

"If the council have a financial inclusion strategy, that has to come into account when they make decisions. They can't say, 'We have looked at every bid and assessed them all the same.'"

(Group 6, unsuccessful applicant)

"We were told by a Council member in three meetings of the three priorities and mental health was number one. We thought as we are a Mental health charity, we'll be fine there. But it didn't translate to what was supported."

(Group 3, Successful applicant)

Perceptions of success in meeting its aims

The online survey of Third Sector organisations in Glasgow asked respondents how successful they felt the GCF had been in meeting various specific objectives. As can be seen in Table 2.1, below, there was no agreement among respondents about the extent to which it had met its overarching aim of addressing inequality - 34% felt the fund was successful in helping the Third Sector address inequalities across Glasgow, 33% that it was unsuccessful, and 33% said either that it had neither been successful nor unsuccessful, or that they did not know how successful it had been.¹⁴ Similarly, with regard to helping the Third Sector meet unmet needs across Glasgow, while 33% felt it had been successful, 35% said it had

¹⁴ Note that the figures quoted in the text are based on combined figures in the underlying data rather than the sum of rounded responses. Given this, they may differ in some cases by a percentage point from the sum of separate figures in the Tables. For example, based on the underlying data the combined total of those who thought the GCF had been 'fairly' or 'very' unsuccessful in helping the Third Sector to address inequalities is 33%, rather than the 34% figure obtained by adding the rounded figures for 'very unsuccessful' and 'fairly unsuccessful'.

been unsuccessful and 31% said it had neither been successful nor unsuccessful, or that they did not know how successful it had been.

The area in which the highest proportion of respondents felt the GCF had been at least partially successful was in opening up Glasgow City Council funding to a wider range of Third Sector organisations – 42% said the fund had been either very or fairly successful in this regard. However, 29% felt it had been unsuccessful in opening up funding, and 27% felt it had been neither successful or unsuccessful, or were unsure how successful it had been.

Respondents were most likely to say that the GCF had been unsuccessful in promoting partnership working between Glasgow City Council and the Third Sector – 47% felt the fund had been unsuccessful in doing so, compared with 26% who said it had been successful (26% felt it had been neither successful or unsuccessful, or were unsure).

There appeared to be a particular lack of certainty about whether or not the fund had succeeded in helping the Council deliver on its strategic priorities for 2020-23 – 40% said either that it had been neither successful nor unsuccessful (11%) or were unsure (29%). This may, in part, reflect the fact that the impacts of the Fund have yet to be evaluated (since it is currently at the end of the first year of a 30 month funding cycle). However, it seems likely that this also, at least in part, reflects the lack of certainty about how the Fund's aims relate to Council strategy, discussed above.

Table 2.1: Views of how successful GCF is in meeting various objectives

		Very successful	Fairly successful	Neither successful nor unsuccessful	Fairly unsuccessful	Very unsuccessful	Don't know / prefer not to say*
Opening up Glasgow City Council funding to a wider range of Third Sector organisations?	%	13	29	9	10	19	20
Helping to support a vibrant Third Sector in Glasgow?	%	8	25	12	17	21	17
Promoting partnership working between Glasgow City Council and the Third Sector?	%	6	20	10	22	26	17
Helping the Third Sector to meet unmet needs across Glasgow?	%	8	25	11	13	22	21
Helping the Third Sector to address inequalities across Glasgow?	%	8	26	12	15	19	22
Helping the Council to deliver its strategic priorities for 2020-2023?	%	6	24	11	12	17	30

Base = all respondents (241)

* NB 2% or fewer opted not to respond to each of these statements – so the 'Don't know/prefer not to say' column is largely composed of 'don't know' responses.

As might be expected, there were pronounced differences in the views of those who had been allocated funding compared with those who had not received any funding from the GCF on the impacts of the fund. As Table 2.2 shows, fewer than 1 in 10 respondents from organisations whose applications had not been successful felt that the GCF had succeeded across most of its objectives. While 1 in 5 respondents from organisations that had not been funded felt the fund had been successful in opening up funding to a wider range of Third Sector organisations, over half (54%) felt it had not been a success even in this regard. At the same time, views were still somewhat divided even among those whose applications had been successful - particularly on whether the Fund had promoted partnership working between the Council and the Third Sector, where only 40% of respondents from successful organisations felt the fund had been successful.

Respondents from organisations with lower incomes were also less positive than organisations with higher incomes about the impacts of the GCF. For example, 56% of respondents from organisations with annual incomes of £500,000 or more felt the Fund had succeeded in opening up funding to a wider range of organisations, and half as many (28%) from organisations with incomes under £100,000 a year also thought this had been the case.

Table 2.2: Views of how successful GCF is in meeting various objectives, by whether funding application was successful and organisational annual income (% saying GCF was ‘very’ or ‘fairly’ successful in each case)

		Successful applicants	Unsuccessful applicants	Under £100,000	£100,000-£499,999	£500,000+
Opening up Glasgow City Council funding to a wider range of Third Sector organisations?	%	62%	19%	28%	43%	56%
Helping to support a vibrant Third Sector in Glasgow?	%	55%	6%	17%	34%	44%
Promoting partnership working between Glasgow City Council and the Third Sector?	%	40%	7%	17%	25%	31%
Helping the Third Sector to meet unmet needs across Glasgow?	%	55%	9%	22%	32%	46%
Helping the Third Sector to address inequalities across Glasgow?	%	56%	7%	17%	38%	44%
Helping the Council to deliver its strategic priorities for 2020-2023?	%	52%	6%	22%	31%	43%
Sample size	n	124	81	64	93	54

Many of these findings were reflected in discussions in the focus groups and qualitative interviews. As noted above, while there was wide support for the intention of opening up funding to a wider range of Third Sector organisations, there was less consensus over whether this had actually been achieved in practice. While there were examples of smaller organisations who had not previously received IGF funding who welcomed the opportunity to apply for and receive GCF funding, other representatives of smaller organisations felt that, in practice, the Fund had continued to favour larger organisations and had disadvantaged smaller, grass roots projects.

“It seemed particularly designed almost to help organisations like ours, newer grass roots organisations. It feels like the outcome of the funds were contrary to its intentions. It has increased the inequality between smaller and larger organisations rather than alleviated them.”

(Group 6, unsuccessful applicant)

The fact that almost half of respondents felt the Fund had been unsuccessful in promoting partnership working between the Council and the Third Sector was reflected in the strength of negative feeling about

Third Sector experiences of the Fund expressed in the groups and interviews. There was a recurrent view that the Council will need to work hard to rebuild trust with the Third Sector:

"The feeling is of lack of interest in what we do and the reasons we do it. They need to win that trust back, not us."

(Group 2, unsuccessful applicant)

Reasons for not applying to the GCF

As discussed in Chapter 1, very few respondents to the Third Sector survey were from organisations that had not applied for GCF funding - just 25 in total. Their responses cannot, therefore, be assumed to be representative of all those Third Sector organisations in Glasgow that did not apply to the Fund.

However, among those who did respond, the most common reasons for not having applied to the GCF were: thinking they would not be eligible (n = 9), not having heard of the Fund (n = 8), and the perceived level of administration involved in managing the grant (n = 4).

Among the small number (7 in total) of non-applicants that took part in a focus group or in-depth interview, stated reasons for not applying to the GCF included:

- **Uncertainty about eligibility** - in spite of the aim of the Fund being to open up Council funding to more organisations, one participant remained under the impression that they would not have been funded as they had not previously been in receipt of IGF funding. Another thought the fund was not aimed at arts and culture organisations like theirs. One view was that the eligibility criteria for the GCF was less clear than it had been for the IGF:

"...With the IGF you had three parts, so you had to make sure you were following those specific things. But when you looked at the application how [GCF] was being described, and "you could be this", and "shouldn't [apply] if that". It wasn't clear-cut."

(Group 4, non-applicant)

Another point related to eligibility criteria was raised by a participant whose organisation had applied to the GCF, but not for the specific project that they worked on. They felt that the decision to only allow one application per organisation had meant they had to choose carefully which parts of their work to apply for, as applying for multiple elements was seen as risking 'muddying' the application and reducing their score. They pointed out that under the IGF they had been able to apply for funding to cover multiple areas of work.

- **Being put off by the application process / requirements** - the process of applying to the GCF was viewed as very time consuming (more so than the IGF by some), particularly for small organisations (a point we return to in Chapter 4, in discussing possible improvements to the process):

"The application process itself was more involved than IGF had been. We are a small organisation, we're all volunteers, so it wasn't worth the money."

(Group 4, non-applicant)

In addition, a lack of certainty around when funding would commence was cited by one organisation as a reason for deciding it was not worth the effort involved in applying.

One organisation that had been very new at the time the GCF was introduced said they had not applied because of lack of awareness of the Fund's existence, but pointed out that it would also have been difficult for them to meet all the requirements for documentation needed at that point.

3. Views and experiences of the GCF process

Summary of key points

Communication about the GCF

- The survey indicated that, on balance, more applicants felt that communication and information about the purpose of the fund, eligibility criteria, and guidance on the application process were clear than felt they were unclear.
- In contrast, views around the scoring process and feedback on applications were viewed more negatively, with over half in each case saying either that communications and information was either unclear, or that they had not received any communication at all on these.
- Views on all aspects of communication about the GCF were more negative among respondents whose applications had not been funded, and among smaller organisations (in terms of income).
- Across the qualitative interviews and focus groups, criticism of perceived poor communications around the GCF was a recurrent theme. Early consultations with the Third Sector were appreciated, but in some cases perceived to be tokenistic, and had set expectations around co-production of the Fund that were not fulfilled. At the other end of the process, there was considerable dissatisfaction around a perceived lack of direct communication and feedback to the Third Sector around funding decisions.
- There was a perceived 'disconnect' between Council Officials and elected members, which was seen as contributing to disjointed or inconsistent messaging around the GCF at key points.

Applying to the GCF

- On balance, most survey respondents felt the timescales for submitting an initial application to the GCF had been about right (although unsuccessful applicants were more likely both to say it had been too short, and to say it had been too long). However, views on the time allowed for clarifications were much more mixed, with no consensus over whether this had been too long, too short, or about right.
- Focus group participants and interviewees expressed particular frustration with the decision to re-open applications in January 2020 to allow incomplete applications to be corrected. This was viewed as reflecting inappropriate political interference in the process and created unacceptable delays for those who had submitted the correct information in October 2019. At the same time, however, there was some sympathy with organisations who had made mistakes, given the problems experienced with the application form (discussed below). The initial decision to limit the Fund to organisations with Charitable Incorporated Organisation status also received some criticism.
- There was a perception that the amount of information requested in the application form was excessive compared with participants' experience of other funders, while the questions on the form were not seen as well aligned with the scoring criteria. In addition, participants identified

various technical aspects of the application form that they felt had not worked well and needed to be improved before any future funding round.

Decision-making and feedback

- Most (83%) of survey respondents felt that the time between submitting an application and receiving a decision had been too long. There was no difference in the views of those whose applications had been funded and those who had not in this regard. Participants in the focus groups described how the delay in decision-making had created substantial uncertainty and difficulties for some organisations.
- Focus group participants raised a number of interlinked concerns about the scoring and decision-making process including: who was involved in scoring applications; a perceived lack of clarity about scoring criteria early on in the application process; a belief that the actual funding decisions did not always fairly reflect the scores given; concerns about the re-allocation of applications to different geographic sectors; and a perceived lack of information about how scores were actually arrived at.
- There were mixed feelings about the decision to offer part-funding to as wide a range of organisations recommended for funding as possible. While some were happy to have been funded and were able to maintain or expand their services for others the impact of not receiving full funding (particularly when they had been asked to base their calculations on Full Cost Recovery) was impacting on their ability to deliver the services they had applied to the GCF to fund.
- While some participants reported being able to make-up the shortfall, others were facing uncertain or negative outcomes. Participants (both successful and unsuccessful applicants) described having to reduce or, in some cases, close services, and reduce or lose posts as a result of GCF funding decisions. Organisations reported challenges convincing other funders to support them, as they had been told by other funders that the services they provided should be funded by the Council.
- Participants across focus groups and interviews raised concerns about the fact that there had not been an Equalities Impact Assessment on the funding decisions that were made under the GCF.
- Survey respondents' perceptions of communication of feedback were particularly negative, with just under half saying feedback was unclear and a further one in five (both successful and unsuccessful) saying they had not received any feedback information at all. The importance of receiving feedback for being able to understand scores and improve applications in the future was emphasised in the groups.

Monitoring and evaluation

- Successful applicants to the GCF were divided in their views on guidance on monitoring and evaluation of the Fund - around half felt information on this had been clear, while half either felt it had been unclear, were unsure how clear it had been, or indicated they had yet to receive any information on this.
- Participants commented on their impression that information collected in the past, as part of the monitoring and evaluation of the IGF, had not been used effectively by the Council to assess impact and plan for the future.

- Focus group participants suggested that future monitoring and evaluation should be: proportionate to grant and organisation size and digital capability, appropriate in terms of confidentiality and level of detail requested, capture qualitative information as well as quantitative data, and link to strategic outcomes of the fund.

This chapter explores Third Sector views and experiences of the GCF process, from initial communications to views on monitoring and evaluation of how the Fund's resources are being used.

Communication about the GCF

The online survey asked respondents how clear or unclear they felt various aspects of the communication around the GCF had been. As shown in Table 3.1, communications around the scoring process and feedback on applications were viewed particularly negatively. Half (51%) felt explanations of the scoring process had been very or fairly unclear, while a further 8% said they had not received any information or communications about this at all.¹⁵ Similarly, 45% felt that feedback on their application had been unclear, while a further 19% (both successful and unsuccessful) said they had not received any information or communications relating to feedback.

Perceptions of communications around the purpose of the fund, eligibility criteria, and guidance on the application process were more positive – over two thirds of survey respondents said communications around each of these had been very or fairly clear. However, in each case there was still a significant minority of respondents who felt communications had been unclear – from 20% for information on eligibility criteria, to 29% for guidance on the application process.

Table 3.1: Perceived clarity of communication and information about the GCF

		Very clear	Fairly clear	Fairly unclear	Very unclear	Did not receive any info or comms relevant to this	Don't know/prefer not to say
Information about the purpose of the Fund	%	28	46	14	7	1	3
Information about eligibility criteria for the Fund	%	29	48	12	7	-	3
Guidance on the application process	%	23	45	19	10	-	3
Explanations of the scoring process	%	10	24	23	27	8	7
Feedback on your organisation's application	%	10	20	21	25	19	7

Base = all applicants (209)

¹⁵ As noted in the previous chapter, combined figures for 'very' + 'fairly' clear / unclear quoted in the text are based on combining these figures using the underlying data, rather than the sum of rounded responses. Given this, they may differ in some cases by a percentage point from the sum of separate figures in the Tables.

Views on all these aspects of communication around the fund were more negative among respondents who had not been allocated GCF funding - for example, while 85% of those who were allocated funding said information about the purpose of the fund had been clear, among those who were not allocated funding this fell to 58%. Figures for information about eligibility were similar (89%/59%).

Across the qualitative interviews and focus groups, perceived poor communication around the GCF was a recurrent theme. One view was that communication between the Council and the Third Sector had deteriorated even in advance of the launch of the GCF - it was suggested that there had been much more communication and contact between the Council, the Third Sector, and local communities in the past, for example through Social Inclusion Partnerships. However, there was a perception that communications around the GCF had contributed to a further weakening of understanding and trust between the Third Sector and the Council.

"Years ago, people used to come out and meet people we work with. None of that happens now. Nobody is interested ... I'm lost with the whole process."

(Group 6, unsuccessful applicant)

"The communication process was ridiculous. We couldn't access committee papers, so we couldn't see what the decision process was. There was no proper feedback on what we should've done. It was very significant ... the work we put into that application, but not much support on how to do it."

(Group 2, unsuccessful applicant)

In terms of early communications about the Fund, the fact that the Council had held a number of consultation events and spoken to the Third Sector about its ideas for the Fund was generally appreciated by those who had attended. However, there was also some criticism of the shape and tone of these consultation meetings, which some participants felt had been tokenistic. At the same time, there was a perception that the early Council communications and consultation process had set expectations about co-production and ongoing communication with the Third Sector around the shape of the Fund that had not subsequently been followed through. There was a strong view that genuine co-production required greater scope for evolution and ongoing engagement with the Third Sector throughout the whole process of development and implementation.

"I thought the pre-meetings were really useful...They were certainly making a statement by saying they were meeting with all organisations...The positive thing is that they talked to us."

(Group 3, successful applicant)

"The process was well organised, good events to get you involved, but it didn't feel like it was actually listening to your voice. There was a lot of being talked at, and you couldn't hear because the microphone wasn't working, or the room was too big....and then when there was an opportunity for your voice to be heard it was a pre-orchestrated survey. It was like they had already decided the answers without actually listening to us. That was just the consultation process"

(Group 7, unsuccessful applicant)

"I think it was made worse by the council originally communicating that they wanted to co-produce this fund, but the actual process was nowhere near remotely approaching even a proper consultation."

(Group 5, successful applicant)

Participants who had not been involved in the early consultation events were, if anything, even more critical about the early communication about the Fund, reporting only having heard about it through other organisations. There was a perception that there had been a dearth of information about the Fund in advance of applications opening, and that more communication and information about eligibility and likely criteria at this stage would have enabled organisations to better prepare for applying. There was also considerable criticism of the perceived lack of detailed, upfront information about how applications would actually be scored - an issue we return to later in this chapter.

At the other end of the process, there was considerable dissatisfaction around the manner in which some organisations had found out about GCF funding decisions. Participants reported only learning that there had been a decision to move them from one geographic sector to another when assessing their application (an issue which is discussed in more detail later in this chapter) after the fact, while others reported only finding out that their application had not been funded indirectly, through looking through minutes of Council meetings.

"We found out the results through looking at the minutes of the meeting, because somebody contacted us and asked if we knew. And then I immediately had a phone call from social services saying, 'I can't believe you're not successful, this is going to put lots of pressure on us'. It was bizarre."

(Group 8, unsuccessful applicant)

This lack of direct and specific communication from the Council around decisions and, in particular, application scores contributed to a perception that the decision-making process lacked transparency - a theme we return to below, when we discuss views on feedback.

Across the focus groups and in-depth interviews, there was a belief that there had been a 'disconnect' between Council Officials and elected members during the GCF process. This perceived disconnect, and a lack of clarity around their respective roles in the process, was seen as contributing to messaging that was seen as disjointed or contradictory at key points in the GCF process. There was a concern that it was not always clear who, within the Council, organisations could go to for support or to raise concerns during the GCF process. Various participants discussed the difficulties they had experienced in arranging meetings with or getting responses from Officials or elected members, with differing views expressed on which of these were more responsive, and on which of the two ought to be have been most involved at different points of the process. There was a general perception that, beyond the initial consultation period, the Council had not been particularly open to meeting with the Third Sector to discuss their concerns about the Fund.

"I don't quite know how to articulate this but there is something odd at Glasgow City Council. The workers are doing their thing and it doesn't connect to what the councillors are saying. The councillors don't know what the workers do. I know it's all meant to connect and there are policies but there does seem to be some disconnect."

(Group 6, unsuccessful applicant)

"So, it opened with a deadline but no information on application process and scoring. When decisions would be made, most importantly, no information on the role of elected members who, looking back, were heavily involved in trying to overturn decisions."

(Group 5, successful applicant)

"We tried to speak before the tendering process in the planning stage. When it opened for discussions, we really couldn't get any sort of process to discuss it with them (the Council)."

(Group 1, successful applicant)

Across all the focus groups and interviews, there was a very strong belief that communication between the Council and the Third Sector needed to be substantially improved across the whole funding process ahead of future funding rounds. Specific suggestions as to how this might be achieved in practice are discussed in Chapter 4.

Applying to the GCF

Views on the application process itself encompassed timescales; eligibility criteria and other specific requirements; and technical aspects of the form. We address each of these in turn.

Timescales

As discussed in Chapter 1, applications to the GCF were opened on 18 September 2019, with a closing date of 25 October 2019 (extended from 20 October). However, after 125 applications were initially rejected as late or incomplete, the Council subsequently decided to allow an extension, so that organisations could resubmit corrected applications by 31 January 2020.

Overall, around half of survey respondents (55%) said the timescale for submitting an initial application was about right, a third (31%) said it was too short (19% 'a bit too short' and 12% 'much too short'), and 10% said it was too long. Unsuccessful applicants were more likely to say the timescale had been too short (40%, compared with 26% of successful applicants). They were also more likely to feel it had been too long (16%, compared with 6% of successful applicants). Those who had previously been in receipt of IGF funding were also more likely to feel that the timescales for submitting an initial application was too short (37%, compared with 21% of those who had not previously received IGF funding).

The perception that the timescale was too short appeared to be linked, in part, with a perception that the application form was particularly demanding in terms of the level of information required (a point discussed further below):

"I think the timescale was absolutely diabolical. We had no time to really study it, to tweak it because it was so quick. And obviously all the documentation that needs to go with it."

(Group 9, successful applicant)

Views on the time allowed for clarifications after the initial application were even more mixed. Around a third (35%) of survey respondents felt the timescale for clarifications had been about right, 22% that it had been too long, and 17% that it had been too short (24% were unsure). Unsuccessful applicants were again more likely to feel the time allowed had been too short (23% compared with 12% of successful applications), but in this case, were no more likely to feel it had been too long.

Focus group participants expressed frustration with both the initial decision to extend the application closure date to 25 October (from 20th), and the subsequent decision to re-open applications in January to allow late or incomplete applications to be corrected. Particularly strong feelings were expressed about this latter decision, which was viewed as reflecting inappropriate political interference in the process and created unacceptable delays for those who had submitted the correct information in October. There was also a feeling that it was unfair that only those who had submitted late or incomplete applications were able to resubmit, when everyone would have benefited from having more time to review and refine their applications.

"I was disgusted with the way that local newspapers ran a campaign on behalf of popular organisations who couldn't hand an application form on time. The Council should be saying 'I'm not giving money to organisation that can't fill in application forms'. I was disgusted that the Council they suddenly made it January and organisations could resubmit. What message does that give to the Third Sector? I thought was very poor."

(Group 3, successful applicant)

"Another thing is the political interference and influencing. Rightly or wrongly, there was a point in the process where we were supposed to get decisions or processes put forward. It was put on hold as some organisations didn't really comply or get forms in time, which had an impact on the rest of us."

(Group 2, unsuccessful applicant)

At the same time, some sympathy was expressed for those organisations who had made mistakes with their application form, as there was a general perception that there were numerous problems with the form itself (discussed below). While there was no consensus on what should have happened to resolve this, there was a strong view that timescales should be more strictly adhered to in any future funding rounds, supported by an improved application form.

Eligibility and specific requirements

As reported above, most (78%) of respondents to the survey felt that the information provided about eligibility criteria for the fund had been at least fairly clear. However, as with other elements of communication about the fund, those who had not been successful with their application were more likely to feel information on eligibility had been unclear (37% vs. 9% of successful applicants). These differences of opinion on and understanding of eligibility criteria were reflected across focus groups and interviews - for example, while one unsuccessful applicant felt the criteria had been "bureaucratic but clear", another was initially under the impression that organisations who had been in receipt of IGF

would not be eligible for GCF (a view that seemed to stem from the communications they had received around the ending of the IGF).

The decision to initially limit the Fund to organisations that were registered as Charitable Incorporated Organisations received some criticism, partly on the basis that it was seen as a late change to the eligibility criteria, and as adding to the burden of applying for some smaller organisations, and partly because it was viewed by some as unduly limiting the scope of the Fund. Although it was recognised that the Council needed to ensure that organisations it funds are well run, there was a view that this had not been the best way to achieve this, particularly as it, initially, excluded new organisations and organisations that were part of larger (unincorporated) umbrella organisations.

Beyond comments on the eligibility criteria, it was suggested that the amount of information requested in the application form was excessive or unusual compared to participants' experience of other funders, including asking organisations to have reviewed their constitution within the previous year, and in general requesting a very high volume of supporting documentation:

"The volume of supporting information, which I am sure wasn't looked at fairly, like the governance documents, backup documents, accounts, felt excessive compared to other funds."

(Group 5, successful applicant)

The level of detail requested as part of the application process was again seen as particularly onerous for newer organisations and those with less application experience.

In addition to the volume of information requested, there was a perception that the form itself was not well aligned with the scoring criteria, which made it difficult for organisations to compile a convincing application that addressed all the required criteria.

"I would really struggle to apply those criteria in a methodological way to the range of questions... It's like they did the form first and then decided what the criteria would be, which is not a good way of doing it."

(Group 5, successful applicant)

Technical aspects of the application form

Participants identified various technical aspects of the application form that they felt had not worked well and needed to be improved before any future funding round, including:

- A perceived lack of clarity about what software programme was required to complete the form
- The form not allowing for copying and pasting from other documents
- A perceived lack of space to provide full answers to questions, added to which participants reported finding it difficult to view answers on screen (which led to concerns about whether those assessing applications would be able to see their full responses either)
- Difficulties printing the form (which would have been helpful when applications needed to be shared with other people internally, including those who are less IT proficient)

- Difficulties uploading attachments. Organisations reported thinking they had sent attachments, which had not in fact uploaded correctly due to their size. This was seen as contributing to the problems with incomplete applications, which ultimately led to the process being reopened to applicants whose initial applications were deemed ineligible, as discussed above.

"We struggled with the form. It didn't print out. We didn't even know if they could see it all or if they assessed on just parts of the information."

(Group 9, successful applicant)

"There was information about sizes of documents to attach that caused endless problems. It stopped us attaching something. Or something we thought was attached didn't go through."

(Group 6, unsuccessful applicant)

Overall, the application form was viewed as having been particularly difficult for new and smaller organisations to complete and in need of significant improvement prior to any future funding process.

"The form was a nightmare and I felt for the people, the people who got it wrong, a lot of them were little grass-roots things."

(Group 1, successful applicant)

"It was quite complicated ... it was difficult for a newcomer ... There was a lot of mathematical juggling of numbers, so it was difficult for a small organisation. There were lots of attachments you had to upload"

(Group 7, unsuccessful applicant)

In terms of the wider support that was available to assist with completing the application form (beyond the guidance accompanying the form), mixed views were expressed. Some participants reported having received good support from GCVS and others, who were available to talk through the form and review it for organisations. However, others felt it had been more difficult to access support or had not been aware of anyone they could approach for help:

"What I liked is the collaboration with GCVS, that they would look at it for you if you're unsure."

(Group 9, successful applicant)

"I remember at the time thinking it was one of the most difficult documents I've ever had to deal with and there was nobody to ask about it."

(Group 8, unsuccessful applicant)

Decision-making

Timescales

As described in Chapter 1, the timeframe for the Council to make decisions about which organisations would receive GCF funding was extended to October 2020, almost a full year after the initial deadline for applications. A clear majority of respondents to the survey - 83% - felt that the time between submitting an application and receiving a decision had been too long. There was no difference in the views of those whose applications had been funded and those who had not in this regard - over 80% of both groups felt the time taken to receive the decision had been too long.

Participants in the focus groups described how the delay in decision-making had created substantial uncertainty and difficulties for some organisations. Some participants suggested that the delays in the GCF process in general had been a significant factor in a further deterioration of relations between the Council and the Third Sector.

"Everything was delayed, and that's really hard for organisations to deal with because no one knew whether they were getting funding or not. They were having to issue redundancy notices to people. It was very hard for a lot of organisations."

(Group 7, unsuccessful applicant)

"We didn't have a problem with the application process and completed that fine, but I think everyone has a problem with the fact that timescales changed ... We are all professionals here and we haven't been treated like professionals and that needs to be fed back."

(Group 6, unsuccessful applicant)

Scoring and decision-making process

Both the survey and the focus groups found substantial frustration among the Third Sector at a perceived lack of clarity around the scoring and decision-making process for GCF. As reported above, half of survey respondents said that explanations of the scoring process had been unclear, rising to 72% among unsuccessful applicants (36% of successful applicants also felt explanations had been unclear). Smaller organisations (in terms of income) were also more likely to feel that explanations of the scoring process had been unclear - 61% of those from organisations with annual incomes under £100,000, compared with 42% of those from organisations with incomes of £500,000 or more.

Focus group participants raised a number of interlinked questions and concerns about the scoring and decision-making process, including:

- **Who was scoring applications** and what training and qualifications they had to enable them to do so robustly. It was suggested that more advice and support ought to have been sought by the Council from other funding bodies. Concerns about who was doing the assessment were also linked, in part, with strong dissatisfaction at the lack of involvement of local area-based panels,

involving local voluntary sector representatives, in assessing bids - something that had been discussed early in the GCF process but was not ultimately implemented. This led to a perception that decisions had been taken in a 'closed room' and had been insufficiently inclusive (in terms of who was involved in the process) or transparent.

"What was agreed after much negotiation was that the voluntary sector leads would be involved in consideration of the bids...Unfortunately they took the decision not to have the Third Sector participate in that process and it was all done in house...it was done in a dictatorial fashion rather than a democratic fashion"

(Group 6, unsuccessful applicant)

- **A lack of clarity about scoring criteria early on in the application process**, as well as a perception that the criteria that were eventually arrived at did not match the application form well (discussed above)
- **A perception that the actual funding decisions did not always fairly reflect the scores given.** This point was, in part, related to the fact that variation in scores across geographic sectors meant that some organisations who scored more highly, but were in a 'high scoring' pot (particularly the city wide pot) were not funded, while others that scored lower but were in a 'lower scoring' pot were funded.
- **Concerns about the re-allocation of applications to different pots.** The perceived unfairness of higher scoring applications in one pot not being funded while lower scoring applications in another was exacerbated by the re-allocation of some applications to another geographic sector. For organisations that had been re-allocated from a sector pot to the city wide pot in particular, this was seen as having disadvantaged them in the process in multiple ways: their application had been prepared with a specific geographic sector in mind; the city wide pot included more applications relative to the money available; and the city wide pot was overall higher scoring.

"I think the decision was allocating only 30% to city wide organisations and 70% to sectors. I think it was fatal. I think it should be one pot of money. They said when they did this that city wide organisations were not going to be disadvantaged by this, but we were."

(Group 5, successful applicant)

Equality organisations also felt that they had been disadvantaged by having to be assessed in the relatively more competitive city wide pot. Another participant whose (successful) bid had been moved between geographic sectors commented that this had meant they needed to lose posts in the area of the city they had actually applied for (which had less funding from other sources than their services in the area their bid was 'moved' to).

- **A perceived lack of information about how scores were actually arrived at.** This was strongly linked with concerns about lack of feedback (discussed below), which contributed to a perception that decisions were not being made in a transparent manner. There were also concerns about how assessors could fairly compare organisations that were delivering very different services in terms of nature, size and focus.

The quote below reflects a number of the over-lapping concerns that were raised (and discussed at length by many participants):

"We do know our scores, as its published, but there is no relevance to funding. Some places with high scores don't get funding and vice versa. The questions we've asked about how it is scored, who did the scoring, if they had experience scoring, and how do you compare one application form to another when there is so many different organisations. None of these were ever answered. The issue coming from this is trust and the lack of transparency."

(Group 2, unsuccessful applicant)

Impacts of decisions

As discussed in Chapter 1, the volume of applications and amount of money sought from the GCF far exceeded the money that had been allocated to the Fund. This led to a decision to offer part-funding to as wide a range of organisations as possible. There were mixed feelings about this decision among participants in focus groups and interviews. While some were very happy to have been funded and were able to maintain or expand their services even with part-funding of their application, for others the impact of not receiving full funding had meant they were facing significant budget shortfalls which, in turn, was impacting on their ability to deliver the services they had applied to the GCF to fund.

"We had to stop providing a lot of the things we used to provide... Various other parts of what we had planned we now need to seek funding for elsewhere. If not for the good fortune of our sufficient reserves, we would have had to close by now due to that decision. I understand that the decision was made to fund as many projects as possible over what people asked for. But I think it's a catastrophic decision. Many organisations may not make it past this."

(Group 5, successful applicant)

The fact that applicants had been asked to submit applications based on full cost recovery appeared to have exacerbated the sense that the funding actually provided was inadequate. Added to this was the fact that the funding some organisations had received through the IGF was already reported to have been at 'standstill' levels for several years, which meant that the decision to only offer part funding through GCF was seen as an additional cut.

In terms of the impact of funding decisions, while some participants had been able to make-up the funding shortfall (either from not being funded at all, or from receiving less than they applied for) through other funding sources, others were facing uncertain or negative outcomes. Participants (both successful and unsuccessful applicants) described having to reduce or, in some cases, close services, and reduce or lose posts.

"We were grateful, but it has been redesigning services, because as a charity we can't cover this (the shortfall in years 2 and 3) ourselves."

(Group 1, successful applicant)

"We don't know whether to close the Glasgow office. But what happens to those referrals if we are not there?"

(Group 2, unsuccessful applicant)

While there were examples of organisations successfully applying for alternative funding after their GCF application was unsuccessful, others reported challenges convincing other funders to support them when other funders were stating that they felt the service should be funded by the Council.

"The reason we originally applied was because we have tried various other funders. We have also applied to the National Lottery before. They said to us that our option was to go for mainstream funding from Glasgow City Council as it was where it was best placed, as well as from referral agencies in the area. Other funders also told us that is what we should have been doing."

(Group 2, unsuccessful applicant)

It was noted that the full impact of either not receiving any GCF funding, or receiving less than organisations had applied for, was yet to be felt by many organisations, in part because they were due to receive less money in later years of the Fund, but also because some organisations had temporarily been able to make up the shortfall in their funding from emergency COVID grants. However, participants raised concerns that the ultimate impact of receiving no funding or reduced funding from the Council would be exacerbated by the impact of the pandemic, which had increased the level of need for many services:

"We have basically been funding that work on the basis of COVID crisis funding ever since ... We have given the COVID crisis funding huge value but that all comes to an end. We work on poverty, but we also work on sustainability issues, and we need to know how Glasgow is going to fund sustainability going forwards."

(Group 6, unsuccessful applicant)

Participants across focus groups and interviews raised concerns about the fact that there had not been an Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) on the funding decisions that were made under the GCF. This was raised as a major concern by both successful and unsuccessful applicants. A recurrent view was that the outcomes of the fund were open to potential legal challenge on the basis that a full EIA of the impact of the funding decisions had not been carried out. There was also a specific concern that both BAME and LGBTI+ organisations were thought to be over-represented in rejected applications,¹⁶ meaning key equalities groups were believed to be disproportionately disadvantaged by GCF decisions. More broadly, a number of organisations argued that the full impact of the GCF funding decisions still required urgent assessment, in order to understand how decisions not to fund particular services were impacting on the lives of the people and communities the fund was intended to support:

"We need a realistic impact assessment in terms of what was worked, what hasn't, the positive and adverse impact on people's lives. We need that within the next year."

¹⁶ This is discussed in more detail in relation to LGBTI+ organisations in <http://equalityupdates.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Glasgow-Communities-Fund---Impact-on-LGBTI-organisations-December-2020.pdf>

(Group 6, unsuccessful applicant)

Feedback

A perceived lack of clear feedback on applications was another key issue identified in both the survey and the qualitative research. As discussed above, 45% of survey respondents felt that feedback on their applications had been unclear, while a further 19% reported that they had not received any information or communication at all with respect to feedback on their application. Among those who were not allocated funding, only 4% felt they had received clear feedback - 73% felt it had been unclear. While those who were unsuccessful in their application were more likely to feel the feedback they had received was unclear, successful and unsuccessful applicants were equally likely to say they had not received any information or communications relating to feedback (19% in each case). Scores for each GCF application were published by the Council, but this finding indicates that a significant proportion of applicants did not view raw scores as constituting feedback. This is supported by discussion in the focus groups and interviews, which emphasised the importance of feedback on the reasons for scores.

Focus group participants and interviewees stressed the importance of receiving feedback on funding applications for being able to understand their scores and improve their applications in the future. There was some appreciation that, given the number of applications, providing detailed individual feedback to every applicant was challenging. However, at the same time there was a strong belief that there must be written evidence supporting the scoring and decision-making process. For unsuccessful applicants in particular receiving feedback if requested was a basic expectation of all funders.

"If you compare with other funding bodies, what happens is for a big programme like this, people who have not won the award are the people who should get the feedback. If you don't get feedback you don't know where you went wrong."

(Group 7, unsuccessful applicant)

As noted above, concerns about lack of feedback were often linked with concerns about exactly how scores had been arrived at, and contributed to an impression that the process was less than transparent:

"I can understand that it can be a time-consuming process to give individual feedback as standard, but it must be given if requested. There must be some sort of paper trail, there must be notes unless they picked these notes out of thin air, unless they did which is problematic again...We also scored low on governance and that has never been a problem with other applications. I was concerned by that. I would love to know how that came about, but there is no transparency so we can't find out."

(Group 6, unsuccessful applicant)

A related (though more exceptional) view was that it was unfair for the actual scores to have been published in the public domain - it was suggested that feedback should be provided in private, as publishing the scores might impact on other funding applications.

Monitoring and evaluation

Successful applicants were asked their views on monitoring and evaluation of the fund. Half (51%) said guidance on how spending would be monitored and evaluated was clear, while 38% said it was unclear (10% were unsure or indicated that they had not yet received any information about this). Discussion of monitoring and evaluation in the focus groups and interviews largely focused on things participants felt the Council should consider when formulating requirements, as few appeared clear on what was going to be expected for the GCF. It was suggested that any monitoring and evaluation should:

- **Be proportionate** to organisational and grant size, to avoid over-burdening small organisations in particular
- **Be appropriate** in terms of confidentiality / level of detail (it was reported that the Council had recently asked the advice sector for a level of information that advice agencies believed breached GDPR rules)
- **Capture qualitative information** as well as quantitative, including stories of what impact funding has had 'on the ground'
- **Take account of organisational digital capacity** (and the fact that not every organisation will have the necessary infrastructure to collect certain sorts of data)
- **Link to the strategic outcomes of the fund** (although as discussed in chapter 2, there was also a view that these outcomes needed to be clearer).

Participants commented on their impression that information collected in the past, as part of the monitoring and evaluation of the IGF, had not been used effectively by the Council to assess impact, learn lessons, and plan for GCF:

"We gave prolific feedback about the impact on lives and it was never reviewed. The previous Fund was never evaluated. I am raging about that. We were evaluated and we had reports every year; they chose to do nothing with it."

(Group 9, successful applicant)

As noted above, there was a strong desire for the impact of the GCF - including the impact of deciding not to fund certain organisations - be assessed from the earliest possible stage to ensure that future funding decisions were more fully informed.

4. Future options for Council funding of the Third Sector in Glasgow

Summary of key points

- The most commonly suggested improvement to the Council's approach to funding the Third Sector in Glasgow related to improving communication; streamlining and/or adhering more closely to timescales; ensuring funding is fairly and equitably distributed; and enhanced transparency and feedback on decisions.
- Suggestions for how the Council could take a more strategic approach to setting priorities for Third Sector funding included ensuring the aims are based on analysis of existing evidence of local need, building in more effective consultation with communities, and ensuring that priorities are set on a cross-departmental basis and with the involvement of all relevant partners.
- However, while there was a consistent desire for the Council to set clear and robust priorities for funding, there was no clear consensus on how wide or narrow these priorities should be.
- Suggestions for improving the operation and implementation of the Fund included:
 - o Improving communications across the entire process, from initial consultation to feedback and ongoing support, learning from how other funders approach this
 - o Clarifying the respective roles of Councillors and Officials in the process
 - o Ensuring that the timetable set out at the beginning is adhered to
 - o Improving the application form to address known technical issues and to reduce the scope for organisations to inadvertently submit an incomplete application
 - o Ensuring the application form reflects assessment criteria more clearly
 - o Developing a simplified form / application process for organisations applying for smaller amounts of money
 - o Transferring responsibility for assessing applications and making decisions to an external independent body, separate from the Council, and/or involving local panels in assessing applications
 - o Conducting an Equalities Impact Assessment of GCF funding decisions.
- Suggestions that would involve a more substantial change to the design or model of Council funding for the Third Sector in Glasgow included:
 - o Tighter minimum standards (there was majority support for tighter standards for applicants on equalities and inclusion and also governance aspects)
 - o Moving away from a single 'discretionary' fund to funding different services in different ways - either through 'core funding' of some services, splitting the GCF into different

funds with different outcomes, and/or ring-fencing of funding for particular types of services or of services for specific groups.

- A majority of survey respondents favoured some sort of ring-fencing, and there was strong support for this within focus groups and interviews. However, there were also some reservations about what this would mean for organisations that serve cross-cutting needs. It was also clear from the survey and discussions that agreeing how funds should be ring-fenced and for which areas, user groups, or services would be challenging.
- There was no consensus on whether the minimum and maximum grants sizes should be changed, although there was more support for removing or reducing the minimum than for increasing the maximum.
- There was a strong view that the Council needed to look again at the amount of money it invests in the Third Sector, and that the money currently allocated to the GCF should not be the only source of funding for the services they provide.

Overview of suggested changes

In the final chapter of this report, we discuss views on potential changes to the way the Council funds the Third Sector in Glasgow. The online survey of Third Sector organisations asked respondents what, if any, changes they would make to the current approach Glasgow City Council takes to funding the Third Sector - respondents typed in their answers, which were then read and grouped together into themes/suggestions by the Ipsos MORI team. The top four suggestions, as shown in Table 4.1, all relate to addressing some of the main concerns about the process discussed in chapter 3. Specifically, they recommended:

- Better engagement / communication / networking with communities / the Third Sector (mentioned by 20% of respondents)
- Streamlining / speeding up of processes, including strict timeframes for decisions and funding (15%)
- Providing funding fairly / equitably / spreading funding across the sector / eliminating any favouritism (11%)
- Greater transparency on decision making processes / greater availability of feedback (10%)

While improving engagement / communications was equally likely to be suggested by those whose applications were funded and those whose applications were rejected, streamlining or speeding up the process was more likely to be mentioned by successful applicants (21%, vs. 10% of those whose applications were not funded), while increasing transparency and/or providing more feedback on how decisions were made was more likely to be recommended by those whose applications were not funded (17%, vs. 6% of those whose applications were funded).

Table 4.1: Suggestions for changes to the current approach to Council funding for the Third Sector in Glasgow, by whether application to the GCF was funded or not

		All respondents	Successful applicants	Unsuccessful applicants
Better engagement / communication / networking with communities / the Third Sector	%	20	19	22
Streamline / speed up processes including strict timeframes for decisions and funding	%	15	21	10
Provide funding fairly / equitably / spread funding across the sector / no favouritism	%	11	9	14
Greater transparency on decision making processes / availability of feedback	%	10	6	17
Involve other people (e.g. local people / specialists / Third Sector reps) in the assessment	%	8	6	15
Provide funding for those with the greatest need / vulnerable / marginalised groups	%	7	7	6
(More) funding for another specific group / sector	%	7	6	9
(More) funding for the arts / culture	%	5	2	10
Evaluation of funded services, monitoring of outcomes / feedback from service users	%	5	6	1
Greater clarity on the fund's priorities / goal	%	5	4	6
More detail / clarity on criteria and eligibility	%	5	3	5
Provide advice / help / support for application	%	5	4	6
Suggested changes to the eligibility criteria / which organisations can / cannot apply	%	5	4	9
<i>Sample size</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>241</i>	<i>124</i>	<i>81</i>

In addition to the suggested changes shown above, in Table 4.1, other suggestions, each raised by under 5% of all respondents, included: simpler application forms (4%); making the fund (more) strategic/part of a wider plan (4%); increasing the amount of funding (3%); robust reporting/information on reporting (3%); ring fencing / having specific funding pots for specific groups/areas (3%); providing funding for a wider range of people / groups / organisations (3%); greater visibility / more information about the fund (3%); avoiding overlap / duplication in funding (3%); providing funding to trusted / established providers (2%); greater clarity about the reporting required / simplify reporting requirements (2%); de-politicising the fund (2%); extension of application deadlines (1%); changes to the funding

period covered by the GCF (2%); a better scoring system (2%); assessments being made by someone other than Council Officers (1%); not moving application between sectors (1%). Many of these also relate to the concerns about the operation of the GCF, discussed in Chapter 3.

The remainder of this chapter discusses in more detail Third Sector views on potential changes, first to the **aims of the Fund**, second to its **operation and implementation**, and third, to its **design** (or the design of any alternative scheme that might replace it in the future).

Setting strategic aims for Council funding

As discussed in Chapter 2, there was a general perception that the Council needed to set clearer strategic aims for the GCF. A number of related suggestions were made as to how this might be achieved in practice. First, it was suggested that any decisions on what priorities the fund is meant to address (and, by implication, what services it should fund) need to be driven by data and evidence on community needs. There was a belief that the Council could make better use of existing evidence in this regard, as well as consulting with areas and communities about their changing needs on an ongoing basis:

“Glasgow City Council, they have access to all the data about their communities and the issues within them, and they didn’t use that data. I would suggest in future funds that they work with their rather extensive team who do know all the answers and where the gaps are. ... They need to join themselves up a wee bit more.”

(Group 7, unsuccessful applicant)

Second, it was suggested that decisions on priorities for future funding needed to be taken on a cross-departmental basis, and with the involvement of all relevant partners (such as the Health and Social Care Partnership):

“Looking ahead there are key things Glasgow need to sort out. Priorities, how do they want to be with the 3rd sector, where does the 3rd sector play a crucial part in eliminating poverty and inequality, isolation and the impact of the pandemic? They need cross departmental conversations ... they don’t talk to HSCP, who don’t talk to education, and everyone in the council is doing their own thing.”

(Group 1, successful applicant)

However, while there was a strong desire for more transparent planning to inform the Council’s priorities for Third Sector funding, and for these priorities to be clearly communicated and linked to scoring criteria from the outset, there was no clear consensus on how narrow or wide the priorities of the GCF or any future fund ought to be. On the one hand, some support was expressed for setting much more specific priorities:

“If you open it to all it causes confusion, you need clear guidelines, knowing what the councils’ priorities are. They can’t cover everything. Give clear guidelines. The council want to make it political and not exclude someone. You have to make tough choices, but back them up, and it shouldn’t be those who shout the loudest that get (funded).”

(Group 4, non-applicant)

On the other hand, those who provided services that they thought might not fit neatly into a single priority area were more resistant to the idea of a more narrowly focused Fund (a view which reflects some of the reservations about ring-fencing, discussed below):

“There’s only really one thing which was good. By having wide and varied funds to fit into, rather than being narrow and doing a specific type of work which would lead to pressure on organisations to do that. I know there has been some debate on whether it should be discretionary funding or being separately funded. But I do think for the general funds it enables strange organisations like ours to be able to apply and that’s valuable.”

(Group 5, successful applicant)

Changes to the operation and implementation of the Fund

The focus groups and in-depth interviews conducted for this research included asking participants for their views and suggestions on alternative models for funding the Third Sector in Glasgow. While there were lots of opinions about what model, or combination of models, might work better than the GCF - and these are discussed later in this chapter - there was also pushback from some participants against the perceived assumptions behind this question. It was commented that it was not the GCF model that they felt had caused the issues reported in Chapter 3, but rather the manner in which it had been implemented:

“The council cannot use models to get off the hook. This wasn’t a model problem.”

(Group 6, unsuccessful applicant)

Participants made lots of suggestions about how the implementation issues discussed in Chapter 3 might be addressed in the future, without necessarily completely revising the funding model.

Improving communications

As discussed in Chapter 3, improving communication was seen as a central priority in making the Fund more transparent and effective. Suggestions for improvement encompassed the whole process, from **genuine consultation, listening and co-production** around the future design and implementation of Council funding for the Third Sector, through **systematic pre-promotion** of the fund (including setting out - and sticking to - a clear timetable and providing unambiguous, upfront information about scoring criteria), to offering **detailed feedback** on the reasons for particular scores or outcomes, and providing **ongoing support** to successful applicants.

There was a clear desire for more ongoing communication between the Council and the Third Sector throughout the funding process. Other funders were viewed as more open in this regard - including being willing to discuss individual applications and maintaining more contact with successful applicants around their progress. There was also a perception that the Council itself had previously been better resourced to provide a higher level of support to the Third Sector organisations it had funded in the past:

“They could learn an awful lot from the National Lottery Community Fund – they’re a really developed, really supportive funder. GCC seem very top heavy - if you get it wrong you get scalded. (The National Lottery) listen to the organisations they fund - they want to learn from that. Their model is different – how they work with people. ... It’s really focused, partnership working – you are able to connect with other services across the board. ... You can phone and speak to them about an application – get guidance from them. You can phone a helpline. You get so much more support”

(Interview 4, successful applicant)

“We used to have monitoring officers they used to be more involved prior to the IGF they were good ... that’s missing, they need people on the ground who care. They could learn from independent funders. The best is the Robertson Trust; they ‘get’ poverty. They were fantastic when COVID happened. We have an email saying ‘don’t worry you’ll get your money.’”

(Group 1, successful applicant)

As discussed in Chapter 3, there was a perception that a lack of clarity around the respective roles of Councillors and Officials in the GCF had been a significant contributing factor in the perceived inconsistency of communication around the fund. There was a clear view that the involvement and roles of Councillors and Officials required clarifying. However, different views were expressed on exactly what these roles should be. Some participants felt that Councillors should be closely involved in the dispersal of public money and considered it correct that Councillors had become involved in recommendations by officials with which they disagreed. However, others felt that there was a need to “*take the politics out*” of the Fund and that Councillors had been inappropriately involved in discussions about the funding of individual organisations. One suggestion was that Councillors should be more involved in the early stages, in agreeing the overall aims for the fund, but that after that point they should step back from involvement in the actual funding decisions:

“Given that they are elected representatives, it’s only right that there should be some say for Councillors. But that say should only be on the aims it wishes to achieve. I’m not sure it’s very transparent to put them on actual decisions on the funding.”

(Group 5, successful applicant)

Improving the application process

Participants’ suggestions for improving the application process again largely follow logically from the issues they raised about this, as discussed in chapter 3. They include:

- **Ensuring that the timetable set out at the start is followed**, so that organisations can plan effectively around deadlines for funding applications and decisions. There was some concern already about whether this was achievable in terms of the planning, approvals, and stages required to have funding in place in 2023, particularly given Council elections in May 2022.
- **Improving the application form**, to address the specific technical issues outlined in chapter 3 and reduce the scope for organisations inadvertently submitting incomplete applications. This might include building in automatic checks so that the form cannot be submitted if key documents or responses are missing. It was also suggested that the application form could be split into two

stages - so that qualifying information (including attachments of key documents) is submitted and checked before organisations spend time completing the full application. A supporting workshop on how to complete the application form was proposed. Online forms used by other funders that were mentioned as potential templates or good examples included the National Lottery's 'Awards for All' form and Scottish Government funding application forms.

- **Improving and clarifying the link between the information requested on the application form, and the criteria being used to score applications.**
- **Producing a simplified version of the application form for organisations that are applying for smaller amounts of money.** As discussed in Chapter 3, the amount of information requested by the GCF application form was viewed by some as disproportionate, particularly for smaller applications:

"How can you have the same approach to someone who wants £300,000 to someone who wants £30,000? It needs a light touch and one needs a decent degree of calibration ... part of what was horrendous was you didn't know how much detail to go into."

(Group 1, successful applicant)

Improving decisions-making

Participants' suggestions around improving funding decisions focused on both improving the perceived quality of decisions and on enhancing transparency around how these decisions were arrived at. Providing more detailed feedback on how scores and decisions were arrived at was viewed as essential to ensuring confidence in the fairness and transparency of the process, as discussed in Chapter 3.

Participants also proposed changes to who is involved in assessing applications and making decisions. Two main options were discussed. First, it was suggested that responsibility for assessing applications should be transferred to an independent body, external to the Council - either another large funder, or an external organisation that specialises in administering grants (Impact Funding Partners was mentioned). Transferring responsibility for running the fund to an external body was seen as both a way of ensuring appropriate expertise and capacity to run it effectively, and as a mechanism for 'de-politicising' the process:

"I don't think the City Council should be running these things. They should be commissioning a big trust fund or lottery who is used to running this. I would have faith in their decision-making process ... They would at least tell you why you didn't get something."

(Group 3, successful applicant)

"In the (COVID) emergency, the government gave (fund administration) to the Scottish Foundation – that's the way it should be. These people do it for a living. For me, the Council is power ... Funding should never be through the council – they are too biased. They have their own wee pet projects ... If it was an (external) funder, everybody would be on an even keel, where they feel that even if they don't get it, that's OK."

(Interview 5, unsuccessful applicant)

Second, as discussed in Chapter 3, there was considerable disappointment that local panels, involving both community and voluntary sector representatives with local knowledge, had not been convened to review applications for each sector, and a strong desire to address this in any future funding rounds.

"In terms of this or future funds, unless they have the people that day by day are experienced in what the need is out there involved in a bid process, it's going to fail. It's crucial that both the Third Sector and other parts of the community are involved in the process. In that way, you raise the bar of accountability and heighten the awareness of city officials at the same time. It's a win/win situation."

(Group 6, unsuccessful applicant)

It is worth noting that these two options are not necessarily mutually exclusive - the Fund could be administered by an external body that also convenes local expert panels, with input from local panels to review applications collectively.

It is also important to note that while there was strong support for local panels to be involved in reviewing bids, participants were generally opposed to the idea that decisions over which organisations were funded should be taken using a participatory budgeting approach. There was a perception that participatory budgeting often creates a '*beauty contest*', which disadvantages many essential services and minority group services that may have narrower appeal than, for example, children's charities.

As already discussed in Chapter 3, there was also a strong view that there should have been an Equalities Impact Assessment of the actual outcomes of the GCF decisions, and not only of the overall design of the Fund.

Changes to the design of the Fund

The changes discussed above relate to how the implementation of the existing GCF could be improved in future funding rounds - they do not necessarily require fundamental changes to its design, but are rather about ensuring that design is implemented as effectively as possible. In this final section of the report, we consider views on potential changes to the actual design of the Council's funding model for the Third Sector.

The survey asked whether respondents would support or oppose a number of potential changes to the way in which the Council funds the Third Sector in Glasgow (Table 4.2). The suggestion with the most support was setting tighter minimum standards around equalities and inclusion for organisations applying to the fund (66% of respondents supported this idea), followed by ring-fencing for specific types of Third Sector services (63%) and setting much more specific strategic goals for any future discretionary grant (63%). Over half of respondents expressed support for setting tighter minimum governance standards for organisations applying to the fund (59%) and ring fencing of funding for Third Sector services for specific groups of people (55%).

Lower levels of support were expressed for setting tighter minimum standards around climate impacts (49%) and removing the minimum (48%) and maximum (38%) grant sizes. However, it is important to note that none of these possible changes are entirely uncontentious – with the exception of tighter minimum standards around equalities and inclusion, all of these potential changes were opposed by at least 1 in 10 respondents, rising to around a third who were opposed to removing or increasing the maximum grant.

Larger organisations (with annual incomes of £500,000 or more) were more likely than small or medium-sized organisations to support more significant changes to the fund, like ring-fencing or setting much more specific strategic goals for the fund - for example, 78% of respondents from organisations with incomes of £500,000 or more supported setting much more specific strategic goals for the fund, compared with 61% of respondents from organisations with incomes between £100,000 and £499,999 and 56% of respondents from organisations with incomes under £100,000 a year. This may indicate a greater level of uncertainty among smaller organisations about what such changes might mean for their ability to access Council funding.

Table 4.2: Support for introducing specific features to the 2023 GCF

		Strongly support	Tend to support	Neither support nor oppose	Tend to oppose	Strongly oppose	Don't know/prefer not to say
The ring-fencing of pots of council funding for specific types of services delivered by the Third Sector	%	24	39	11	12	5	8
The ring-fencing of pots of council funding for Third Sector services for specific groups of people	%	21	34	23	12	6	4
Setting much more specific strategic goals for any future discretionary grant	%	28	35	21	8	4	4
Removing or reducing the minimum grant organisations can apply for (set at £20,000 per year for 2020-2023)	%	20	28	25	17	6	4
Removing or increasing the maximum grant organisations can apply for (set at £200,000 per year for 2020-2023)	%	17	21	25	20	12	4
Setting tighter minimum governance standards for organisations applying to the Fund	%	26	33	22	12	3	4
Setting tighter minimum standards around equalities and inclusion for organisations applying to the Fund	%	29	37	22	4	3	5
Setting tighter minimum standards around climate impact for organisations applying to the Fund	%	18	31	29	8	7	8

Base = all respondents (241)

Most of the potential changes shown in Table 4.2 were discussed in more detail in the focus groups and interviews.

Alternatives to a single 'discretionary' fund

A key topic of discussion in the focus groups and interviews was whether the model of having a single fund that almost any Third Sector organisation in Glasgow could apply to for Council support was the right approach in terms of meeting the wider aims of the fund - supporting partnership with the Third Sector to meet the Council's strategic goals around poverty and inequality.

There was some criticism of the use of the term 'discretionary' to describe Council funding for Third Sector services in Glasgow, as well as criticism of the overall 'discretionary' model, which was seen as requiring Third Sector organisations to effectively 'compete' with each other for a limited pot of money.

"Councillors cannot use the word funding without saying, 'discretionary.' It's like group think. I'm sorry, it's not discretionary to fund advice projects to stop people from becoming homeless and saving the council money."

(Group 6, unsuccessful applicant)

"I have a fundamental problem with the question (of what types of services a discretionary fund is appropriate for). What is the council trying to do here? They are trying to make a cohesive sector but also throwing us into a cutthroat marketplace. I'm fed up with being asked by councils whose funding should be cut if not ours."

(Group 2, unsuccessful applicant)

However, even among those who were less critical of a model based around funding pots to which the Third Sector applies, questions were raised about whether a single funding pot, with a single application process, can work effectively to distribute funding across very different sizes and types of organisation and services. 'Comparing apples and pears' was a recurrent phrase across groups - there was a belief that it was very difficult to compare different types of services within one assessment process, and to come up with criteria and scoring that is equally fair to all.

Options for addressing this issue focused on either funding some types of services in a different way, from other sources (including providing 'core funding' for services that were seen as providing services that the Council would otherwise be required to provide), splitting up the GCF into different funds with different outcomes, or ring-fencing funding for particular types of services or particular groups of service users within the GCF or any successor fund.

"Different sectors of the Third Sector provide different benefits, different roles and meet different needs within Glasgow and need different strategic outcomes. It's not appropriate to make everybody fit the same funding outcomes... Ideally at a minimum there needs to be a separate fund for arts and culture. But probably there should be more different funds."

(Interview 2, unsuccessful applicant)

There was a particularly strong view among some participants (including some outwith the advice sector) that advice provision needed to be either ring-fenced or funded as 'core', since it was seen as essential to delivering the Council's financial inclusion strategy. This was accompanied by the suggestion that the Council conduct a more formal review of what is required in terms of advice provision across the city in

order to be able to effectively resource the delivery of this strategy. It was also suggested that the Council might need to re-consider how it funds organisations that promote and support equality groups, since there was a perception that equality organisations had been ‘squeezed’ by being put in a “*competitive process against smaller and city wide organisations.*”

However, although considerable support was expressed for ring-fencing in principle, in both the survey and across the focus groups and interviews, this was by no means universal, and some significant reservations were also expressed. In particular, it was suggested that there would inevitably be losers in this process, perhaps particularly among organisations who serve needs that cut across a number of priorities for which funding might be ‘ring-fenced’. It was also commented that agreeing which areas funding should be ring-fenced for would be very challenging:

“Everybody will tell you the same, if you ask ten people that, you’ll get ten different answers. Because of that, I don’t think anything should be ringfenced.”

(Interview 6, non-applicant)

This view finds some support in the fact that 17 of the 19 types of service included in the survey were mentioned as an area that ought to have ring-fenced funding by at least 20% of those who favoured ring-fencing in principle. Similarly, 7 of the 8 specific groups of service user listed in the survey were mentioned by at least 33% of respondents who favoured ring-fencing of money for specific groups of people (see Annex B, Tables B.1 and B.2 for figures).

Reservations around the feasibility and appropriateness of further ring-fencing were also related to concerns about the overall amount of money available to support the Third Sector in Glasgow, and whether it was possible to sub-divide this any further in a fair manner:

“I don’t know what the solution is, because it seems intuitive that they should be split in a way, you shouldn’t have colleges going for the same funding as a grassroots community with two staff or whatever. But at the same time, I don’t think that is the answer because if you did disaggregate, then you would get a big pot of money and then the rest of us fighting for crumbs amongst ourselves, and we don’t want that either.”

(Group 6, unsuccessful applicant)

Although participants appreciated that the amount of money the Council has available is limited, there was nonetheless some resistance to the notion that the amount allocated to the GCF was fixed, and that this was all that could be made available to support the Third Sector:

“I think their funding for everything that’s what needs to be looked at. ... Look at city budgets; the Community Fund is a drop in ocean... The Third Sector we’re the best sector. We impact communities.”

(Group 1, successful applicant)

There was also a recognition that ‘*Funding for the third sector cannot be the challenge for GCC alone*’. It was suggested that the Council and its partners need to work more closely together not only to agree

shared priorities, but also to find the best ways of working together to fund services to achieve shared aims.

Finally, it is worth noting that, just as there was little support for participatory budgeting (as distinct from involving local panels in assessing bids), there was also little appetite to replace a 'discretionary' fund with a more direct competitive commissioning procurement route. It was suggested that competitive commissioning would exacerbate issues around the Council not always being best placed to know what is needed in individual local areas and would also create barriers to funding small (but effective) organisations who cannot easily compete in this kind of procurement process. It was suggested that it would be better to find a way to work more collegiately at local level around what is needed, and then to enable Third Sector organisations to apply for funding collectively rather than competitively.

Minimum and maximum grant sizes

As shown in Table 4.2, there was somewhat more support overall for removing or reducing the minimum grant size (£20,000) compared with support for removing or increasing the indicative maximum grant (£200,000) - 48% supported the former, while 38% supported the latter (23%/33% were opposed respectively).

Participants in the focus groups and interviews suggested that setting a £20,000 minimum might have encouraged some organisations to artificially 'scale up' what they applied for. It may also have excluded some small organisations that might deliver valuable services the Council should, in principle, be willing to support. However, a counterpoint was that there are other organisations that provide very small grants, so it is not necessarily appropriate for the Council to do so.

There was less discussion within the focus groups and interviews of views on the maximum grant size. While some noted that the indicative maximum level had been challenging for bigger organisations who deliver large services (and may previously have received bigger grants through the IGF), others felt it was a reasonable limit:

"If you get £200,000, you could be able to be able to source the other £50,000. And I'm sure other community organisations are the same, no matter how much money you get, it's never enough. The community need is always there."

(Interview 6, non-applicant)

Length of grants

The relatively longer-term nature of GCF funding (which allows organisations to apply for up to three years of funding) was one feature of the fund that attracted more positive comments.

"On the whole, it allows you to plan... The continuous year-to-year existence was tiresome as you are always chasing down funding applications."

(Group 2, unsuccessful applicant)

One view was the Fund should allow for even longer-term grants to enable planning. However, it was also noted that, for organisations that are not successful, multi-year funding cycles means that they are 'locked out' of Council funding for longer. There was also a suggestion that making funding periods too

long might lead to some complacency around what is delivered, in the light of changing community needs:

"I'm not saying they're not doing fantastic work, but they become comfortable in getting that funding and just doing what they're doing. But it's not enough. COVID and lockdown has proved it's not enough. The need has grown. ... Over longer periods, it gives you a chance to build and grow but it also gives you more chance to grow complacent."

(Interview 6, non-applicant)

Annex A - Survey questionnaire

This questionnaire was designed to be completed online – the content below was converted into a fully online script with automatic routing. The routing instructions (in capitals) are written for the Ipsos MORI scripter.

Introduction screen

Thank you very much for taking part in this survey. It is being conducted by **Ipsos MORI**, the independent research organisation, on behalf of Glasgow City Council. The findings will feed into the Council's review of the Glasgow Communities Fund.

The survey should only take around **15-20 minutes** to complete. There are no right or wrong answers – we are just interested in your views.

All responses are confidential – Ipsos MORI will write a report for Glasgow City Council about the findings, but we will not report anything in a way that would allow any individuals or organisations to be identified. Data is securely stored on the Ipsos Server and will be deleted after the end of the project. Your answers will only be used for research purposes.

Taking part is completely voluntary – you are free to refuse to answer particular questions or to stop the survey at any time.

If you would like any more information about the survey, please contact GCFSurvey@ipsos-mori.com. If you would like to read the survey privacy policy, this can be accessed here: <https://media.ipsosinteractive.com/projects/S2021867/docs/privacy.pdf>

Please click to confirm you are happy to continue.

About your organisation

Q1a ASK ALL
SINGLE CODE

First, a few questions about your organisation.

Does your organisation operate only in Glasgow, or do you have services or offices in other parts of Scotland or the UK?

1. Operate in Glasgow only
2. Also have services in other parts of Scotland / the UK
3. Don't know
4. Prefer not to say

Q1b ASK ALL
MULTI-CODE OK (THOUGH 1 SHOULD BE UNIQUE CODE)

Which geographic area or areas of Glasgow does your organisation provide services in?

If you are not sure what areas are included in the answer options, you can check here:

<https://www.glasgowcpp.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=16039>

1. City Wide
2. North East Sector Partnership area
3. North West Sector Partnership area
4. South Sector Partnership area
5. Don't Know
6. Prefer not to say

Q2 ASK ALL
MULTI-CODE OK

Which of the following areas does your organisation primarily focus on?

1. Arts and cultural activities
2. Buildings / Facilities (including managing buildings for community use)
3. Children and Young people's services
4. Community learning and development
5. Disability support / advocacy
6. Drug and alcohol support
7. Faith groups / faith-based support
8. Family support
9. Financial / legal advice and information
10. Food / nutrition
11. Health and social care, including mental health
12. Housing and/or homelessness
13. Justice
14. LGBTIQ+ equality and support
15. Older people
16. Race equality
17. Third Sector infrastructure and development
18. Volunteering, employability and personal development
19. Women's sector, including Violence Against Women services
20. Other – please say what
21. Don't know
22. Prefer not to say

Q3a ASK ALL
SINGLE CODE

We'd like to understand the range of sizes of organisation who take part in this survey. To do this, we'd like to ask about the annual income of your organisation in Glasgow (as opposed to nationwide, if you're part of a larger organisation).

Do you know – even if only approximately – the annual income of your organisation in Glasgow?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Prefer not to say

Q3b ASK IF Q3a = 1
SINGLE CODE
What is the annual income of your organisation in Glasgow?

1. Under £25,000
2. £25,000 to £99,999
3. £100,000 to £249,999
4. £250,000 to £499,999
5. £500,000 to £999,999
6. £1,000,000 or over
7. Don't Know
8. Prefer not to say

Q4 ASK ALL
SINGLE CODE
How many **paid** staff members does your organisation have in Glasgow?

1. None
2. 1 or 2
3. 3-5
4. 6-9
5. 10-20
6. More than 20
7. Don't know
8. Prefer not to say

Awareness / experience of the Glasgow Communities Fund

ASK ALL
SINGLE CODE

Q5. As you may know, the Integrated Grant Fund was the Council's main funding stream for the third sector in Glasgow from 2010 to 2020.

Did your organisation receive any funding from Glasgow City Council's **Integrated Grant Fund** (IGF) at any point?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know
4. Prefer not to say

ASK ALL
SINGLE CODE

Q6. The Integrated Grant Fund was replaced in 2020 by the **Glasgow Communities Fund**. How much, if anything, would you say you know about the Glasgow Communities Fund?

1. A great deal
2. A fair amount
3. Just a little
4. Heard of it, but don't know anything about it
5. Never heard of it
6. Don't know
7. Prefer not to say

ASK ALL
SINGLE CODE

Q7a. Did your organisation apply for funding from the Glasgow Communities Fund for 2020-23?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know
4. Prefer not to say

Q7b. ASK ALL CODED 1 AT Q7a
MULTI-CODE OK

Did your organisation apply to the Glasgow Communities Fund via the City-wide stream, or one of the sector partnership area streams? (PLEASE SELECT ALL THAT APPLY)

1. City Wide
2. North East Sector Partnership area
3. North West Sector Partnership area
4. South Sector Partnership area
5. Don't Know
6. Prefer not to say

ASK ALL WHO APPLIED FOR FUNDING (CODE 1 AT Q7a)
MULTI-CODE

Q8. Which of these categories best describes the kind of services you applied for funding to cover?

1. Financial Inclusion/Wellbeing
2. Capacity Building/Community Empowerment
3. Arts & Cultural Activities
4. Health Improvement & Wellbeing
5. Youth Services
6. Other (please specify)
7. Don't know
8. Prefer not to say

ASK ALL WHO APPLIED FOR FUNDING (CODE 1 AT Q7a)
SINGLE CODE

Q9a. How much funding, in total, did your organisation apply to Glasgow Communities Fund for?

1. £20,000 to £99,999
2. £100,000 to £249,999
3. £250,000 to £499,999
4. £500,000 or more
5. Don't know
6. Prefer not to say

ASK ALL WHO GAVE A RESPONSE AT Q9a (i.e. coded 1-4, not 5 or 6)
SINGLE CODE

Q9b. What time period was this funding intended to cover?

1. 1 year or less
2. 2 years
3. 3 years
4. Don't know
5. Prefer not to say

ASK ALL APPLIED FOR FUNDING (CODE 1 AT Q7a)
SINGLE CODE

Q10. Was your organisation's application for funding from the Glasgow Communities Fund successful?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know
4. Prefer not to say

Questions for successful applicants
--

ASK ALL RECEIVED FUNDING (CODE 1 AT Q10)
SINGLE CODE

Q11. Roughly what percentage of the Glasgow Communities Fund funding you applied for were you actually awarded?

1. Under 30%
2. 30% to 49%
3. 50% to 59%
4. 60% or more
5. Don't know
6. Prefer not to say

ASK ALL RECEIVED FUNDING (CODE 1 AT Q10)
SINGLE CODE

Q12. How much funding, in total, is your organisation scheduled to receive from the Glasgow Communities Fund for 2020-2023?

1. £20,000 to £99,999
2. £100,000 to £249,999
3. £250,000 to £499,999
4. £500,000 or more
5. Don't know
6. Prefer not to say

Questions for all applicants (successful and unsuccessful)

ASK ALL WHO APPLIED TO THE GCF (ALL CODED 1 AT Q7a)
SINGLE CODE PER STATEMENT
REVERSE ORDER OF 1-4 FOR HALF THE SAMPLE

Q13. Thinking about the communication and information you received about the Glasgow Communities Fund, how clear or unclear were each of the following?

- a. Information about the purpose of the Fund
- b. Information about eligibility criteria for the Fund
- c. Guidance on the application process
- d. Explanations of the scoring process
- e. Feedback on your organisation's application

ASK F. ONLY OF SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS (CODE 1 AT Q10)

- f. Guidance on how Glasgow Communities Fund spending would be monitored and evaluated
1. Very clear
 2. Fairly clear
 3. Fairly unclear
 4. Very unclear
 5. Did not receive any information or communication relevant to this
 6. Don't know
 7. Prefer not to say

ASK ALL WHO APPLIED TO THE GCF (ALL CODED 1 AT Q7a)
SINGLE CODE PER STATEMENT
REVERSE ORDER OF 1-5 FOR HALF THE SAMPLE

- Q14. And thinking about the timescales involved in the application process, did you feel the time allowed was too long, too short, or about right for each of the following?
- a. The timescale for submitting an initial application
 - b. The time allowed for clarifications after initial applications
 - c. The length of time between submitting an application and receiving a decision
1. Much too long
 2. A bit too long
 3. About right
 4. A bit too short
 5. Much too short
 6. Don't know
 7. Prefer not to say

Questions for non-applicants

ASK ALL NON-APPLICANTS (CODE 2 AT Q7a)
MULTI-CODED OK
RANDOMISE ORDER OF 1-9

- Q15. Which, if any, of the following were reasons why your organisation did not apply for funding from the Glasgow Communities Fund?
1. Unaware of it / hadn't heard of it
 2. Timescales for applying were too tight
 3. Put off by minimum grant size
 4. Put off by maximum grant size
 5. Level of administration involved in applying
 6. Views of Glasgow City Council as a funder
 7. Level of administration involved in managing the grant
 8. Didn't think my organisation would be eligible
 9. Receive funding from other sources
 10. Some other reason (please say what)
 11. None of these reasons
 12. Don't know

Overall assessment and views on the future of the fund

ASK ALL
SINGLE CODE PER STATEMENT
REVERSE ORDER OF 1-5 FOR HALF THE SAMPLE
RANDOMISE ORDER OF a. TO f.

Q16. Overall, how successful or unsuccessful do you think the Glasgow Communities Fund has been in ...

- a. Opening up Glasgow City Council funding to a wider range of third sector organisations?
 - b. Helping to support a vibrant third sector in Glasgow?
 - c. Promoting partnership working between Glasgow City Council and the third sector?
 - d. Helping the third sector to meet unmet needs across Glasgow?
 - e. Helping the third sector to address inequalities across Glasgow?
 - f. Helping the Council to deliver its strategic priorities for 2020-2023?
-
1. Very successful
 2. Fairly successful
 3. Neither successful nor unsuccessful
 4. Fairly unsuccessful
 5. Very unsuccessful
 6. Don't know
 7. Prefer not to say

ASK ALL
SINGLE CODE PER STATEMENT
REVERSE ORDER OF 1-5 FOR HALF THE SAMPLE
RANDOMISE ORDER OF a. TO h.

Q17. Thinking about the next round of the Glasgow Communities Fund in 2023, how far would you support or oppose each of the following?

- a. The ring-fencing of pots of council funding for **specific types of services** delivered by the third sector
 - b. The ring-fencing of pots of council funding for third sector services for **specific groups of people**
 - c. Setting much **more specific strategic goals** for any future discretionary grant
 - d. Removing or reducing the **minimum** grant organisations can apply for (set at £20,000 per year for 2020-2023)
 - e. Removing or increasing the **maximum** grant organisations can apply for (set at £200,000 per year for 2020-2023)
 - f. Setting tighter minimum **governance standards** for organisations applying to the Fund
 - g. Setting tighter minimum **standards around equalities and inclusion** for organisations applying to the Fund
 - h. Setting tighter minimum **standards around climate impact** for organisations applying to the Fund
1. Strongly support
 2. Tend to support
 3. Neither support nor oppose
 4. Tend to oppose
 5. Strongly oppose
 6. Don't know
 7. Prefer not to say

ASK IF SUPPORT (CODE 1 OR 2) AT Q17a
ALLOW MULTI-CODE

Q18. You said you support ring-fencing of council funding for specific types of services delivered by the third sector. Which type of services would you like to see funding ring-fenced for?

1. Arts and cultural activities
2. Buildings / Facilities (including managing buildings for community use)
3. Children and Young people's services
4. Community learning and development
5. Disability support / advocacy
6. Drug and alcohol support
7. Faith groups / faith-based support
8. Family support
9. Financial / legal advice and information
10. Food / nutrition
11. Health and social care, including mental health
12. Housing and/or homelessness
13. Justice
14. LGBTIQ+ equality and support
15. Older people
16. Race equality
17. Third Sector infrastructure and development
18. Volunteering, employability and personal development
19. Women's sector, including Violence Against Women services
20. Other – please say what
21. Don't know
22. Prefer not to say

ASK IF SUPPORT (CODE 1 OR 2) AT Q17b
ALLOW MULTI-CODE

Q19. You said you support ring-fencing of council funding for third sector services to particular groups of people. Which groups of people would you like to see funding ring-fenced for?

1. Children and Young people
2. Disabled people
3. LGBTIQ+
4. Minority ethnic groups
5. Older people
6. People with drug and alcohol issues
7. Women
8. Working age adults
9. Other group – please say who
10. Don't know
11. Prefer not to say

ASK ALL
SINGLE CODE

Q20. How likely or unlikely are you to apply for funding from the Glasgow Communities Fund in the future?

1. Very likely
2. Fairly likely
3. Fairly unlikely
4. Very unlikely
5. Don't know

ASK ALL
OPEN TEXT

Q21. Finally, thinking about the future of Glasgow City Council funding for the third sector in Glasgow. What, if any, changes would you make to the current approach of the Glasgow Communities Fund to ensure that limited resources are distributed in the most effective way to tackle poverty and inequality in Glasgow?

ASK ALL

Thank you very much for taking part in this survey. Your answers will be kept confidential and anonymous. They will feed into Ipsos MORI's report to Glasgow City Council about views of the Glasgow Communities Fund, to inform their review of the Fund.

Annex B - Additional tables

Table B.1: Types of Third Sector services respondents would like to see ring-fenced Council funding for (%)

	%
Children and young people's services	53
Health and social care, including mental health	49
Disability support / advocacy	43
Community learning and development	40
Family support	39
Women's sector, including Violence Against Women services	37
Race equality	35
Arts and cultural activities	30
Drug and alcohol support	30
Older people	30
Buildings / Facilities (including managing buildings for community use)	28
Housing and/or homelessness	28
Volunteering, employability and personal development	28
LGBTIQ+ equality and support	25
Food / nutrition	24
Third Sector infrastructure and development	23
Financial / legal advice and information	22
Justice	16
Other	8
Faith groups / faith based support	5
Don't know	1

Base = 152 (all who supported ring-fencing of Council funding for specific types of services)

Table B.2: Groups of people respondents would like to see funding ring-fenced for (%)

	%
Children and young	64
Minority ethnic groups	58
Disabled people	54
Older people	51
Women	48
People with drug and alcohol issues	41
LGBTIQ+	34
Working age adults	23
People with poor mental health	3
Other group	10

Base = 132 (all who support ring-fencing services for particular groups of people)

For more information

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