



Connecting All Communities by Shukri Adan

Question1:

Our Collaboration with Hackney Council on the VCS Strategy and Grants Program

Our collaboration with Hackney Council on the development of the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) strategy and the revamped grants program was rooted in a shared vision to ensure that every community, especially those historically underrepresented, felt seen, heard, and supported.

As community advocates and connectors, we played a key role in:

- Bridging grassroots voices with institutional planning, ensuring that the strategy reflected the lived realities of diverse communities across Hackney.
- Co-designing inclusive consultation processes, where faith groups, food migrant led initiatives, and informal support networks could contribute meaningfully.
- Advocating for equity in funding, helping shape a grants program that prioritizes accessibility, transparency, and capacity-building for smaller organizations.
- Championing cultural sensitivity and dignity, embedding values that honour the unique strengths and challenges of each community.

One of the most powerful aspects of this collaboration was the council's openness to reimagining its approach from transactional funding to transformational partnerships. Together, we helped shift the narrative from "service delivery to community empowerment.

This work was not just strategic, it was personal. It reflected our belief that healing, inclusion, and resilience begin when communities are trusted to lead. The revamped grants program is now a tool for connection, not just a way to build bridges across Hackney's rich tapestry of cultures and experiences.



Question 2:

Support Needs of Connecting All Communities and How the Council and HCVS Can Assist

As a grassroots organisation rooted in lived experience and cultural connection, Connecting All Communities plays a vital role in bridging gaps between underserved communities and mainstream services. To sustain and grow our impact, we rely on targeted support from the wider Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS), Hackney Council, and Hackney CVS (HCVS).

Our Key Support Requirements

1. Capacity Building and Training support such as resources, guidance, and learning opportunities provided to help organisation's especially in the voluntary and community sector grow stronger, more effective, and sustainable.

Funding Readiness, Support with Grant writing and fundraising strategies,

- Mentoring and Peer Learning
- Access to Resources
- Toolkits, templates, and guides.
- Why It Matters For small or emerging groups like Connecting All Communities, capacity building ensures you're not just surviving but thriving. It helps us deliver services confidently, meet funder requirements, and grow our impact sustainably.

2. Sustainable Funding Access

- Clear, accessible grant opportunities tailored to small, community led groups.

3. Multiyear funding options to enable long term planning and stability.

4. Outreach and Visibility

- Help raise awareness of our work within the borough.

5. Culturally Competent Support

- Recognition of the unique barriers faced by migrant, faith-based, food network and multilingual/multicultural communities.
- Support that respects and uplifts communities' values and lived realities.



How Hackney Council and HCVS Can Help

Hackney Council can:

- Continue co producing strategies with grassroots groups.
- Offer simplified application processes.
- Provide access to community spaces and logistical support for events.
- Hackney CVS can Deliver tailored training and mentoring for emerging leaders.

At Connecting All Communities, we believe in true inclusion and are trusted to help set it. With the right support, we can continue to build bridges, foster healing, and ensure that every voice in Hackney is heard and valued.