

A group of children in white t-shirts and blue jeans are engaged in a tree-planting activity outdoors. In the foreground, a young girl with long dark hair is smiling and using a small shovel to dig in the soil. In the background, other children are also working with trees and tools. The scene is set in a grassy area with a bridge or overpass visible in the distance under a bright sky.

My Funding Central: a funding lifeline for the UK's vital charities sector

It should go without saying that the charities and voluntary sector makes a valuable contribution to society. In economic terms, NCVO has **estimated** that the sector accounts for over 950,000 jobs and over £20 billion in GDP. The social value of the sector is harder to measure, but there's no doubt that the thousands of charities and millions of volunteers across the UK deliver vital support in areas such as homelessness, healthcare and education.

The impacts of the pandemic

During the past two years, the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the charities and voluntary sector have been profound. The Charities Commission has **reported** that over 90% of charities have experienced some negative impact from COVID-19, while 60% lost income. At the same time, the voluntary sector has experienced a **surge in demand** for its services.

The importance of grants

While charities rely heavily on donations from the public for their funding, contracts and grants from trusts, foundations and government generate almost as much of the sector's income. There are thousands of funders awarding grants to charities for a wide range of causes, from poverty relief and housing to educational and community arts projects. Keeping track of all these funding opportunities is challenging, particularly for smaller charities.



An affordable, essential solution

One solution to ensure that charities are up-to-date with information on grant funding opportunities is **My Funding Central** from software specialists the Idox Group.

Now in its second year of operation, the My Funding Central database provides easy access to thousands of grants and social investment opportunities from local, national, and international funding sources – all in one place. According to Paula Baker, Director, HeadsUp Mental Health Awareness CIC, “It’s an easy-to-use service, which has benefitted us greatly. We applied for eight grants through My Funding Central and secured £14,500 from the four grants we were successful in”. HeadsUp is a charity that works with children and young people, promoting understanding, raising awareness, and breaking down the stigma that surrounds mental health issues.

My Funding Central service is available to organisations with an annual income below £1 million and free **for organisations whose income is under £30,000**. Larger charity and voluntary organisations can still access Idox Group’s GrantFinder service which works with organisations with an income over £1 million. My Funding Central software is designed for easy use, recognising that smaller charities generally do not have specialist staff focused on finding and applying for funding. Around 3,000 small charities use the service every month to find funding to keep existing projects going or to expand their work. “My Funding Central’s service is totally invaluable to us as a tiny, fledgling charity with really limited staff capacity. The software has helped us find and apply for relevant funding opportunities that we otherwise wouldn’t know about or be able to access,” says Lucy Whitehouse, Founder and CEO of Fumble.org.uk, a sex education charity, offering non-judgemental advice and information.

A dedicated team of expert researchers monitor, verify and report daily on thousands of funding sources, including charitable trusts, foundations, councils, national government and corporate sponsors. And because the service comes from the same reliable source as GrantFinder – the leading funding database in the UK and Europe – My Funding Central has ready-made relationships with funding administrators and fund managers across a wide range of organisations.



All part of the service

Subscribers to My Funding Central have immediate access to a suite of services tailored to meet the needs of the charities and voluntary sector. This means that users of the service can:

- search the database to identify opportunities that match their project;
- find niche funding opportunities that other funding searches typically miss;
- narrow searches to funding available in specific geographic areas;
- receive alerts about new funding opportunities tailored to their needs direct to their inbox;
- get the latest news on funding.

The database is easy to use, with key eligibility criteria highlighted, and information on how to apply fully explained. There’s no jargon, and because all of the funding opportunities have been handpicked by My Funding Central researchers to be right for the sector, users can be sure that they are current and relevant to their needs.

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Director
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A lifeline for the future

Over the past two years, the charities and voluntary sector has proved its resilience. Many charities and voluntary organisations have found ways of adapting to the restrictions caused by the pandemic, despite the challenges of increasing demands and falling incomes.

Now, as it emerges from the worst of the restrictions, the sector is facing a still uncertain future. The voluntary sector is a huge, diverse and vital part of our society, and now more than ever it needs funding to continue its work with and for communities.

For many charities, My Funding Central is already a lifeline for connecting to funding streams. It offers the sector a reliable and up-to-date resource that can point charities towards the funding they need.

For more information or to subscribe, visit [My Funding Central](#).

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