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Process Evaluation of the Coronavirus Community Support Fund (CCSF)

Final Report

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Executive Summary

Introduction and context

Ipsos MORI, in partnership with New Philanthropy Capital (NPC) and The Tavistock Institute of Human Relations (TIHR), was commissioned to undertake an evaluation of the **Coronavirus Community Support Fund (CCSF)**. The CCSF was targeted at small and medium sized community organisations delivering activities and support to people affected by the COVID-19 crisis. A total of **£199m** was allocated to CCSF and **£187m** was distributed after administration and evaluation costs had been deducted. It was funded through the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and The National Lottery Community Fund (The Fund) was appointed to manage and distribute the funding.

This document summarises findings from the process evaluation of the CCSF. It draws on grant management data, customer experience survey results, grantholder survey results and interviews with grantholders. It also draws on interviews and round tables with The Fund and DCMS staff involved in the design and delivery of the CCSF.

Engagement and reach

The Fund undertook a range of promotion and engagement activities to raise awareness of the CCSF:

- **Direct communications** to organisations they had an existing relationship with
- **Amplification** of Government communications about CCSF
- **Online promotion** through their website and social media channels, as well as the sector press
- **Targeted outreach** through partners and stakeholders at national and regional level.

A total of **13,835** applications were made for CCSF funding and **8,247** grants were awarded. The funding reached those organisations it was intended to, with the majority going to small or medium sized community organisations. CCSF grant funding was distributed to every region and almost every local authority in England, with the highest concentrations going to the Northern regions and London.

Engagement and Reach of CCSF

72%	Of grantholders rated the application process as fairly easy or very easy	
70%	Of applicants accessed information from The Fund's website	
81%	Of applicants were satisfied with the experience	

45% Of CCSF grantholders were 'new' to The Fund
89% Were small or medium sized organisations
24% Targeted people with disabilities
19% Targeted people from Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic communities

The factors that **worked well** in relation to engagement and reach included:

- Having Funding Officers based within local communities
- Taking a strategic and planned approach to outreach activities
- Working through partners to reach people and communities most in need.

Central Government announcements about the CCSF, including during televised Coronavirus daily briefings, also helped raise awareness of the funding opportunity amongst eligible organisations.

Distribution of funding

The CCSF was distributed via The Fund's existing products – **Simple** (grants up to and including £10k) and **Standard** (grants over £10k). The processes for these products were adapted for the CCSF:

- **Additional information** was recorded on grant applicants, including the purpose of the grant – whether to address increased or changed demand as a result of COVID or liquidity issues, intended impacts and financial status.
- **A DCMS Rapid Review panel** was established to assess applications valued at £10k and over.
- **A Joint Panel** was established to assess grants of over £300k and/or deemed risky or noteworthy.

Most successful applicants were **satisfied with the speed at which award decisions were made**, although funding staff were less satisfied with the speed at which applications were processed and the lack of communication on progress with these. This stemmed from them usually having greater oversight and involvement in each stage. It aligns with feedback from grantholders that they would have welcomed greater clarity on the process and timings for award decisions to help with their planning.

500+

CCSF applications
received on first day

61 days

Average time from
application to decision

9 days

Average time from award
decision to funds being
distributed

Stakeholders involved in the design and delivery of CCSF felt that the **right balance** was achieved between getting the funding out at pace and managing risk. Key enablers for effective distribution of the CCSF funding included:

- **The Fund Grant Management System (GMS)** – which facilitated processing of applications
- **Alignment of application processes for CCSF with other COVID response funding** – creating a 'one door' approach for applicants to The Fund throughout the pandemic
- **Gathering early customer experience insights** – and communicating these in a timely manner to inform adaptations to processes once the CCSF had been launched
- **The established relationship between DCMS and The Fund** – a level of trust was established and this was further strengthened through a sense of shared endeavour to get the funding out to those people and communities most in need.

The main challenge faced was the volume and nature of applications received, which put unprecedented pressure on funding staff during a time when they were adapting to remote working and other issues associated with the pandemic and associated restrictions (such as home schooling and being isolated from friends and family).

Use of funding and grant management

The CCSF contributed to keeping some small and medium sized charities operating during the pandemic. Whilst application data would suggest that relatively few CCSF grants were intended to address liquidity issues faced by small and medium sized organisations in the sector, evidence from the evaluation suggests that this was in fact how it was used by many organisations. A key finding from the evaluation is that these two purposes cannot be easily separated, with most community organisations dependent on grant funding to enable them to continue delivering activities and support.

Despite the rapidly changing context, including the periods of local and national lockdown restrictions, the majority of grantholders were able to use the grant in the way they had intended. There was an element of flexibility built into grantholder agreements to enable them to adapt delivery if required and this was deemed critical to enabling them to deliver appropriate support to people and communities in need. As a result, most were able to be flexible and adaptive to this changing context and continue to deliver mainly as intended. However, the requirement for all grant funding to be used within six months did create challenges for some grantholders given the changing context and the impact of this on delivery.

There is evidence that the CCSF has facilitated increased partnership working amongst organisations in the sector. Almost half of survey respondents worked with at least one other organisation to deliver activities and support through CCSF, most commonly registered charities and community groups. This is a key finding relating to the impact and legacy of the CCSF.

Lessons learned

The pace at which the CCSF was mobilised and delivered was both a significant achievement and a challenge. The embedding of feedback loops, rapid reviews and real-time learning were found to be critical for reflecting on what was working well and less well, enabling adaptations to be made throughout the period of delivery.

The pandemic highlighted a lack of data and evidence on the impact of civil society as a whole (beyond individual charities). This was identified as an ongoing challenge to overcome so that in the future, it is possible to have an understanding of what the sector looks like at any one time, the value it brings from a public services perspective and its role in preventing the need for more acute services (or conversely, the value lost when an organisation or group of organisations closes). The impact and Value for Money strands of the current evaluation should help contribute to addressing this gap in evidence on the value of the work of civil society.

The commitment across Government to getting the funding out to those organisations working with people and communities in need was a key success factor in enabling the CCSF to be developed and delivered at pace. Additionally, the willingness of key stakeholders to work together to achieve this, combined with DCMS and The Fund's understanding of the VCSE sector, helped ensure that the design of the CCSF was appropriate and fit-for-purpose for the sector.

Given the rapidly changing context, making use of The Fund's existing products offered consistency and efficiency. The decision to give grantholders a degree of flexibility in their use of the funding was considered the right approach given the ongoing changes to lockdown restrictions across areas and as the crisis became more protracted than expected when the CCSF was initially conceived. Grantholders identified the ability to use the funding in a flexible way to cover core costs as critical to enabling them to continue to operate throughout the period of their grant.

Conclusions

The evidence suggests that the CCSF represented an effective route to distributing emergency response funding. The evaluation highlighted a number of lessons from the processes involved in the design, development and delivery of CCSF, the learning from which will be available should a similar response be required in future. The evidence points to four overarching lessons for the future design and implementation of emergency response funding.

- 1. If time permits, the approach should be strategic and aim to generate impact that is sustainable in the longer-term, recognising that this is not always possible or appropriate in the context of emergency funding.**
- 2. It should create a reflective environment by building in regular feedback loops to generate live insights and enable effective and timely adaptation when issues arise – this was a key success factor for CCSF.**
- 3. At the planning stage, consideration should be given to the resource required to distribute funding at this scale and pace and early measures taken to put this in place.**
- 4. Building on established relationships between policy makers and partners with existing grant distribution processes and relevant experience represents an effective approach to distributing emergency funding efficiently and effectively.**

1 Introduction and context

Ipsos MORI, in partnership with New Philanthropy Capital (NPC) and The Tavistock Institute of Human Relations (TIHR), was commissioned to undertake an **evaluation of the Coronavirus Community Support Fund**. The evaluation comprises four inter-related strands of work:

- **A process strand** to understand how the funding process has worked and to capture lessons to inform future emergency response funding
- **An impact strand** to assess the difference CCSF has made to the organisations that are funded, the people and communities that are supported, volunteers and wider society
- **A value for money strand (VfM)** to assess the value to the public purse that the funding achieves
- **A learning strand**, which aims to generate a range of real-time learning opportunities and outputs throughout the life of the programme for the benefit of grantholders and the wider sector.

This document reports the findings from the **process strand** of the evaluation. The findings from the other three strands have been reported separately.

1.1 Context and background to the CCSF

COVID-19 and the associated lockdown enforced by the UK Government in late March 2020 disproportionately affected some people and communities. Widespread recognition of these challenges led Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector representatives to voice their concerns about the financial health, resources and ability of VCSE organisations to meet the increasing and often changing nature of demand in the absence of Government intervention.

The Government in turn pledged £750 million in April 2020 to ensure VCSE organisations could continue to support people disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 crisis. This included £199 million which was allocated to the Coronavirus Community Support Fund (*hereafter referred to as the CCSF*). After deducting administration and evaluation costs of £11 million, a total of £188 million CCSF funding was available to disburse to charities. The final figure awarded was £187 million, taking account of grant variations and withdrawals.

The CCSF had two primary objectives:

- **To increase community support to people disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 crisis**, through the work of civil society organisations
- **To reduce temporary closures of essential charities and social enterprises**, ensuring services for people disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 have the financial resources to operate, and so reduce the burden on public services.

The CCSF was funded by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), and The National Lottery Community Fund (The Fund) was appointed as Principal to manage, distribute and oversee the funding. Grants management and evaluation expertise was provided by PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC), who were appointed by DCMS to support delivery of the package of emergency funding going into the VCSE sector, which included CCSF.

The funding window for applications was open between the 22nd May and 17th August 2020, which led to the first grants being awarded in early June 2020. Grants continued to be awarded until the end of

November 2020, and all successful applicants (*hereafter referred to as grantholders*) were given up to six months to spend their grant.

During the time that the CCSF was established and funding awarded, the context continued to change for people and communities, and for the organisations that received grant funding. This included two England-wide lockdowns, as well as a range of local and tiered restrictions applied in different regions, which in turn created challenges for organisations, their staff and volunteers in delivering the activities and support funded by the CCSF. This changing context has been considered in the reporting of the process evaluation findings.

The CCSF was distributed via TNCLF existing products:

- **Simple product:** grants up to and including £10k delivered via National Lottery Awards for All
- **Standard product:** grants over £10k.

Further information about the standard processes used to distribute Simple and Standard grants and the adaptations that were made to enable the rapid distribution of the CCSF is included in Chapter 3.

1.2 Aims and objectives of the process evaluation

The aims and objectives of the process evaluation are set out in Box 1.1. This report focuses on addressing these policy questions, and therefore on the efficacy of the application and decision-making processes that were developed and delivered to administer the CCSF. The focus for the evaluation was on assessing overall effectiveness and it was therefore out of scope to review and assess the effectiveness of each of the component parts of the application and decision-making processes.

Box 1.1: Key process evaluation policy questions

1. Has the funding reached the organisations as set out in the funding criteria?

Did the 'open but targeted' funding approach encourage applications from organisations delivering activities and support to people disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 crisis?

Did organisations from certain parts of the sector not apply? Who, why and how could they have been reached? What were the barriers to applying? (NB: the evaluation will not incorporate research with non-applicants and so the evidence available to address this subset of questions is likely to be limited).

2. How well has the process of distributing the funding worked for The Fund customers and staff?

There was a need to balance speed and fiduciary duties: if the application process had stressed speed over risk management would charities have received money faster? What would the trade-offs be in terms of risk of errors in awarding grants?

Which aspects of the CCSF process have worked most efficiently compared to other funding applicants may have applied for/received?

3. What can we learn from this about crisis response funding?

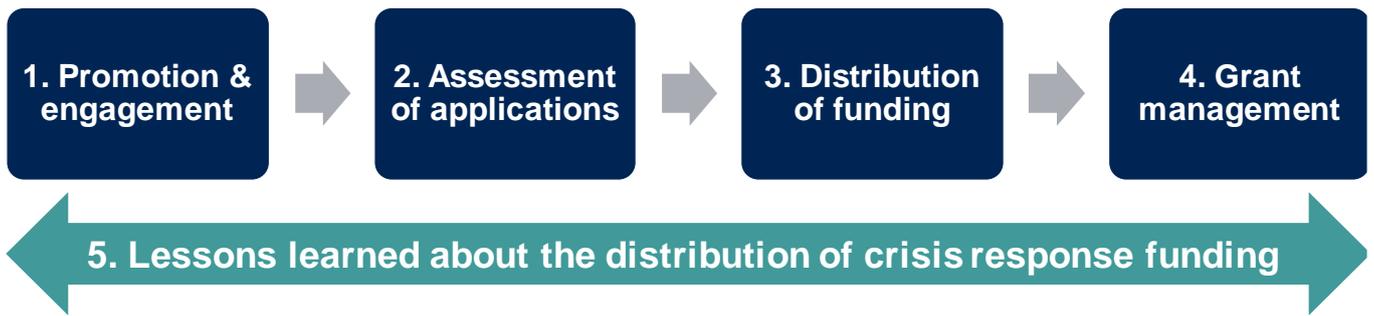
What can internal stakeholders tell us about CCSF's funding approach to help us learn and improve for future emergency funding programmes?

1.3 Methodology and sources of evidence

A **process evaluation framework** was developed at the evaluation scoping and design phase (see Annex A). This set out the key questions to be addressed through this strand of the evaluation and the sources of data and evidence that would be drawn on for this.

The findings presented in this report draw on data and evidence from multiple sources, which have been triangulated to report against the overarching process evaluation questions. This includes data from the:

- **The Fund Grant Management System (GMS)** – a cut of raw, uninterpreted data on CCSF applicants (13,835) and grantees (8,247) was shared with Ipsos MORI for analysis. This included all applicants and awards for CCSF between April and November 2020, with the data up to date as of 31 March 2021. It included data provided by applicants and grantees during the application process, data inputted by funding staff during the assessment and grant management process, and information about the organisations from The Fund.
- **Customer Experience (CX) Survey** – all applicants for CCSF funding were invited to complete a customer experience survey, which was administered by Kubi Kalloo on behalf of Ipsos MORI. Applicants were surveyed at one of four journey stages: 1) enquirers, 2) applicants awaiting decision, 3) successful applicants and 4) unsuccessful applicants. A total of 2,694 responses to the survey were received, representing a response rate of 25%.
- **Grantee survey** – a total of 6,712 responses were received from 8,179 CCSF grantees who were invited to take part in the survey in the sixth month of their grant, representing a response rate of 82%.
- **Qualitative interviews / round tables with The Fund and DCMS staff ('CCSF Stakeholders')** – three interviews and four round tables were undertaken with fourteen representatives from The Fund and three representatives from DCMS who had been involved in the design, setup, management and/or delivery of the CCSF. All interviews took place during December 2020 and January 2021. The key focus for the qualitative interviews was to capture the lessons learned from Fund Management (see Figure 1.1).
- **Qualitative interviews with grantees** – 268 qualitative interviews were conducted with a sample of CCSF grantees between January and May 2021. They were recruited from those who completed the grantee survey and gave their permission to be re-contacted for this purpose. Quotas were identified to ensure the sample was broadly representative of all CCSF grantees in terms of region, size of organisation and size of grant.

Figure 1.1: Fund Management Processes

1.4 Structure of document

The remainder of the document is structured as follows:

- **Chapter 2** – reports the process findings relating to engagement and reach of the CCSF
- **Chapter 3** – reports the process findings relating to the distribution of the CCSF grants
- **Chapter 4** – presents an assessment of the ways in which the CCSF funding was used
- **Chapter 5** – sets out the process findings relating to the lessons learned in relation to crisis response funding
- **Chapter 6** – presents key findings and conclusions from across the report.

2 Engagement and reach

Chapter Summary

- Approaches to promotion of the CCSF and engagement of eligible organisations included direct communications to organisations that The Fund had existing relationships with, targeted outreach at national and regional level and central Government announcements.
- The promotion and engagement activities undertaken were successful in generating applications from organisations that The Fund had not worked with previously. Almost half (45%) of CCSF grantholders were 'new' to The Fund.
- CCSF appears to have been successful in reaching those people and communities in need. CCSF grant funding was distributed to every region and almost every local authority in England. The regions with the highest levels of CCSF funding were also those with the highest concentrations of deprivation.
- The key factors identified as having worked well included having Funding Officers based within local communities, taking a strategic and planned approach to outreach activities and working through partners to reach people and communities most in need.
- On the first day that applications for the CCSF opened, all previous records held by The Fund broken in terms of the volume of applications received. Once this initial peak of applications had been processed, and as the volume of applications gradually slowed, regional teams were able to focus more time and resource on outreach activities.
- CCSF grant funding was distributed to every region and almost every local authority in England. Indicative regional funding allocations were identified at the outset to ensure appropriate distribution of funding by geography.
- CCSF was successful in reaching the organisations it was intended to – most of the funding went to small or medium sized organisations who intended to deliver targeted support to people and communities disproportionately impacted by COVID.

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reports the process findings relating to engagement and reach of the CCSF. It covers the processes involved in promotion and engagement, applications received and the profile of grant awards. It includes some consideration of equity issues, such as whether the funding was accessed by those most in need. The information presented is based on analysis of CCSF applicant data, results of the customer experience survey, interviews and round tables with The Fund and DCMS staff and interviews with grantholders. The conclusion addresses the key process evaluation questions set out in Box 2.1.

Box 2.1: Key areas of focus

1. Has the funding reached the organisations as set out in the funding criteria?

Did the 'open but targeted' funding approach encourage applications from organisations delivering activities and support to people disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 crisis? Did organisations from certain parts of the sector not apply? Who, why and how could they have been reached? What were the barriers to applying? (NB: the evaluation will not incorporate research with non-applicants and so the evidence available to address this subset of questions is likely to be limited).

2.2 Promotion and engagement

Overview of approach

There were four main approaches taken to the promotion of the CCSF and engagement of eligible organisations: 1) communications to organisations that The Fund had an existing relationship with, 2) information posted on The Fund website, 3) targeted outreach both nationally and within regions and 4) central Government announcements. These are each discussed in turn below.

The Fund issued a series of email communications to organisations they had an existing relationship with to alert them to the funding opportunity. This included existing and previous grantholders, as well as organisations in their pipeline – that is, they had expressed an interest in funding but had not yet gone through the full application process. These emails were used to alert grantholders to the upcoming opportunity, let them know when the fund was open to applications and to provide an overview of the processes involved. This was the first time that The Fund had used mass email in this way and adaptations were required to their systems to enable this. Staff considered it to have been an efficient and effective approach to raising awareness of the CCSF amongst large numbers of eligible organisations.

"We looked at our existing pipeline and grants in management... We were in constant contact [with them] using mass emails in a way that we don't normally." **Stakeholder, The Fund**

Information about the funding opportunity was posted on the The Fund website and shared widely on social media and with the sector press. A message from the Chief Executive was posted on the landing page of the website, with links to more detailed information about how to apply. This was also shared across The Fund social media channels and press releases were provided to a range of trade sector bodies. Throughout the period CCSF was open to applications, updates and prompts were issued through social media channels, including to alert organisations to when the CCSF would be closing.

Regional and national engagement and outreach. Senior staff within The Fund had early conversations with key national stakeholders to alert them to the funding opportunity. Regional teams also undertook a range of outreach and engagement activities, including facilitating round table discussions with key partners and stakeholders and targeted outreach with organisations, drawing on existing relationships and networks. There was a focus on reaching beyond The Fund's existing networks to those organisations supporting groups who had been disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, such as ethnic minorities, disabled people and women.

The targeted outreach work within communities also resulted in some applications being generated through word of mouth. There was one example provided of where an organisation received CCSF funding to reinforce the Government's public health messages in communities who did not speak English or who had a culture of deferring to elders within their communities who may not have received those messages. The organisation had initially been engaged through regional outreach activity. The translation support they delivered within those communities led to conversations about the funding, which was reported to have resulted in applications being submitted by other eligible organisations delivering support within those communities.

Government announcements about the funding raised awareness. CCSF was referenced in a number of central Government communications, including by the Chancellor and Secretary of State at two of the televised Coronavirus daily briefings. These high-profile announcements were reported to have generated a lot of interest in the funding opportunity from eligible organisations. They also generated a lot of interest from the VCSE sector more widely, including the sector press who ran a number of articles on this. This further contributed to raising awareness of the fund across the sector and amongst eligible organisations.

What worked well?

Having Funding Officers based within local communities. This is a key feature of The Fund's delivery model, which meant that there were people embedded within local communities who were used to working in this way. They were able to bring in-depth understanding of the needs of local communities and the existing infrastructure in place to support them. They were also able to draw on established relationships and networks across regions to promote the CCSF and generate applications from eligible organisations.

"That was one of the things that is very good about the relationship with NLCF. They have that network of Funding Officers who know those organisations very well. That was a very good and positive element of this." **Stakeholder, DCMS**

The strategic decision by The Fund to deliver outreach activities to reach those most impacted by the pandemic. The outreach activity undertaken within regions was successful in generating applications from organisations that The Fund had not worked with previously. This is demonstrated by the fact that almost half (45%) of CCSF grantholders were 'new' to The Fund and had not received funding from them previously. Outreach activities were reported to have worked best in regions where a strategic and targeted approach was taken based on a clear understanding of who the funding was intended to reach and where The Fund did not have an existing footprint. For example, one regional team did a lot of early work engaging local infrastructure groups who had networks within ethnic minority communities, which resulted in a number of CCSF grants being awarded to those communities. Another region identified key strategic priorities for outreach at the outset and focussed time and resource on these.

Working with partners. As referenced already, a key focus for the outreach work undertaken by local Funding Officers involved engaging organisations with links to communities most in need and where The Fund did not have existing relationships. In some cases, this included communities who had been reluctant to access funding from the organisation previously due it being generated through gambling. By working through partners, regional teams were able to get the message out to those communities that the CCSF was Government funded. This was reported to have contributed to an increase in applications from organisations who would not normally consider lottery funding.

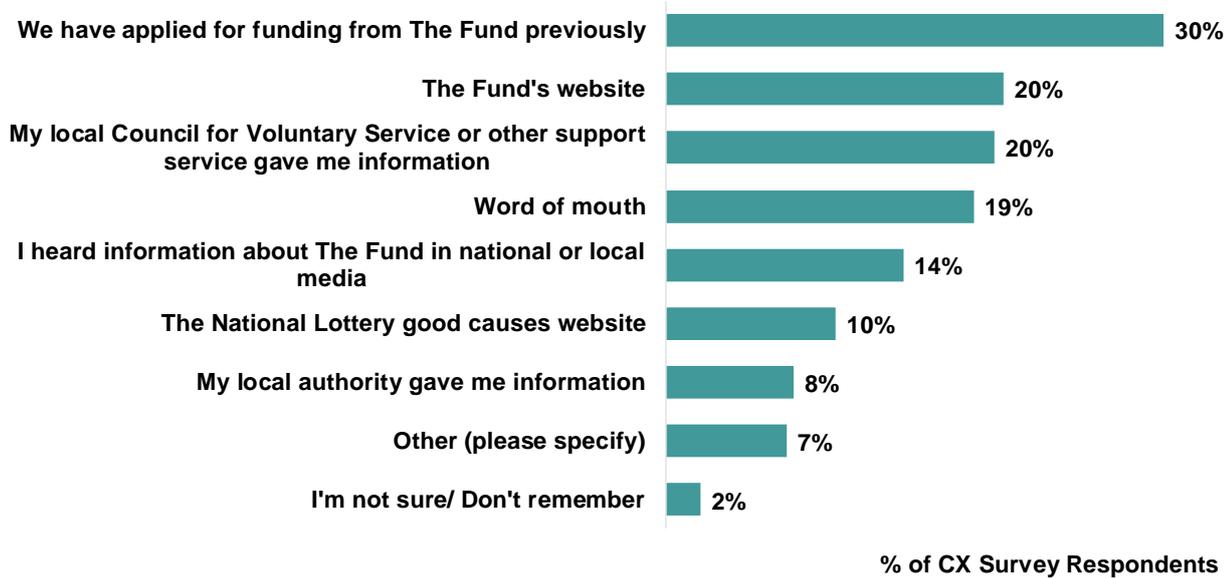
“It being Government money and advertised as such, that opened up different doorways in different constituencies in terms of groups to apply and who were interested in us who would see the lottery as a barrier. That was a success.” Stakeholder, The Fund

Central Government announcements. The high-profile Government announcements of CCSF were cited by The Fund staff as a contributing factor to the volume and breadth of applications received. One staff member who had been working in their area for a number of years said they had received applications from organisations they had never heard of before despite having a very local presence. Their view was that some organisations had never considered funding through The Fund before as they *“didn’t think it was for them”*. However, the national announcements on this and the slightly different badging of the funding helped generate interest.

“That is one of the positives actually... the Government involvement and the Government announcements. It was much more high-profile than any of the other programmes that we’ve worked on. That was reflected in terms of the volume but also the breadth of organisations we had coming into us.” Stakeholder, The Fund

Around one third of CCSF applicants heard about the Fund from having applied for funding previously. A range of other sources of information were cited, including The Fund’s website, local Councils for Voluntary Service and other support services and word-of-mouth (Figure 2.1). This analysis shows the relative effectiveness of the various approaches to engagement and reach discussed in the previous section in terms of reaching eligible organisations.

Figure 2.1: How did you first hear about the National Lottery Community Fund?



Base: 2,694 CCSF applicants
 Source: CX Survey
 Respondents could select more than one response

What were the challenges?

There was a tension between distributing the funding at pace whilst also ensuring it reached the people and communities most in need. CCSF opened on 22 May 2020 and over 500 applications were received on the first day. This was equivalent to the average number of funding applications received by The Fund in a week – as a comparison, less than 100 were received on the same day the previous year. As this was emergency funding, there was pressure to process those applications as

quickly as possible in order to get the funding out to people and communities in need. This unprecedented high volume of applications meant that most funding staff were tied up processing these, which limited the resources available to deliver targeted outreach. Following this initial peak and as the volume of applications gradually slowed, regional teams (who were responsible for processing standard grant applications) were able to return to delivering outreach activities which had started prior to the CCSF being launched.

"Parts of this were about pipeline management but because some teams were just so inundated they didn't have time to do that. If we were doing it again I think as regional teams we would all put in place some kind of high-level strategy over a few days." **Stakeholder, The Fund**

Unexpected or unintended consequences

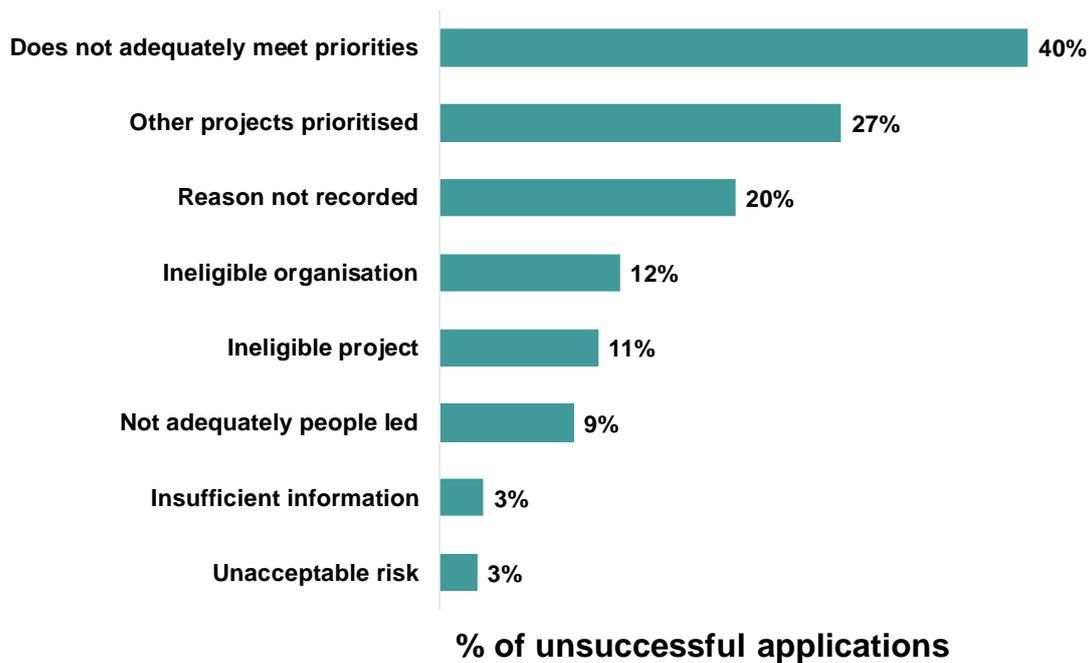
The open but targeted approach to the funding was said to have resulted in a number of 'pop-up organisations' coming forward for support. This included newly formed Community Interest Companies who applied for funding to deliver support to communities whilst paying themselves a salary. This was not considered to have been widespread but was highlighted as an unintended consequence of the open nature of the funding. In these examples, there was confidence that support was still reaching the people and communities most in need, but there was a question over whether that was the best or most appropriate use of the funding.

2.3 CCSF applications

2.3.1 Volume of applications

A total of 13,835 applications were made for CCSF funding. Of those, 8,247 were successful – a conversion rate of 60%. Around one in ten (9%) were identified as having withdrawn, which could happen before or after their application had been assessed. This was usually the result of changing context or applicant circumstances, such as them having received funding from other sources or incorrectly submitting multiple applications. The remaining 31% were unsuccessful.

The reasons for applications being unsuccessful mainly related to priorities. Two fifths (40%) were considered to not adequately meet priorities as per the 'Saying No Early' process (see Section 3.2) and a further 27% were unsuccessful due to other projects being prioritised (Figure 2.3). Relatively few applications were rejected due to having come from ineligible organisations (12%), being an ineligible project (11%) or the organisation not being adequately people led (9%). The proportions being rejected for having provided insufficient information or representing unacceptable risk were also low at 3% respectively.

Figure 2.2: Reasons applications were unsuccessful

Base: 4,348 applications that were unsuccessful
 Source: The Fund Grantholder Management System
 Multiple reasons could be selected
 Chart shows % of applications that contained the reasons recorded for applications being unsuccessful

This analysis suggests that more could have been done to provide greater clarity on the reasons applications were unsuccessful. The categories used to record the reason for unsuccessful applications were quite broad and open to interpretation. As noted, the key reason recorded was that the application did not meet priorities, which was often the reason assigned to those who did not make it through the early stages of the application process. There were also gaps in the data, with no reason recorded for one fifth (20%) of unsuccessful applicants. Feedback from staff at The Fund suggested that more could have been done to provide constructive and helpful feedback to applicants on the reasons they had been unsuccessful. This aligns with feedback from unsuccessful applicants who completed the CX survey, only a quarter (27%) of whom agreed that The Fund had clearly explained why their application had been unsuccessful¹. However, there was also recognition that The Fund was operating as an emergency funder and so there was less time available to explain the rationale for unsuccessful decisions, particularly those made at the early stages of the application process. It is also worth noting that unsuccessful CCSF applicants could not submit a second application and so, whilst useful, detailed feedback could not have been used to strengthen their application.

2.3.2 Profile of CCSF grantholders

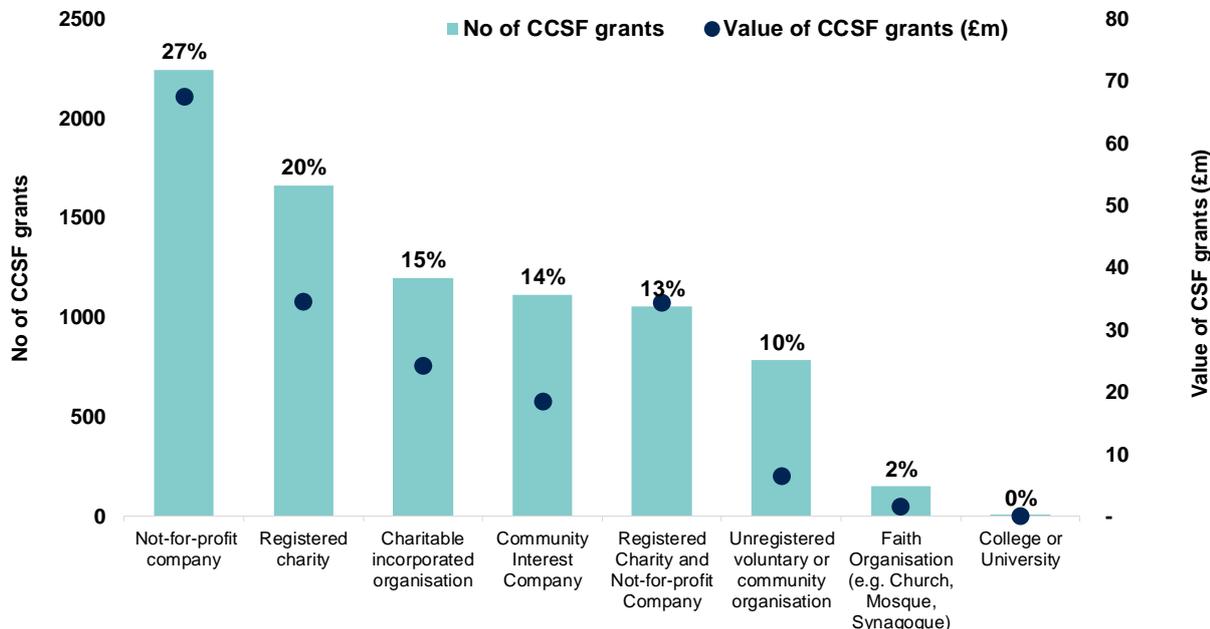
Type of organisation

Not-for-profit companies accounted for the highest number of CCSF grants and the highest value of grant awards made. CCSF was targeted at voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) organisations. A total of 2,245 grants were made to not-for-profit companies, accounting for over a quarter (27%) of the total (see Figure 2.3). This was followed by registered charities (20%), charitable incorporated organisations (15%) and Community Interest Companies (14%).

¹ Out of 206 unsuccessful applicants who completed the CX survey.

Not-for-profit companies also accounted for the highest value of CCSF grant awards. Over a third (36%) of the total value of grants made went to not-for-profit companies – a total of £67.6m out of £187m. This was followed by registered charities (18%) and organisations that were both registered charities and not-for-profit companies (18% of the total).

Figure 2.3: Distribution of CCSF grants by type of grantholder organisation



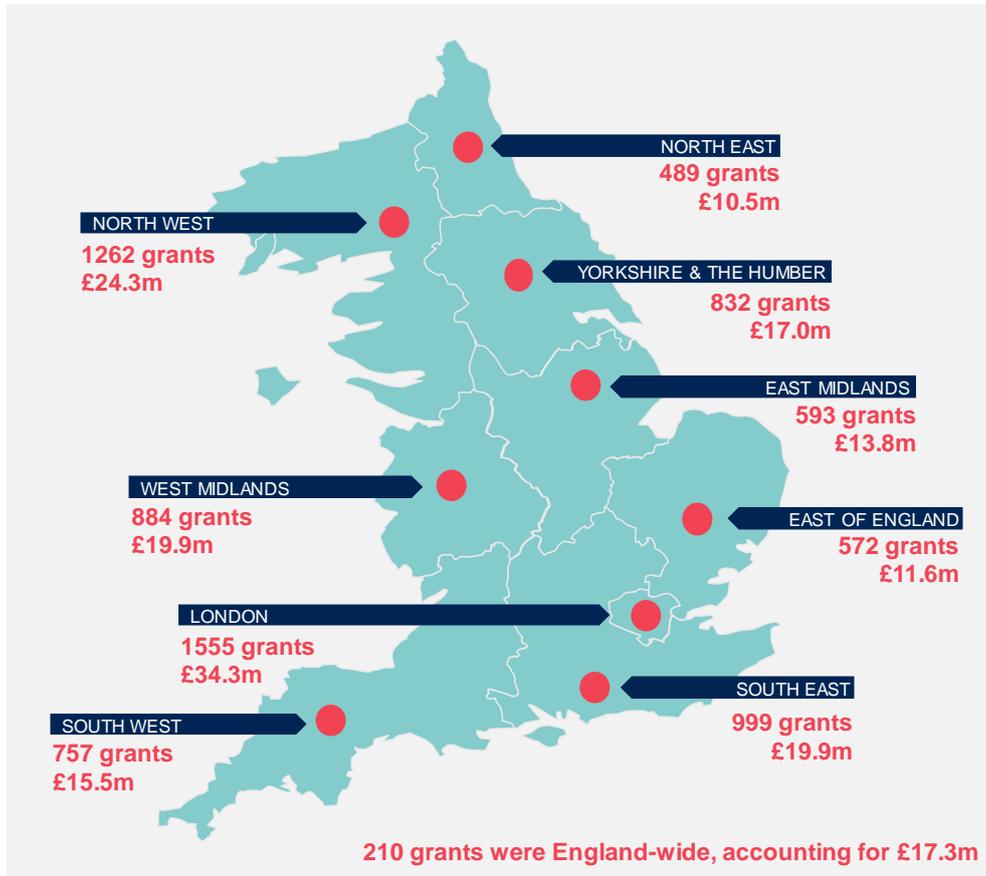
Base: 8,202 grants, £187m grant funding
 Data labels refer to proportion of total grant awards (rather than funding)
 Source: The Fund Grantholder Management System

Geography

CCSF grant funding was distributed to every region and almost every local authority in England.

Indicative allocations of funding per region were identified at the outset to ensure an appropriate distribution of funding across regions. CCSF grants reached organisations delivering in all nine regions in England (Figure 2.4). The value of this funding ranged from £10.5m in the North East to £34.3m in London. The funding reached 316 out of 339 local authorities in England – 93% of the total.

The distribution of funding was broadly in line with regional allocations. The funding awarded to organisations delivering in the East of England and South East was slightly lower than the indicative allocation, whilst in London it was slightly higher. However, these differences were relatively small (between 2% and 4%) suggesting that the distribution of funding was broadly in line with initial allocations.

Figure 2.4: Distribution of CCSF grants by region

Base: 8,153 grants, £184.6m funding

Source: The Fund Grantholder Management System (based on postcode of project)

Excludes grantholders with a postcode in Scotland/Wales or where the postcode was missing (49 grants amounting to £2.9m)

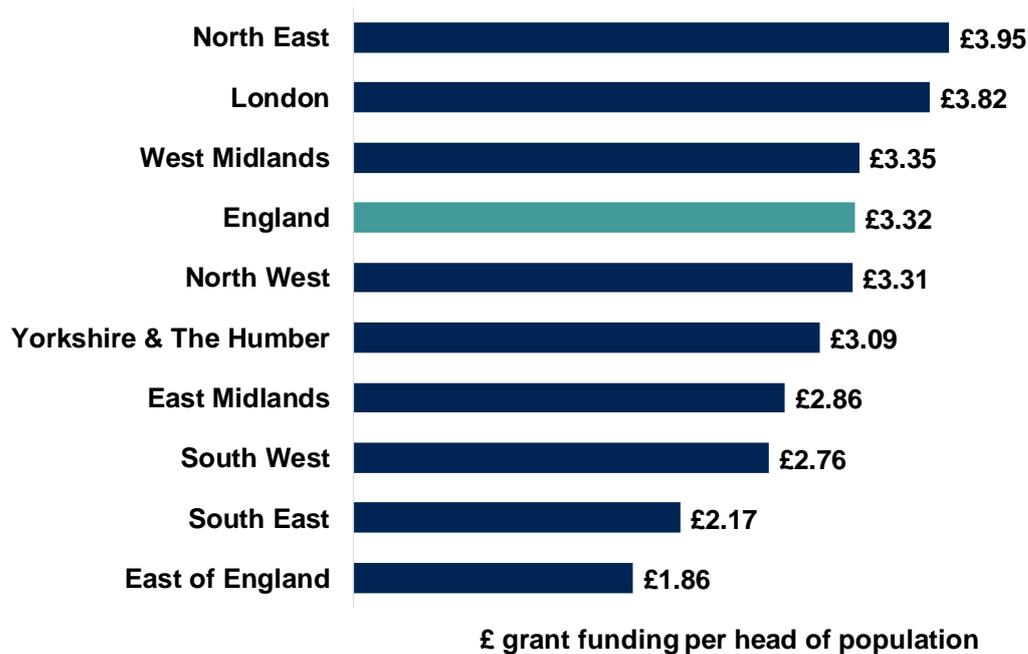
The North East and London received the highest levels of CCSF funding per head of population, while the East and South East of England received the lowest. CCSF grant funding amounted to £3.32 per head of population across England as a whole (see Figure 2.5). This rises to £3.95 per head in the North East, the region with the highest concentration of funding, followed by £3.82 in London. The West Midlands also received above average concentrations of CCSF funding. The regions with the lowest concentrations of funding were in the southern (other than London) and eastern regions.

This analysis is indicative only and some caution must be taken in the interpretation of this.

Grantholder delivery offices are not always in the same region as their target beneficiaries, particularly for larger projects. For example, activities delivered to people living in the South East are often delivered by organisations based in Greater London.

However, this analysis does suggest that CCSF has been successful in reaching those people and communities in need. London and the northern regions are home to the local authority areas with the highest levels of deprivation in England². The higher concentrations of funding going into those areas would suggest that it reached people and communities who were facing economic and social challenges prior to COVID.

² As measured by the Index of Deprivation (IMD). Local Enterprise Areas with the highest levels of deprivation in 2019 were: Liverpool City Region, Black Country, Greater Manchester, Greater Birmingham and Solihull, Tees Valley and the North East.

Figure 2.5: CCSF Funding per Head of Population

Base: 8,153 grants, £184.6m funding

Source: The Fund Grantholder Management System

Excludes grantholders with a postcode in Scotland/Wales or where the postcode was missing (49 grants amounting to £2.9m)

Purpose of funding

Most CCSF grantholders applied for funding to address increased or changed demand as a result of COVID-19. The majority of CCSF grants (89%) went to organisations seeking additional funds to deliver activities aimed at people and communities impacted by COVID-19. At the grant award stage, just over one in ten (11%) were recorded by Funding Officers as having received the funding primarily to address liquidity issues. However, evidence from the grantholder surveys and interviews suggests that the picture on primary need for CCSF funding was more complex – this issue is discussed in detail in Chapter 4.

Those categorised as seeking financial support primarily for liquidity issues were typically awarded higher value grants – an average of £35,000 relative to £21,000 for those not allocated to this category.

“Overnight, we lost about 75% of our income since we closed the doors. I had to work out a way of trying to get that income back in because we had salaries, we had bills, we had expenses and everything, as everybody does. It was really important from the outset to get some money in quite quickly to allow us to continue running. It definitely put us in a better position. I wouldn't even like to think where we'd be if we didn't get [the CCSF grant].” **CCSF Grantholder**

Target beneficiaries

A quarter of CCSF grantholders targeted people with disabilities and a fifth targeted people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME)³ communities. Grantholders were asked to specify at application stage whether they targeted three types of beneficiary groups (see Table 2.1). A quarter (24%) of CCSF grant awards and funding went to organisations delivering activities and support targeted

³ We recognise that there are issues with this term as it emphasises certain ethnic minorities and excludes others. However, it has been used here as that is the name of the field that records this data on The Fund Grant Management System.

at people with disabilities. A fifth went to organisations targeting BAME communities. A relatively small proportion of grantholders (3%) targeted LGBTQ+ people.

Table 2.1: CCSF Grantholders targeting specific groups of beneficiaries

	CCSF Grant awards	% of all grant awards	CCSF Grant funding (000s)	% of all grant funding
People with disabilities	1997	24%	£44,973	24%
People from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities	1532	19%	£35,218	19%
People who are LGBTQ+	207	3%	£3,532	2%

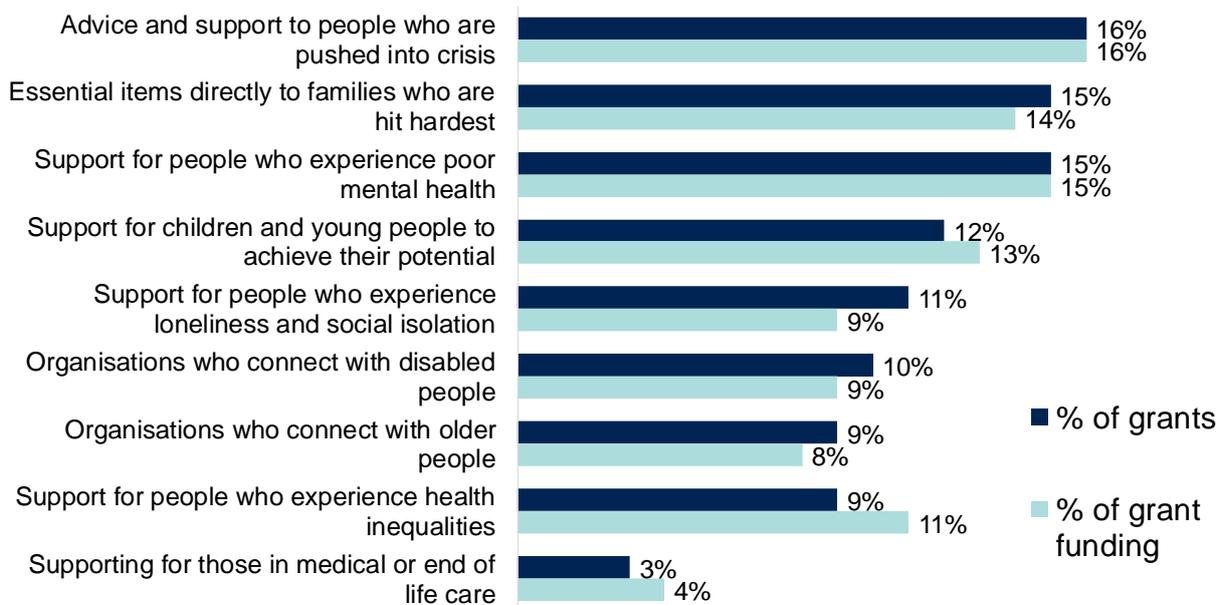
Base: 8,202 CCSF grantholders; £187m grant funding
 Source: The Fund Grant Management System

Types of support intended to be delivered

CCSF grants were distributed to organisations that intended to deliver a broad range of activities and support to people and communities in need during the COVID-19 pandemic. At the application stage, CCSF grantholders were assigned to a category relating to the type of activities or support they would deliver to people impacted by COVID-19. Whilst some grantholders intended to deliver a range of different types of activities and support to different groups of people, for the purposes of the CCSF application they were assigned to a single category.

Around half of CCSF grant awards and funding went to organisations that intended to provide advice and support to people pushed into crisis, essential items to families, or support for people experiencing poor mental health (Figure 2.6). The remainder were spread across a broad range of categories. The distribution of grant funding broadly mirrored the distribution of grant awards.

Figure 2.6: Types of activities or support to be delivered by CCSF grantholders



Base: 8,160 grantholders, £184.4m funding
 Source: The Fund Grantholder Management System

2.4 Conclusions: Has the funding reached the organisations as set out in the funding criteria?

This evidence suggests that CCSF was successful in reaching the organisations as set out in the funding criteria. Most of the funding went to small or medium sized organisations (with an annual turnover of up to £1m) who intended to deliver targeted support to people and communities disproportionately impacted by COVID.

CCSF appears to have been successful in reaching those people and communities in need. CCSF grant funding was distributed to every region and almost every local authority in England. The regions with the highest levels of CCSF funding were also those with the highest concentrations of deprivation, suggesting that the funding reached communities who were facing economic and social challenges prior to COVID. A quarter of CCSF grant funding went to organisations targeting people with disabilities and a fifth went to organisations targeting activities and support at Black and Minority Ethnic communities.

The targeted outreach work delivered at the regional level was successful in broadening the reach of the CCSF beyond the usual customer base of The Fund. Almost half (45%) of CCSF grantholders had not received funding from The Fund previously. Key factors found to have worked well included having Funding Officers based within local communities, taking a strategic and planned approach to national and regional outreach activities and working through partners to reach people and communities most in need.

3 Distribution of funding

Chapter Summary

- Grant award decisions were made in an average of **61 days** and funding was distributed within an average of **9 days** of decisions being made. These processes were quicker for Simple grants (up to the value of £10k) than Standard grants (over the value of £10k).
- Most successful grant applicants were satisfied with the speed at which award decisions were made, although funding staff were less satisfied with the speed at which applications were processed and the lack of communication on progress with these.
- Successful grant applicants were generally satisfied with the application process and the level of clarity provided by The Fund in relation to their application. The main areas highlighted for improvement related to greater clarity on how applications would be assessed and their chances of success.
- The consensus was that the right balance was achieved between getting the funding out at pace and managing risk, with The Fund staff saying that applications were subject to a higher degree of scrutiny than their usual approaches.
- Key enablers for effective distribution of funding included the The Fund Grant Management System (GMS), the decision to align application processes for CCSF with The Fund's existing processes and gathering early customer experience insights and communicating these in a timely manner.
- The main challenge faced was the volume and nature of applications received, which put unprecedented pressure on funding staff during a time when they were adapting to remote working and other issues associated with the pandemic and associated restrictions (such as home schooling and being isolated from friends and family).

3.1 Introduction

This chapter reports on the findings relating to the distribution of CCSF funding, covering the application and grant award processes. The information presented is based on qualitative feedback from The Fund and DCMS staff, as well as customer feedback gathered through the CX survey, End of Grant Survey and interviews with grantholders. The chapter concludes with a summary overview of the findings in relation to the process question set out in the box below.

2. How well has the process of distributing the funding worked for customers and The Fund staff?

There was a need to balance speed and fiduciary duties: if the application process had stressed speed over risk management would charities have received money faster? What would the trade-offs be in terms of risk of errors in awarding grants?

Which aspects of the CCSF process have worked most efficiently compared to other funding applicants may have applied for/received?

3.2 Application processes

Overview of processes

As noted in the introduction to this report, the CCSF was distributed via The Fund's existing products – **Simple product** (grants up to and including £10k) and **Standard product** (grants over £10k). The processes associated with the Simple and Standard products were adapted for the CCSF. The main changes were that:

- **Additional information was recorded on grant applicants:** a range of new fields were added to the data collected at the application stage. This includes data on the purpose of the funding (i.e. to address liquidity issues or increased / changed demand) and intended impacts, both of which were selected by the Funding Officer rather than the applicant. All customers were required to provide basic financial evidence (such as bank statements), but those applying for funding to address liquidity issues received a more detailed assessment of their finances.
- **The Saying No Early (SNE) process was adapted:** The Saying No Early (SNE) process supported the management of the volume of applications and sifting those out quickly that were not deemed eligible. It is part of The Fund's normal overall process flow for Standard grants but was adapted for CCSF as a mechanism for supporting in managing the volume of applications and in ensuring that The Fund met its commitments. The SNE process was a key aspect of ensuring that the funding reached those disproportionately affected, with an equalities champion in each of the SNE panels to check and challenge decisions and ensure The Fund was applying an equalities lens to decision making.
- **A DCMS Rapid Review panel was established:** The CCSF was the first of the Government funding schemes established for the sector and potentially high risk, with the expectation that a lot of awards would be given to organisations with limited experience of managing Government funds, including non-registered or new organisations. It was therefore agreed with The Fund that higher value or contentious funding proposals would be shared with DCMS and reviewed to identify any that could benefit from further consideration by an advisory panel before a final decision was made. On a weekly basis, all applications recommended by The Fund that were valued at £10,000 and over were subject to review by DCMS through the 'Rapid Review'⁴. All Standard grants therefore went to Rapid Review. As Simple grants could be up to and including £10,000, some went to Rapid Review and some did not. The review process involved reputation checks on all applications received from The Fund against an agreed set of criteria. The Fund remained the full decision-making authority and accountable for the onward distribution of funds.
- **A Joint Panel was established for grants >£300k and/or deemed risky or noteworthy:** A panel of representatives from DCMS and The Fund met to consider all proposed awards which were either more than £300,000 or had been identified as contentious during the DCMS Rapid Review process. The Panel was made up of TNLFCF officials and Board Members, DCMS officials, one of our non-executive directors and a number of external stakeholders. The Panel made a recommendation to The Fund on whether they thought the project was of sufficient quality to be funded.
- **Most grants were awarded in one upfront payment:** the grants were short term (up to six months) and therefore awarded in one payment. This is different from The Fund's usual Standard

⁴ Initially all CCSF applications went to Rapid Review, but this was subsequently changed to only those valued at £10k and over.

awards, which are typically more longer-term with payments aligned to agreed milestones and with regular periodic payments made over the course of the grant depending on the assigned risk level. A small number were made in regular payments usually to mitigate associated risks.

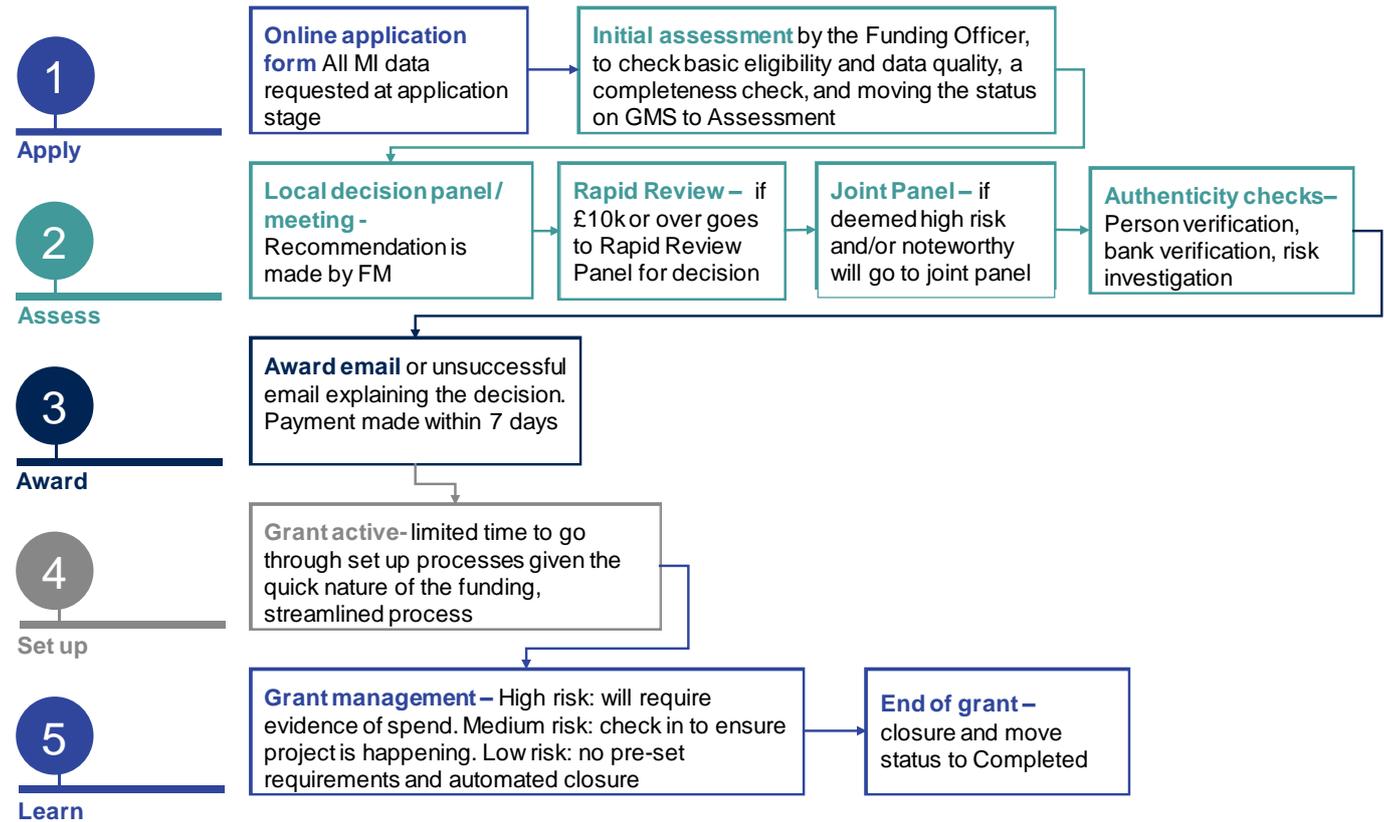
- **Streamlined grant setup process:** the usual processes associated with grant set up were streamlined to enable the funds to be distributed to organisations at pace

Simple grants

Figure 3.1 provides an overview of the key stages involved in the process for distributing **Simple** grants (up to the value of £10k). The key features of this are that:

- Most information was **provided by grant applicants** themselves via an online form
- The decision-making and set up processes were **streamlined** to enable the funding to be distributed as soon as possible following the award decision
- As part of the **Terms and Conditions** of their grant, grantholders were required to report on the activities and outcomes of their grant, as well as the number of beneficiaries reached (though a grantholder survey administered as part of the evaluation).

Figure 3.1: Simple Product Process Map



Standard grants

Figure 3.2 provides an overview of the key stages involved in the process for distributing **Standard** grants (valued at >£10k). The key features of this are that:

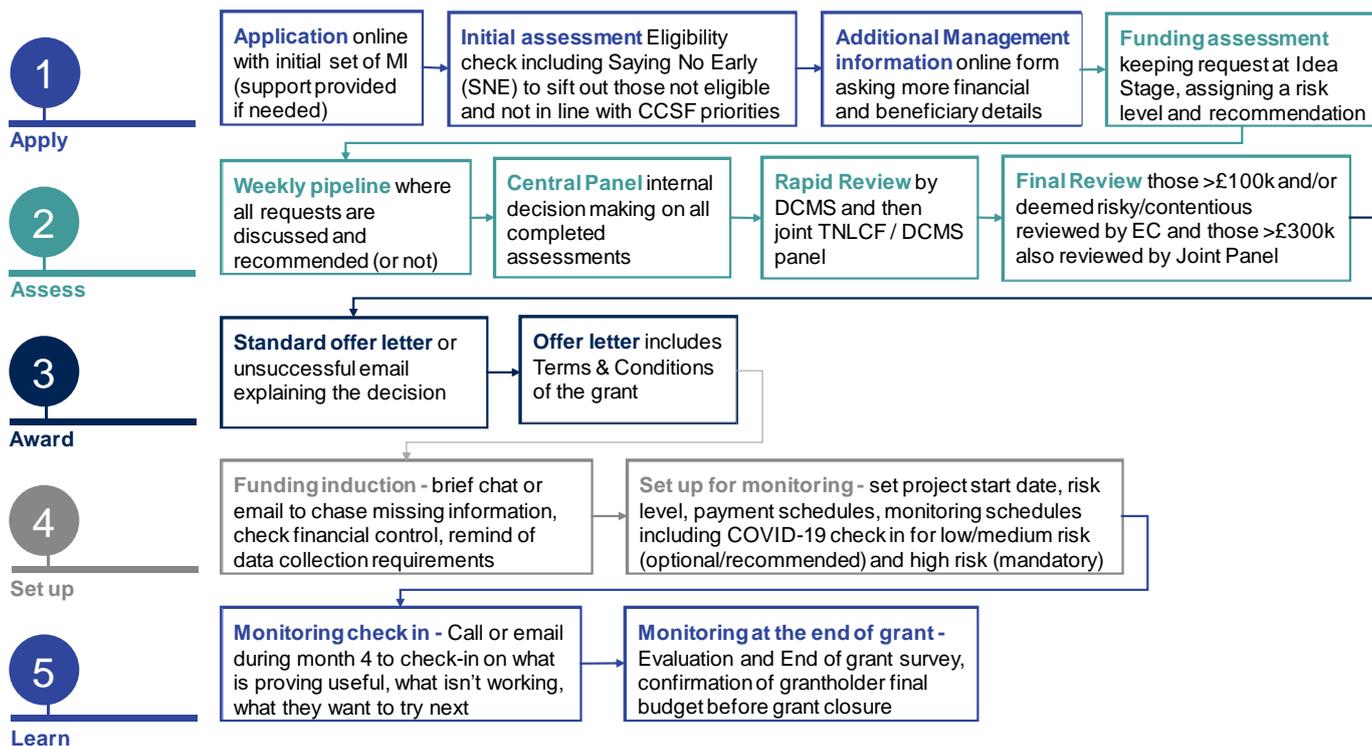
- Applicants were asked to provide **basic information** at the initial application stage

- Those who met the eligibility criteria and were deemed a good fit with CCSF priorities were then assigned to a **Funding Officer**, who worked with them to complete more detailed information on their application
- The Funding Officer assigned categories to the application based on the information provided by the applicant, such as **purpose of the grant award and intended impacts**
- Applications that passed the initial assessment and local review (weekly pipeline) were put forward to a Central Panel and then to the **Rapid Review** stage; those over the value of £100k and/or deemed risky or contentious went to The Fund’s **England Committee**, with those over £300k also going to the **Joint Panel**

The above process was amended slightly from September 2020, with applications that were put forward to a Central Panel being simultaneously sent to Rapid Review

- As with Simple grants, the funding was awarded to successful applicants in **one upfront payment**, except in a small number of cases, and, as part of their terms and conditions, they were required to report on the activities and outcomes of their grant, as well as number of beneficiaries reached.

Figure 3.2: Standard Product process map



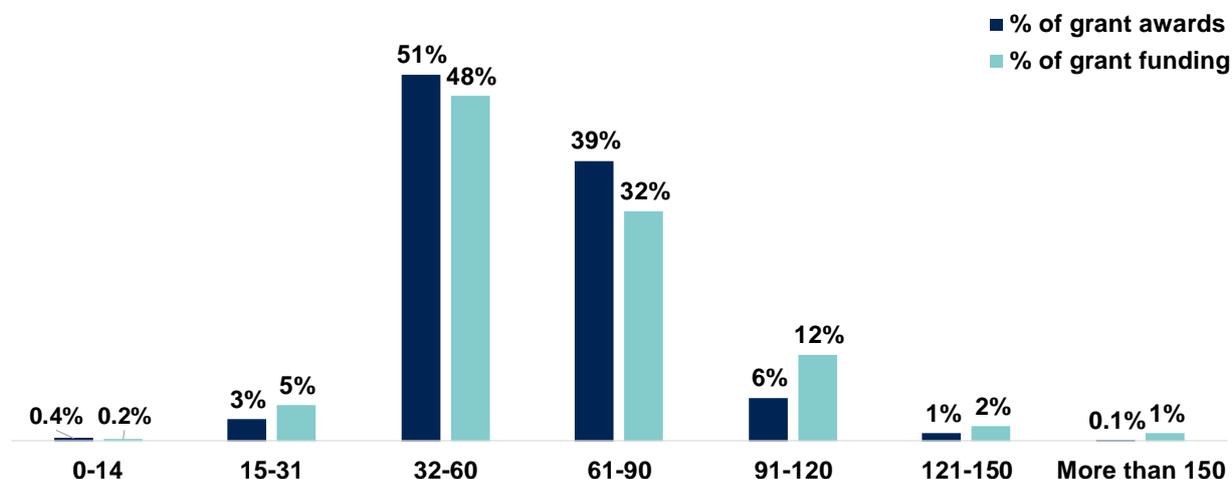
The funding window for applications was open between the **22 May 2020 and 17 August 2020**, which led to the first grants being awarded in early June 2020. Grants continued to be awarded until the end of November 2020. Successful applicants had up to six months to spend their grant with the exception of those were awarded later, who had until 31st March 2021 to spend their grant.

Speed at which applications were processed

CCSF grant award decisions took an average of 61 days. For Simple grants (up to £10k), the average was 59 days and for Standard grants (over £10k) it was 63 days. A small proportion of

successful grant award decisions (less than 5%) were made within one month of the application being submitted (Figure 3.3). More than half (51%) were made between 32 and 60 days and two fifths (39%) were made between 61 and 90 days. A relatively small proportion took longer than 90 days and these were typically larger grants, accounting for 6% of grant awards and 12% of grant funding. 4

Figure 3.3: Length of time between grant application and award decisions (days)



Base: 8,160 grantholders, £184.1m funding

Source: The Fund Grantholder Management System

Most grant applicants were satisfied with the speed at which award decisions were made. The CX survey results show that almost two thirds (64%) of applicants agreed that ‘The National Lottery Community Fund make decisions on applications within a reasonable period of time’. This is substantiated by evidence from qualitative interviews with grantholders, most of whom were positive about the speed at which decisions were made and several have commented that this compared favourably with other funders. However, these findings do need to be caveated by the fact that their applications were successful.

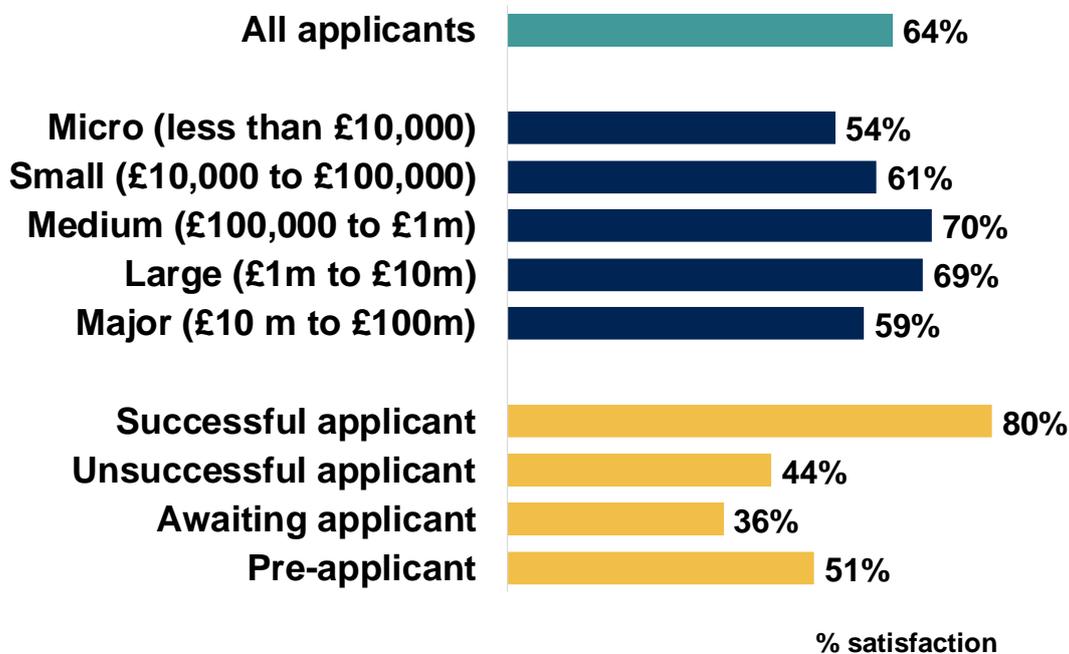
“I can't fault it at all. From start to finish, it was about a month. We turned it around. We got the application in. Really good, clear communication. Shocked, to say the least, that we had a response within a few weeks, and even more shocked to receive the money in the account within the allocated days. It was a very quick, painless process.” **CCSF Grantholder**

Compared to customers who were surveyed in the previous year, CCSF customers who were awaiting decision gave lower CX scores overall. This seems to stem from communication with the Fund – as they gave lower scores on the statements ‘contact us when they say they will’ and ‘respond within a reasonable period of time’ (although it was still a majority who were satisfied on both statements). Standard applicants were significantly more likely to agree that The Fund make decisions on applications within a reasonable period of time than Simple applicants. Almost three quarters (72%) of Standard applicants (those applying for more than £10k) agreed with this statement, compared to less than two thirds (59%) for Simple applicants (those applying for up to £10k).

There were also significant differences on this measure by organisation size and journey stage. Successful applicants were more likely to agree that award decisions were made by The Fund within a reasonable period of time compared to unsuccessful applicants and those who had not received a

decision⁵ (Figure 3.4). Micro and small organisations (who make up the majority of CCSF grantholders) were significantly less likely to agree with this than medium and large organisations. A possible explanation is that micro and small organisations needed the funds more quickly as they were less likely to have additional resources or reserves to draw on.

Figure 3.4: To what extent do you agree that the National Lottery Community Fund make decisions on applications within a reasonable period of time?



Base: CCSF Applicants (2694)

Source: CX Survey

Responses were provided on a 7pt scale where 1=Completely disagree and 7=Completely agree

Percentages calculated based on those who selected 6 or 7 (top two options)

Super Major (over £100m) has been excluded due to their being only two survey respondents in this category

Funding staff were less satisfied with the speed at which applications were processed and the lack of communication on progress. A key frustration for funding staff was that once applications were in the system, particularly those that went to Rapid Review, there was a lack of communication on progress and lack of clarity on how long decisions would take. They were used to being able to be clear with organisations on when they would hear the outcome of their application, but they were unable to do this for the CCSF. They were also unclear as to why some applicants took much longer than others, which created challenges for them in managing customer expectations. There was a view amongst some that the processes should have been quicker given the emergency nature of the funding.

Grantholders would have welcomed greater clarity on the process and timings for award decisions. A key finding from the qualitative interviews with grantholders was that most were unclear on when they would receive confirmation of the outcome of their CCSF grant application. In some cases, this created challenges for their financial and operational planning. For example, they were unsure whether or when they would need to consider putting staff on furlough or explore alternative sources of funding to ensure they could maintain services.

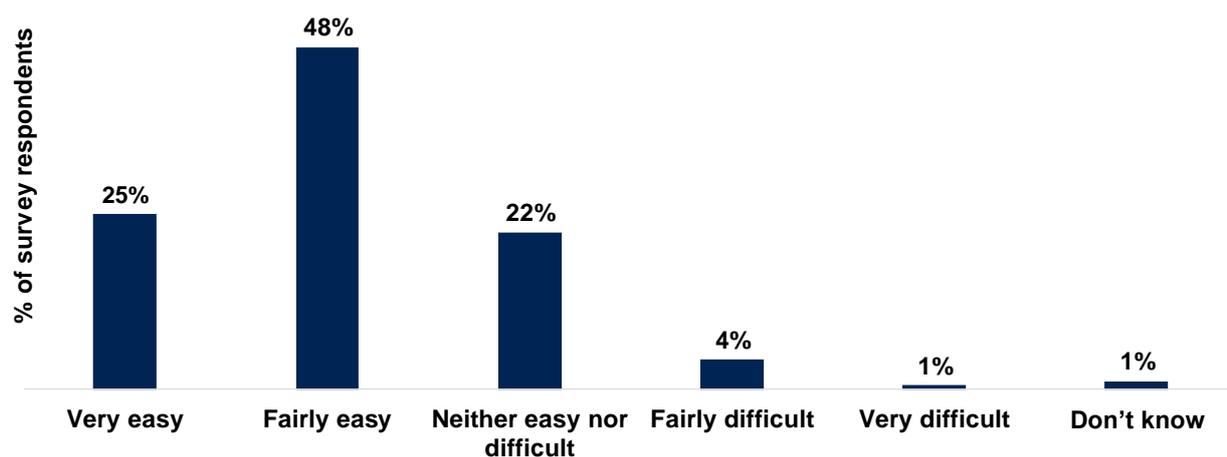
⁵ This includes those awaiting decision, those who have not yet submitted a full application and those who decided not to progress with an application.

Grantholder feedback on application processes

Grantholders were generally satisfied with the application process. Almost three quarters (72%) of those completing the end of grant survey rated this as fairly or very easy and relatively few (5%) rated it as fairly or very difficult (Figure 3.5). The reasons provided by those who found the process difficult included lack of experience completing grant application forms (this was a particularly issue for newly formed organisations), the level of financial information that had to be provided and lack of clarity on which pot of funding to apply for. Again, these findings are substantiated by findings from the qualitative interviews with grantholders – the majority of whom considered the grant application process to have been relatively straightforward.

“It was really refreshing that I was able to do it very quickly and send it off. It was really quite simple. I didn't feel I was having to massively justify my existence. We give a service; this service is really needed and this is the problem we've got and this is what it's costing us. That was great. It made a difference.” **CCSF Grantholder**

Figure 3.5: Thinking about the grant application process as a whole, how easy or difficult did you find the application process?



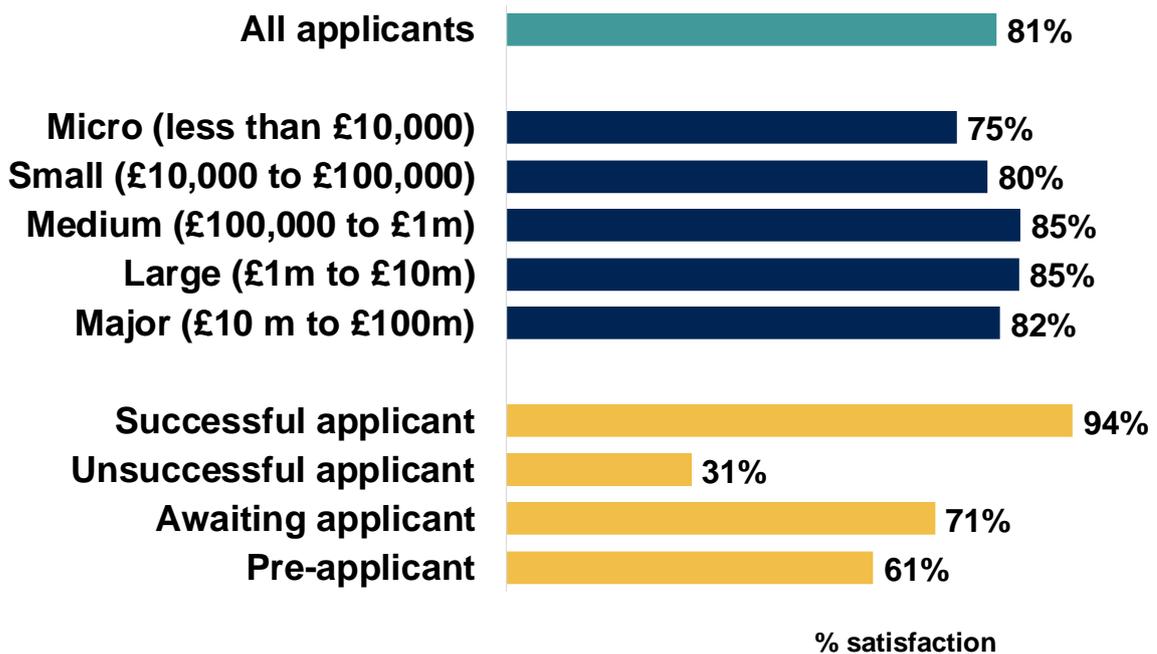
Base: 6,712

Source: Ipsos MORI Grantholder Survey

There is likely to be **an element of positive bias** in these findings given that grantholders were surveyed six months after the application process and after they had received their grant. As highlighted earlier in this chapter (Figure 3.4), successful applicants tend to be more positive about their experience of the process than those who are unsuccessful.

The findings from the CX Survey provide a more balanced picture given that it was issued to all applicants (successful and unsuccessful) prior to grant awards being made. This shows that 81% of all grant applicants were satisfied with their experience of The National Lottery Community Fund overall (Figure 3.6). Successful applicants were significantly more satisfied than unsuccessful applicants and those who had not received an award decision. There were also differences by organisation size, with medium and large organisations significantly more satisfied overall than micro and small organisations. This is in contrast to the previous years' CX results, which showed no difference on overall satisfaction scores between small and large organisations.

Figure 3.6: Taking everything into account, overall, how satisfied are you with your experience of the National Lottery Community Fund’s service to you?



Base: CCSF Applicants (2694)

Source: CX Survey

Responses were provided on a 10pt scale where 1= Extremely dissatisfied and 10= Extremely satisfied

Percentages calculated based on those who selected 8,9 or 10 (top three options)

Super Major (over £100m) has been excluded due to their being only two survey respondents in this category

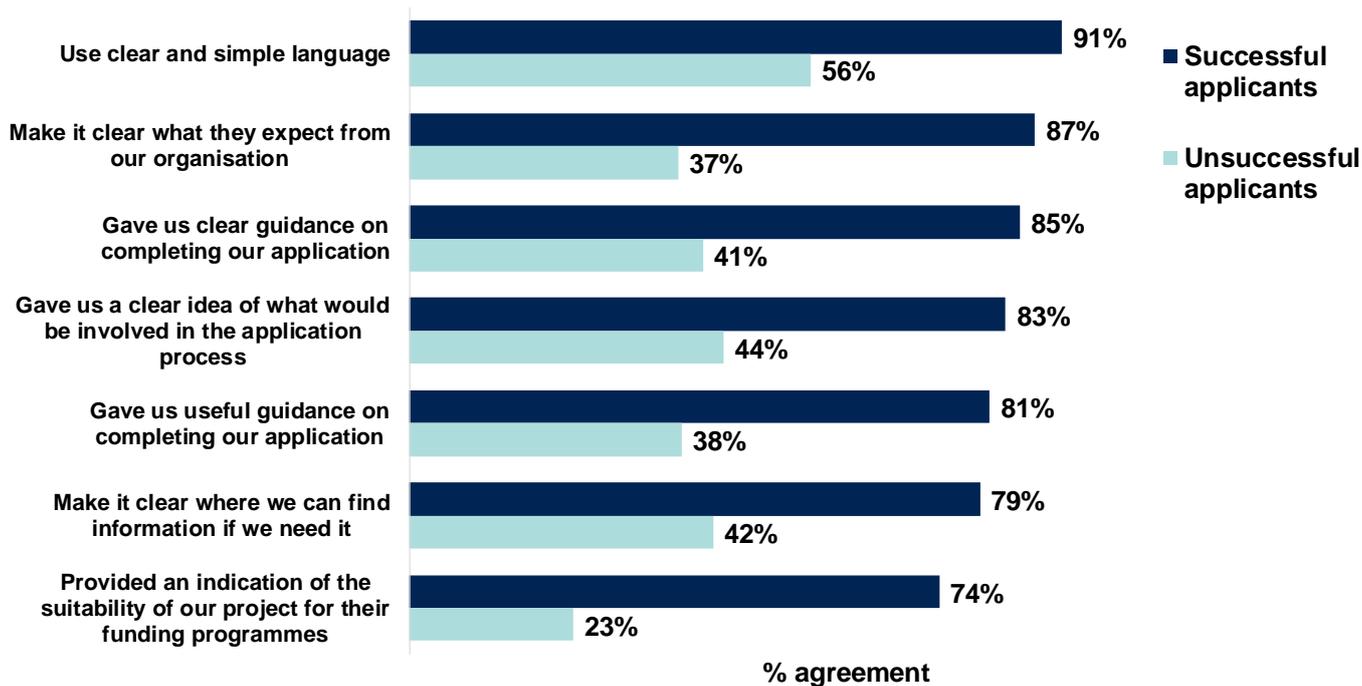
Successful applicants were very positive about the level of clarity provided by The Fund in relation to their application. They were particularly positive about the clarity of language used by The Fund, the guidance provided on completing their application and expectations of the process (see Figure 3.7 on the next page). They were slightly less positive about the extent to which The Fund provided an indication of the suitability of their project for funding, although the majority of applicants still rated this highly.

“I think the whole process of the application was fairly easy because there's lots of back-up information available if you want it. So, if you need more information on putting the bid together, there are documents you can access.” **CCSF Grantholder**

“I have to say it's very straightforward. There are really, really good question and answer facilities and they have some good videos as well.” **CCSF Grantholder**

There were **significant differences** between successful and unsuccessful applicants on all of the measures shown, with successful applicants much more positive about their experiences of these factors. This is in line with previous years’ CX results, which consistently show significant differences between these two groups. There were **no significant differences between Simple and Standard grant applicants** on most of these measures with one exception – the statement relating to the extent to which The Fund provided an indication of the suitability of their project for funding. Standard grant applicants were significantly more likely to agree with this than Simple applicants (71% relative to 62%). This is likely due to applicants for standard grants having to submit an initial ‘idea’ for review and feedback from a Funding Officer before progressing to full application.

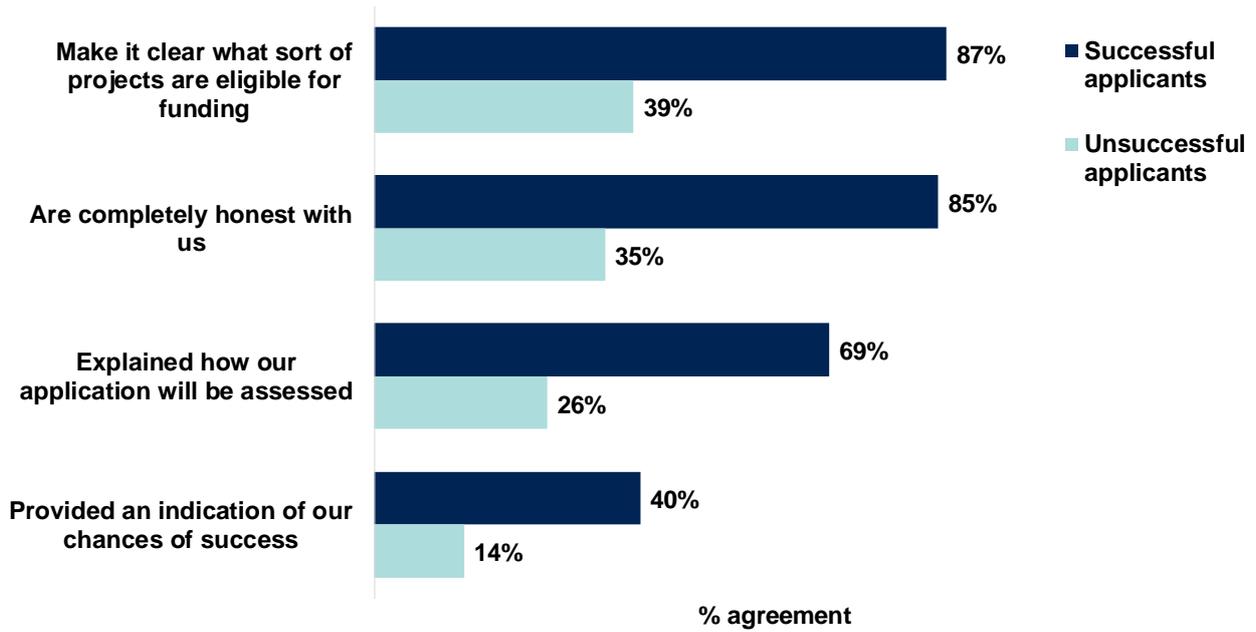
Figure 3.7: To what extent do you agree that the National Lottery Community Fund:



Base: CCSF grant applicants; Variable based on number of responses to each statement (max 1,620 for successful and 206 for unsuccessful)
 Responses were provided on a 7pt scale where 1=Completely disagree and 7=Completely agree
 Percentages calculated based on those who selected 6 or 7 (top two options)
 Source: CX Survey

Some applicants would have liked more information on how their application would be assessed and their chances of success. Most successful applicants who completed the CX survey agreed that The Fund made it clear what sort of projects were eligible for funding and were completely honest with them (Figure 3.8). Whilst most also agreed that the assessment process for applications had been explained, almost a third (31%) did not agree with this suggesting some scope for improvement on this measure. Less than half (40%) agreed that they had been given an indication of their chances of success. This aligns with feedback from funding staff, who reported frustration that they were unable to give applicants greater clarity on this due to the Rapid Review process being centralised. There was also an issue relating to the volume and scale of applications being processed, which created challenges for staff in providing this information.

Unsuccessful applicants were significantly less likely to agree with each of the statements shown.

Figure 3.8: To what extent do you agree that the National Lottery Community Fund:

Base: CCSF grant applicants; Variable based on number of responses to each statement (max 1,620 for successful and 206 for unsuccessful)

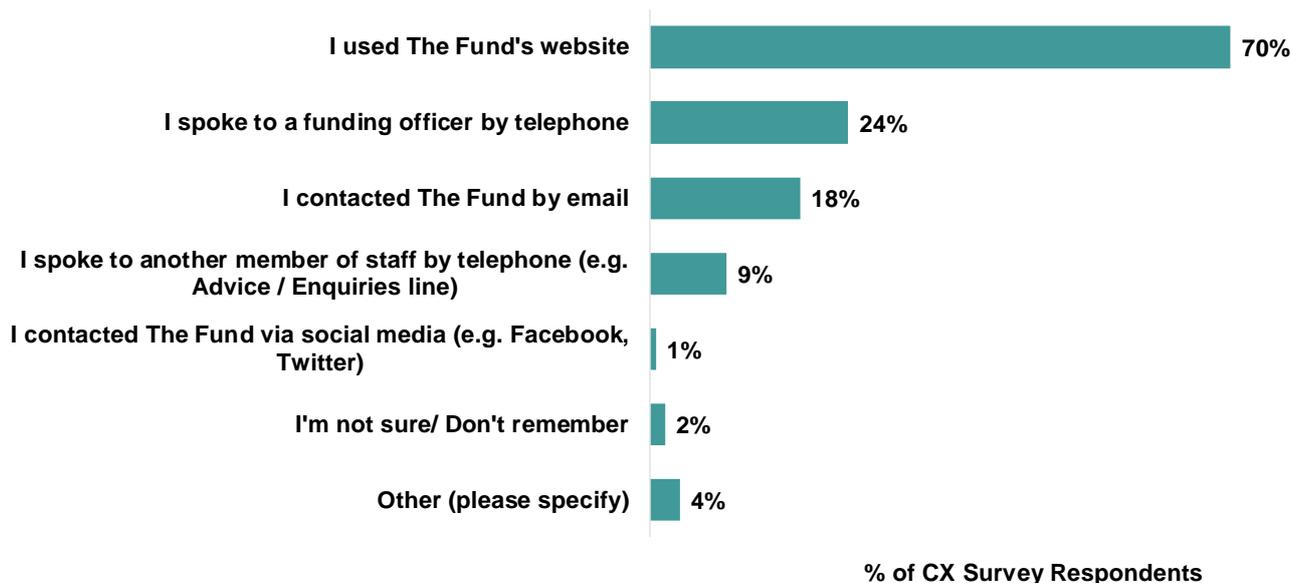
Responses were provided on a 7pt scale where 1=Completely disagree and 7=Completely agree

Percentages calculated based on those who selected 6 or 7 (top two options)

Source: CX Survey

The Fund website was a key source of information and advice at the application stage. The majority (70%) of CCSF applicants reported having accessed this during the application process. Around a quarter (24%) spoke directly to a funding officer and almost a fifth (18%) were in touch with The Fund by email. This analysis suggests that a high proportion of applicants were ‘self-serving’ and able to proceed with their application online. However, it also shows that a relatively high proportion required direct contact with funding staff, which was reported to have been resource intensive to manage and put pressure on capacity. Feedback from interviews with grantholders suggests that many had clarification questions during the application process and welcomed the opportunity to talk these through with a Funding Officer. This in-person contact contributed to them feeling informed and supported.

Figure 3.9: When considering or preparing to make an application with The National Lottery Community Fund did you use any of the following sources of information/ advice?



Base: 2,694 CCSF applicants
Source: CX Survey

Managing risk

There was acknowledgement amongst The Fund and DCMS stakeholders that there was a slightly higher degree of risk associated with the CCSF due to:

- **Applications being processed remotely** – pre-COVID, Funding Officers would be out in the community and often in the premises of applicants where they could verify more easily that they existed and were delivering the types of support they said they were.
- **The high volume and low value of a lot of the grants** – over 5,000 of the grants awarded were under the value of £10k. This is different to the profile of most central Government grant funding programmes, which tend to be lower volume, higher value and subject to higher levels of scrutiny.
- **The single upfront payment** – normally The Fund distribute Standard grants in stages over multiple years aligned to agreed milestones. However, CCSF Standard grants were awarded in one upfront payment and there was less ongoing grant management and monitoring than usual due to them being six-month grants.

The consensus was that the right balance was achieved between getting the funding out at pace and managing risk. Whilst all applications were subject to due diligence, with the Rapid Review process highlighted as working well in this regard, there was acknowledgement that there would be a dependence on back-end processes (i.e. post-event assurance) to pick up on any error or fraud.

Some Fund staff were of the view that applications were subject to a higher degree of scrutiny than usual. For example, they wouldn't normally ask for detailed information on the financial status of organisations which they did for CCSF grantholders. One interviewee thought that the appetite for risk should have been higher given the emergency nature of the funding. They considered the additional processes introduced for the CCSF (including the DCMS Rapid Review Panel) to have slowed down processing of applications.

What worked well?

The Fund Grant Management System (GMS) was cited as a key enabler to effective processing of applications. GMS was compared favourably to its predecessor system and described as very intuitive and adaptable. It was found to be particularly helpful for new staff who were brought on board to help with the processing of applications and distribution of funding as they could get up to speed with it very quickly. Whilst it was acknowledged that there was some scope for improvement, such as automation of some elements of the process, it was considered a contributing factor to the effective processing of applications. However, GMS was considered to be less effective for generating monitoring information – discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

“I would say that having GMS in place, for us at least, was a godsend. Especially for me, having new temps come on board and being able to roll out a very intuitive system to them and that being very adaptable.”

Stakeholder, The Fund

The decision to align the application processes for CCSF and NL COVID. A decision was taken to have a single application process for both the CCSF and The Fund’s own COVID-19 emergency response fund to enable a streamlined process and avoid confusion for applicants. Whilst this created a level of complexity internally for The Fund, the consensus amongst staff was that it was the right thing to do in terms of simplifying the customer experience. The view was that it would have been extremely difficult to explain two different funding streams to potential applicants. It also saved time in setting up separate processes as they could build on the established processes that were already in place.

Gathering early customer insights and communicating these in a timely manner. A lot of the usual development work associated with launching a large-scale fund like the CCSF was not undertaken due to the time constraints. There was no time to engage users in the development of the processes and no time to pilot, test and adapt these ahead of launch. This meant that a lot of adaptations to processes were being made after the fund had gone live. One interviewee described it as *“building the plane whilst flying”*. A key enabler to this process was in-depth customer research that was undertaken by The Fund Service Design team with 20 early applicants.

Participants were interviewed at key time points in the process and asked to keep a diary of their experiences. The emerging insights from this work were communicated to relevant teams on a weekly basis and used to inform adjustments to application processes to improve the customer experience. For example, some application fields were amended or removed from GMS to enable more accurate data entry and further guidance was issued on the application process in response to feedback.

What were the challenges?

The volume and nature of applications received. Fund staff were dealing with a higher volume of applications than they had ever experienced previously. This resulted in capacity constraints as funding staff worked through these, whilst also adapting to remote working and other implications of the pandemic and associated restrictions. To mitigate this, The Fund brought in additional staff from across England, Scotland and Wales to support on processing applications. Temporary staff were also brought in, but this was resource-intensive to manage and there were challenges faced sourcing suitable people within the timescales. The nature of the applications also impacted on staff, as they often described in detail the issues and challenges faced by people and communities most in need. The volume and nature of applicants combined was found to have negatively impacted on the health and wellbeing of some funding staff, which was recognised early by The Fund and a range of measures were put in place to support staff.

“You can't just switch off like that from one application to another. These are emotional conversations that you're having with people and there needs to be some time to digest, and some time out built within your resourcing.” Stakeholder, The Fund

Organisations could only submit one application to The Fund for CCSF funding. This was different to usual funding opportunities where they could submit multiple applications, which caused confusion for some customers. In the early days, there were a few examples of multiple applications that were being submitted from the same organisations. The website content was subsequently updated to make this rule clearer and more prominent. Another consequence of the one application rule was that Funding Officers were fielding a lot of queries from organisations who were looking for advice on whether to go for a Simple or Standard grant. This was reported to have been very resource intensive to manage, particularly given the volume of applications they were dealing with.

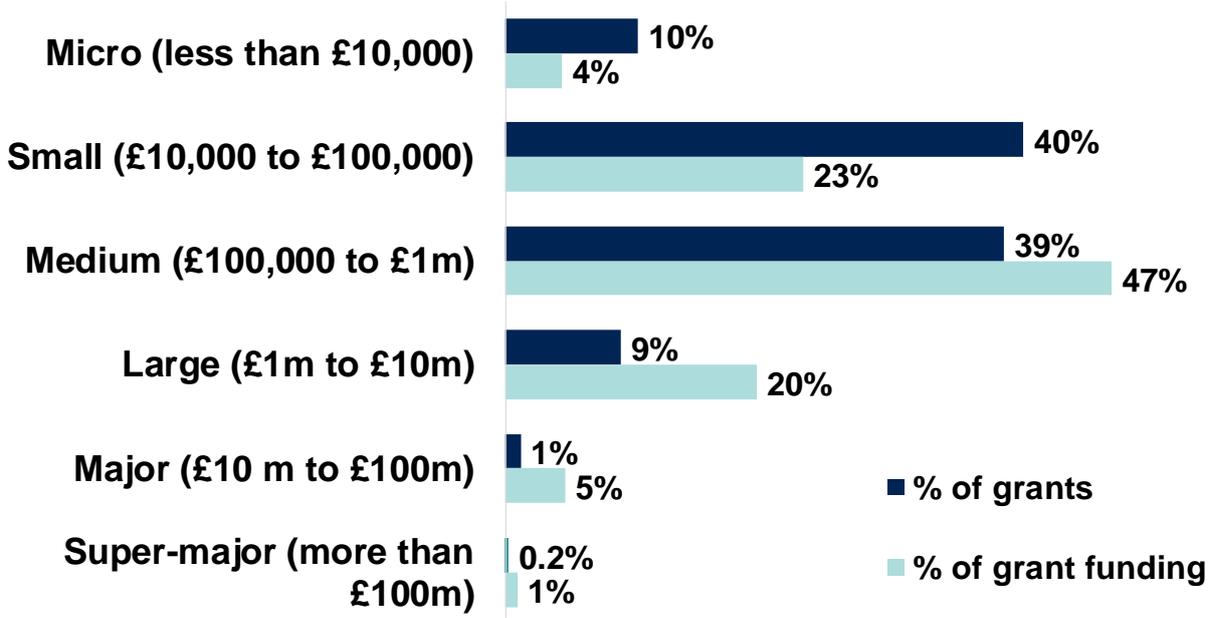
Addressing initial data entry errors. Whilst GMS was widely recognised as being much improved from the previous system that it replaced, there were some aspects identified for improvement. Over a fifth of initial applications were flagged as requiring attention due to customers entering their data incorrectly or not being sure on some fields such as their legal name or bank details. This created a lot of administrative work for funding staff who then had to follow up with applicants to get the right information. If the system could be adapted to help minimise those sorts of errors and discrepancies it would save a lot of time and resource and contribute to a better customer experience.

3.3 Distribution of funding

The CCSF was primarily aimed at small and medium sized organisations and that is where the majority of grant awards and funding went. The majority (90%) of grant awards was distributed to micro, small or medium sized organisations (Figure 3.9). The majority of grant funding was also distributed to micro, small and medium sized organisations, but the proportion was lower (75%). This meant that a quarter of CCSF funding was distributed to large, major or super-major charities.

Feedback from The Fund and DCMS staff suggested that the right balance was struck in terms of the size of organisations who received the funding. There was reported to have been some early discussions about potentially limiting funding to organisations with a turnover of less than one million. However, the decision was taken to include a small proportion of those with turnover of more than one million, with most of the funding still going to the smaller end of the sector.

Figure 3.10: Profile of grantholder organisations by annual income

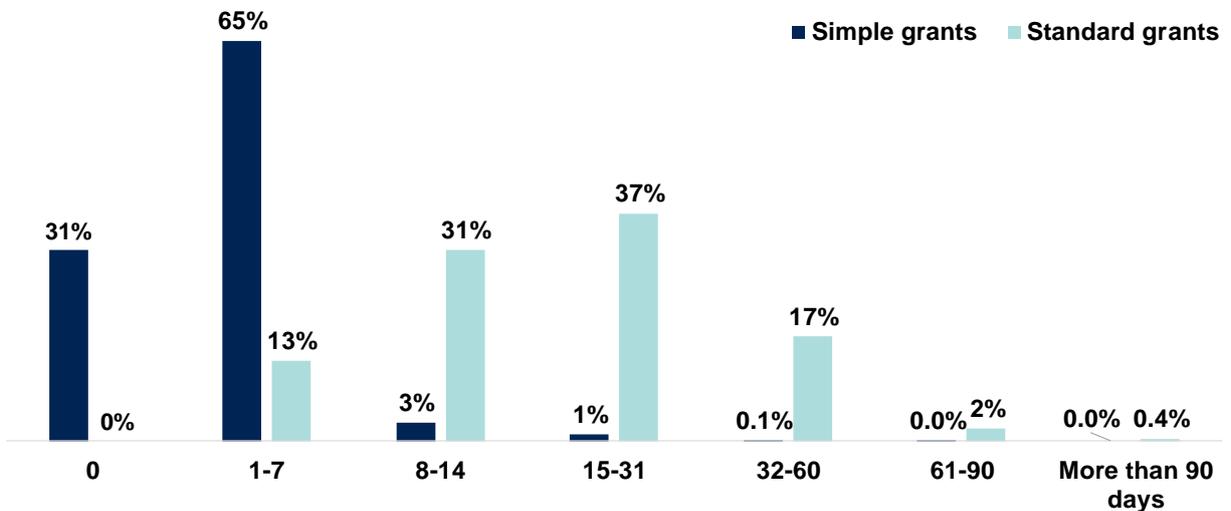


Base: 7,552 grants for which data is available, £180m grant funding
 Categories based on those used by the UK Civil Society Almanac / NCVO
 Source: The Fund Grantholder Management System

Speed at which funding was distributed

There was an average of nine days between grantholders being notified of their award decision and receiving the funding. The process was faster for Simple grants (up to £10k) with grantholders receiving funds on average within three days of the award decision being made and around one in three (31%) receiving the funds on the same day (Figure 3.10). Those receiving Standard grants (over £10k) received the funding within an average of 21 days of the grant award decisions. The process took longer for Standard grants as confirmation of acceptance of the award was required before the funding could be issued, whereas this acceptance was included in the application process for Simple grants.

Figure 3.11: Length of time between grant award decisions and receipt of funding



Bases: 5,408 Simple grants; 2,772 Standard grants
 Source: The Fund Grantholder Management System

Whilst most grantholders were happy with the speed at which they received the funding, some would have liked more notice of when to expect this to help with their planning and preparation.

A small number of grantholders interviewed said they had been surprised and caught slightly off guard by the speed at which they received the funding following the award decision being made. They would have appreciated more notice to ensure they were in a position to begin delivery immediately. Whilst this was not a widespread issue, it aligns with the earlier finding that grantholders would have liked greater clarity on when grant award decisions would be made to help with their planning and preparation.

What worked well?

The Central Panel which was introduced for CCSF was considered to have been effective in ensuring a clear focus on funding frontline COVID activities. Whilst some funding staff questioned the added value of having a Central Panel, those involved were clear that it helped maintain a focus on ensuring that funding was distributed to those delivering frontline services to people and communities impacted by COVID. At times, this was reported to have resulted in some ‘robust discussions’ amongst panel members, but the level of check and challenge this added to the process was widely regarded to have been effective.

The established working relationship between DCMS and The Fund. This was referenced by stakeholders from both organisations as a key success factor in enabling the distribution of the grants in a timely manner. A level of trust was established between the two organisations through previous experience of working together. This was further strengthened through a sense of shared endeavour to get the funding out to those people and communities most in need. Whilst there were pressure points and differences of opinion at various points in the process, the consensus was that the teams came together and delivered effectively in extremely challenging circumstances.

“I found that the whole system, once it got motoring, genuinely felt like a team. That was quite impressive. To manage to do that was great and an important thing to reflect on. We managed to do something pretty big, and pretty spectacular, and pretty difficult, across three different organisations who couldn't ever get in the same room together – everything was done over a video screen.” Stakeholder, DCMS

The team work and collaboration of teams within The Fund. One member of staff commented that previously different teams in the organisation had sometimes had a tendency to work in regional or product silos. However, the CCSF was reported to have helped overcome this by facilitating much greater levels of collaboration and cross-organisational working. The hope was that this would be sustained beyond the CCSF.

What were the challenges?

The high-profile nature of the funding necessitated a level of Government scrutiny that had to be managed. This was reported to have created some challenges due to expectations of ongoing reporting of how grants were being distributed and the volume and profile of beneficiaries being reached. The Fund’s systems and processes did not lend themselves to the level of detail that was being asked, which was reported to have created some tensions.

GMS was considered by some staff in The Fund to be a barrier to the smooth operation of CCSF. As noted earlier in this report, GMS was identified by funding staff as a key enabler to the effective processing of grant applications. However, funding staff noted it was not set up for communicating with grant holders and making changes en masse. Also, it was less effective for supporting the generation of ongoing monitoring data about the funding programme as a whole.

Providing grantholders with clarity on the timings for award decisions. The unprecedented volume of applications that The Fund was dealing with, combined with challenges adapting to a relatively new Grant Management System and new processes associated with the distribution of Government funding, made it difficult to be more transparent about waiting times. Whilst it was deemed particularly critical to have open lines of communication during such a crisis period when organisations were facing furloughing / making redundant staff and shortfalls in income, the situation often precluded that.

3.4 Conclusions: how well has the process of distributing the funding worked for customers and The Fund staff?

Most successful grant applicants were satisfied with the speed at which award decisions were made. Grant award decisions were made in an average of 61 days and funding was distributed within an average of 9 days from decisions being made. Funding staff were less satisfied with the speed at which applications were processed and the lack of communication on progress with these. This seems to have stemmed from the fact that the processes took longer than normal grant programmes delivered by The Fund and they had less oversight and involvement in the process. Applicants awaiting decision also scored lower scores on this measure.

Successful grant applicants were also generally satisfied with the application process and the level of clarity provided by The Fund in relation to their application. The only areas highlighted for improvement related to providing greater clarity on how applications would be assessed and their chances of success, which aligns with the feedback from funding staff noted above.

The consensus was that the right balance was achieved between getting the funding out at pace and managing risk. Staff from The Fund reported that Standard applications were subject to a higher degree of scrutiny than their usual approaches, particularly in relation to the level of financial information that was requested from grant holders. However, overall the consensus was that the right balance was achieved to ensure alignment with expectations of Government funding programmes.

4 Use of funding

Chapter Summary

- Most CCSF grantholders were recorded by Funding Officers as having applied for funding to address increased or changed demand as a result of COVID, with relatively few recorded as having applied for funding primarily to address liquidity issues.
- Comparative analysis of the extent to which intentions differed from delivery suggests that allocating grantholders to a single primary purpose at application stage resulted in an underestimate of the proportion that applied for funding to address liquidity issues. A key finding is that the two purposes cannot be easily separated due to the way in which community organisations operate and their reliance on grant funding to deliver activities and support.
- Almost all grantholder survey respondents reported they had either used the grant exactly (48%) or mostly (42%) as they had intended at application stage.
- Almost half of grantholder survey respondents worked with at least one other organisation to deliver the activities funded by the CCSF grant. There is further evidence from the qualitative interviews with grantholders that the CCSF contributed to increased partnership working amongst organisations in the sector, particularly in relation to sourcing suppliers who were able to deliver support remotely.
- All grants were awarded in one upfront payment. Simple grants deemed medium or high risk were subject to monitoring in the third month of their grant, whilst all Standard grants were subject to a mid-point check in the fourth month of their grant. Some grants had subsequent monitoring at the project end point if deemed necessary after the mid-point check..
- A key success factor for effective grant management was the early decision to enable grantholders to flex delivery as appropriate in response to the changing COVID context and associated regional and national lockdowns.
- Key challenges identified in relation to grant management include the requirement for all grants to be spent within six months, capacity to manage the volume of grants that had been awarded and processes for enabling funding staff to keep up to date with the latest policies on this.

4.1 Introduction

Whilst there are no overarching questions for the process evaluation relating to the use of the funding, there are a number of questions in the process evaluation framework⁶ that relate to the extent to which the funding was used as intended, which this chapter reports on. The information presented draws on CCSF applicant data from The Fund Grant Management System, quantitative feedback collected through the grantholder survey on how the funding was used and reasons for any differences in how it was intended to be used. It also draws on qualitative feedback from The Fund and DCMS staff on the effectiveness of grant management processes, as well as interviews with grantholders.

⁶ See Annex A.

4.2 Overview

During the application process, Funding Officers were asked to confirm the intended primary purpose of each application. This involved them selecting one of the two following categories that was subsequently recorded in the GMS:

1. The funding will deliver activities specifically aimed to support communities through the COVID-19 crisis
2. The funding will overcome any immediate liquidity or staffing issues caused by the COVID-19 crisis.

Analysis of the GMS showed that nearly all (89%) of the CCSF grantholders had been classified as intending to deliver primary purpose (1) – **to support communities through the COVID-19 crisis**. This implied that very few grantholders had been perceived to apply primarily to help them **overcome immediate liquidity or staffing issues** (only 11%).

Comparative analysis of the extent to which intentions differed from actual delivery suggests that allocating grantholders to a single primary purpose at application stage resulted in an **under-estimate of the proportion of grantholders that used the grant to continue to operate** (11% in GMS vs. 48% in the GS – see Table 4.1). This difference is partly due to the ways in which the application process and grantholder survey collected this information:

- The application data captured the perceived primary purpose (i.e. limited responses to one option), whereas the grantholder survey asked respondents to select all applicable uses (i.e. used a multi-code response question) – the results challenge the original assumption that it would be possible to distinguish between grants that enabled grantholders to continue to operate vs. adapt to changes circumstances/respond to increased demand.
- The intended primary purpose was based on the perceptions of Funding Officers, who completed this data, whereas the grantholder survey recorded the direct views of the funded organisations.

The differences are also partly attributed to the fact that the two purposes (to address increased / changed demand or liquidity issues) cannot be easily separated. Evidence from qualitative interviews with grantholders suggest that the two purposes are intrinsically linked as most are dependent on grant funding to continue delivering activities and support.

Table 4.1: Use of the CCSF grant as reported in the grantholder survey and by intended primary purpose in the GMS⁷

	Primary purpose for funding recorded at application stage	
GMS data	The funding will overcome any immediate liquidity or staffing issues caused by the COVID-19 crisis	The funding will deliver activities specifically aimed to support communities through the COVID-19 crisis
Base: All grantholder survey respondents that had the corresponding GMS data (6,676)	11%	89%
		

⁷ GMS primary purpose overcoming any immediate liquidity or staffing issues has been aligned with the subset of grantholders developed to represent grantholder hypothesis 1 a and b, and GMS purpose funding delivering activities specifically aimed to support communities through the COVID-19 crisis aligned with the subset of grantholders developed to represent the combined grantholder hypotheses 2a and 2b

	In which, if any, of the following ways did your organisation use the grant received from the fund?	
Grantholder survey	To ensure my organisation had the financial resources to <u>continue to operate</u> during the COVID-19 pandemic (Hypothesis 1a/b)	To help my organisation respond to an <u>increase in demand</u> for its activities during the COVID-19 pandemic and to help my organisation adapt its delivery models to continue to deliver <u>existing</u> activities or to deliver <u>new</u> activities during the COVID-19 pandemic (Hypotheses 2a and/or b)
Base: All grantholder survey respondents (6,712)	48%	90%

Base: All CCSF grantholders (6,712)

Source: Ipsos MORI Grantholder Survey. Information on primary purpose of grant taken from the GMS – the difference in base sizes is the result of missing information.

The majority (90%) of grantholder survey respondents reported they had either used the grant exactly (48%) or mostly (42%) as they had intended at application stage (see Table 4.2). This differed slightly between grant type, where a slightly higher proportion of grantholders who had received simple grants reported using the grant exactly as they had intended.

Table 4.2: Use of the CCSF funding by grant type

	Grant type		
	All grantholders	Simple (£10,000 or less)	Standard (£10,001 or more)
Which of the following, if any, best describes how your organisation used the grant from the fund?			
We used the grant exactly as we said we would when we applied	48%	50%	44%
We used the grant mostly as we said we would when we applied	42%	39%	46%
We used the grant in slightly different ways than we said we would when we applied	10%	10%	10%
We used the grant in completely different ways than we said we would when we applied	1%	1%	*
Don't know	*	*	*

Base: All CCSF grantholders who used the funding to adapt existing services, develop new services, or respond to an increase in demand during the Coronavirus pandemic (6,056)

Source: Ipsos MORI Grantholder Survey. Information on grant type was taken from the GMS.

More than half (58%) of grantholders who completed the survey said they had **used the CCSF funding to adapt to deliver activities and support online** (e.g. provision of training / technical / digital equipment to remove barriers). Two fifths (40%) used it to adapt activities and support so they could **continue to deliver face-to-face** (e.g. introducing social distancing measures).

Taken in the round, these findings suggest that although the majority of grantholders used the CCSF funding to support communities through the COVID-19 crisis, **around half also used it to continue to operate**. And despite the rapidly changing context, including the periods of local and national lockdown restrictions, the majority of grantholders **were able to use the grant in the way they had intended**.

This was confirmed in the interviews with grantholders, many of whom referenced how grateful they were to have the opportunity to flex delivery in response to changing circumstances, even if they didn't have to use this extensively. The adaptations that were made were typically fairly minor, such as shifts in mode of delivery (from face-to-face to remote) in line with latest restrictions.

"It was really good how flexible the grant was... We did spend the money pretty much on what we thought we were going to, but actually there was no need for us to go back and get permission to do things if they turned out different from what we thought, so it was very flexible." **CCSF Grantholder**

4.3 Partnership funding and collaboration

Almost half (47%) of grantholder survey respondents reported they had worked with an(other) organisation(s) to deliver the activities funded by the CCSF grant (see Table 4.3)⁸. Of those who said they had worked in partnership with other organisations, this had most commonly involved working with community groups (63%) and registered charities (61%) (see Table 4.4).

Table 4.3: Partnership working

	Did you work with an(other) organisation(s) to deliver the activities funded by the CCSF grant?
	All grantholders
Yes	47%
No	52%
Don't know	1%

Base: All CCSF grantholders who used the funding to adapt existing services, develop new services, or respond to an increase in demand during the Coronavirus pandemic (6,056)
Source: Ipsos MORI Grantholder Survey

Table 4.4: Types of organisation involved in partnership working

	Which, if any, of the following types of organisation(s) did you work with to deliver the activities funded by the fund?
	All grantholders
Community groups	63%
Registered charities	61%
Local authority	43%
Other public services (e.g. NHS, police, schools)	38%
Faith organisations	28%
Other*	21%
Prefer not to say	*
Don't know	*

Base: All CCSF grantholders worked with other organisations to deliver funding (2,827)

Source: Ipsos MORI Grantholder Survey

* The most frequently referenced partners in the 'other' category were private companies (22%), including supermarkets, catering companies and IT / digital agencies. This was followed by Community Interest Companies (11%), education providers (9%) and housing associations / providers (7%).

Evidence from the qualitative interviews with grantholders suggest that the CCSF has contributed to increased partnership working amongst organisations in the sector. In one example, an organisation working with stroke survivors was able to use some of the funding to pay for physical therapists and exercise instructors to deliver support remotely. Similarly, an organisation

⁸ No additional differences were evident between grantholders who received simple and standard grants.

providing support to people with long term cancer was able to use some of the funding to bring in counsellors to deliver support remotely. In another example, a food bank developed a commercial partnership with a local organic food supplier. They were confident that this would not have happened in the absence of the funding as, although the supplier provided the food at below market value, they were not in a position to donate the quantities of food required.

4.4 Grant management

Overview of approach

The approach to grant management was lighter touch for CCSF than for usual funding programmes delivered by The Fund, particularly for Standard grants. As noted in the previous chapter, all grants (Simple and Standard) were awarded in one upfront payment. This was different to usual Standard grants, which are typically more longer-term with payments aligned to agreed milestones and with regular periodic payments made over the course of the grant depending on the assigned risk level. Standard grants had a mid-point review at four months, which involved them being contacted by a Funding Officer by phone or email. Only Simple grants deemed to be high risk at the grant award stage were subject to monitoring during the grant period, although they were required to provide information on spend to The Fund at the end of their grant. Usual end of grant monitoring processes for both Simple and Standard grants were removed and replaced with the end of grant survey to be delivered as part of the impact evaluation alongside the usual end of grant financial monitoring and mid-point check-in.

What worked well?

Reaching agreement early that there could be flexibility on how grantholders used the funding.

This was widely regarded as a key success factor for effective management of CCSF grants. The constantly changing COVID context and associated regional and national lockdowns meant that sometimes activities and support that grantholders set out that they would deliver in their applications were no longer appropriate by the time grant awards were made. It was therefore deemed critical that grantholders were given the opportunity to flex and adapt delivery as appropriate. This also came through in the grantholder interviews as being critical to enabling them to respond flexibly to changing circumstances.

What were the challenges?

The six-month funding period and end of March cut off date for grant funding to be spent was identified as a key challenge for grant management. This was reported to be a challenge for many grantholders in the context of changes to regional and national lockdown restrictions, which impacted on their ability to deliver activities and support as intended. A lot of organisations were reported to have been contacting funding staff to request extensions to the end dates of their grant, but they were unable to offer flexibility beyond the end of March 2021. This meant that some organisations were facing into a 'cliff edge' at the end of March 2021 with no future funding secured beyond that date, whilst also not being in a position to spend their existing grants as intended within the required timeframe. In some cases, they were rushing to spend the money on time. The consensus amongst funding staff was that they would be able to make better use of the money if there had been a bit more flexibility on the deadline.

The resourcing required for grant management was underestimated. Once grants had been awarded, funding staff continued to receive a lot of queries from grantholders on how they could spend the funding. For example, if they could change or adapt delivery in response to contextual factors if there was any scope for an extension to the end date of their grant. Whilst the grant management processes

were intentionally designed as light touch for the CCSF (relative to normal funding distributed by The Fund), the volume of grantholders meant that even if a small proportion were getting in touch with queries this took a lot of time and resource to manage.

There was some confusion around the latest processes for grant management amongst funding staff. There were reported to have been some inconsistencies across the organisation on some aspects of the grant management process. This was exacerbated by the fact that minor changes to policy were introduced during the process, which was necessary given that a lot of the usual development work associated with launching a large-scale fund like CCSF could not be undertaken due to the time constraints. There was a recommendation from one staff member that a central database of policies and processes be developed from the outset so that funding staff are clear on where to go for the latest information.

"I think one big learning point for us was just managing all the changes and tracking all the changes and decisions. That was actually quite difficult. It was quite laborious but because there were so many different elements, you'd got policy team and development team and Government input, there were lots of things going on and it was hard to keep track of all those changes." **Stakeholder, The Fund**

4.5 Conclusions: To what extent has the funding been used as intended?

The CCSF has contributed to keeping some small and medium sized charities operating during the pandemic. Whilst application data would suggest that relatively few CCSF grants were intended to address liquidity issues faced by small and medium sized organisations in the sector, evidence from the grantholder survey and interviews suggests that this was in fact how it was used by many organisations. A key finding from the evaluation is that these two purposes cannot be easily separated, with most community organisations dependent on grant funding to enable them to continue delivering activities and support.

Despite the rapidly changing context, including the periods of local and national lockdown restrictions, the majority of grantholders were able to use the grant in the way they had intended. There was an element of flexibility built into grantholder agreements to enable them to adapt delivery if required and this was deemed critical to enabling them to deliver appropriate support to people and communities in need. As a result, most were able to be flexible and adaptive to this changing context and continue to deliver mainly as intended. However, the requirement for all grant funding to be used within six months did create challenges for some grantholders given the changing context and the impact of this on delivery.

There is evidence that the CCSF has facilitated increased partnership working amongst organisations in the sector. Almost half of survey respondents worked with at least one other organisation to deliver activities and support through CCSF, most commonly registered charities and community groups. This is a key finding relating to the impact and legacy of the CCSF.

Grant management processes were intentionally light touch for the CCSF given the short term and emergency nature of the funding. The consensus was that this was right and appropriate. However, there were some challenges identified around capacity of funding offers to manage the volume of grants that had been awarded and ensuring they were clear on the latest policies and processes for this.

5 Lessons learned

Chapter Summary

- The pace at which the CCSF was mobilised was considered both a significant achievement and a challenge. Embedding feedback loops, rapid reviews and real-time learning were critical for reflecting on what was working well and less well and making adaptations while in flight.
- The commitment across Government to the shared endeavour was a key success factor supporting the short timescales. Additionally, the willingness of key stakeholders to compromise alongside DCMS and The Fund's understanding of the sector helped ensure the CCSF was suitable for the sector.
- The lack of robust data and evidence on the (expected) impact of the crisis on the sector presented challenges for building a case for funding. There is an ongoing need to better measure the activities carried out by civil society and the value it brings, including from a public services perspective.
- Given the ever-changing context, making use of The Fund's existing products offered consistency and efficiency. Conversely, there were some tensions regarding The Fund's existing monitoring approaches and those expected for Government funding.
- The flexible use of funding was considered the right approach given the differences in restrictions across areas and as the crisis became more protracted than expected when the CCSF was designed.

5.1 Introduction

This chapter reports the key lessons learned from CCSF about crisis response funding in line with the key process questions set out in the box below. It discusses what worked well and less well in the design, implementation and distribution of CCSF, as well as the key contextual factors influencing these processes, to inform an assessment of the extent to which CCSF represented an effective route for distributing emergency response funding. The findings are based on analysis of qualitative feedback collected through interviews and round tables conducted with The Fund and DCMS staff.

3. What can we learn from this about crisis response funding?

What can internal stakeholders tell us about CCSF's funding approach to help us learn and improve for future emergency funding programmes?

5.2 What worked well?

The following elements of the design, implementation and distribution of CCSF were found to work well.

The speed at which the CCSF was mobilised was considered a significant achievement. There was an early decision to respond to the impact of the pandemic on the sector and part of this decision was to also move at pace to deliver the funding in short timescales. This stood in stark contrast to the much longer timescales typically required for designing grant schemes that took closer to a year.

Processes that normally take multiple weeks were done in hours or days. A key enabler to this swift mobilisation was that 'the whole system stepped up to the plate' to ensure continuous movement through goalposts, for example, through additional flexibility in the typical processes and bureaucracy. Another key enabler was the emphasis on rapid feedback loops and real-time adaptation, for example, by taking decisions in meetings that were immediately actioned. This pace continued through to application and distribution processes, and despite working through significantly higher volumes of applications than usual, the funding was distributed to the sector in a timely manner.

"I do keep reminding myself of how extraordinarily quickly we were able to turn this around, from 8th April to the 25th May. I don't think anyone would have thought it would be possible. It was helped a lot by the flexibility that was allowed by the processes and bureaucracy that went alongside it." Stakeholder, DCMS

There was commitment across Government and compromises were made for the greater good.

Each stakeholder organisation played an important role in facilitating the development and mobilisation of the CCSF. For example, at the design stage, the joint relationship between DCMS and Treasury ensured oversight of what requests were coming in from across Civil Society and what the gaps were, which informed the development of the criteria so that it was flexible and available to wider Civil Society organisations while not duplicating other efforts. Additionally, the established relationship between DCMS and The Fund was important, particularly in the context of designing the CCSF virtually with staff working from home. Participants reflected that a positive team environment, built around a shared endeavour, enabled efficient working relationships and collaboration across three organisations. Furthermore, while some requirements for the CCSF were fixed, it appeared that compromises were also reached, for example, about the length of the grants. These discussions were facilitated by constructive working relationships and the common aim to develop a grant scheme that would work for the sector. In turn, this generated trust and allowed for open and honest conversations about what was working well and less well.

Both DCMS and The Fund have a good understanding of the voluntary sector. There was agreement that the community and voluntary sector was well-placed to support people and communities affected by the pandemic and a good understanding of the role that charities and voluntary sector organisations played. This came with recognition that some charities were not in a position to make use of the Furlough Scheme because it would mean they could not deliver their services to people. As such, both DCMS and The Fund were aware that some charities were making decisions to either continue delivering and put their finances and future at risk, or close shop since this would have a similar impact as putting staff on furlough.

Using existing products but creating a taxonomy ensured efficiency that was also focused.

Rather than designing a new set of products, a decision was made to use The Fund's existing products (simple and standard). Participants who took part in interviews reflected positively about this decision given the complexity of managing many other variables, for example, assessing the needs of the sector and determining what to fund. Using the existing products meant that resourcing discussions were building on experience consistent with how funding was already done. Taking this decision had impacts on assessment and the rapid review of the simple grants; however, addressing this after the fact through a manual process was considered favourable over adding another change to existing processes. Using the existing products also appeared to work well alongside the creation of detailed taxonomy setting out the types of organisations that would be eligible for funding, which helped provide coherency around priorities for funding.

The flexibility of the operating model facilitates learning insights in real time. Feedback loops and learning in real-time were critical to designing and mobilising the CCSF at pace. The flexibility to adapt based on what was working well and less well was key for a funding model to be contextually and locally responsive. Importantly, relationships within the team that were strengthened as a result of the crisis facilitated better learning. There was an investment in making time for applied and real-time learning, with one participant describing the CCSF as an ‘improvement journey’. As an unexpected consequence, some felt that this has already had a positive impact on how they have continued to work, including ongoing sharing.

5.3 What were the challenges?

The following overarching challenges were identified.

Moving at pace to develop the CCSF, and doing so while it was in motion, created challenges. As a result of responding ‘first and fast’, it was not possible to follow typical processes that, for example, pulled together the most experienced team or involved a wider group of people to ensure an element of co-design. The emergency nature of the funding meant that this pace was inevitable, although there were lessons identified that could be helpful if a similar response is required in future. For example, one recommendation was to build in discussions between Ministers and the staff who are developing the design on the ground to support an understanding of the needs and priorities of each group. Once the CCSF was up and running, decisions based on real-time learning were also necessary, some of which may have been avoidable had there been more time to work through potential issues before launching. However, taking more time may not have been palatable in the context of the rapid rise in emergency needs faced by some communities.

There was a lack of evidence on the impact of the pandemic on civil society, the resultant needs of the sector and its potential impact in supporting the response. Those designing the CCSF relied heavily on survey data pulled together by representative organisations to assess the anticipated impact of the pandemic on the sector; however, it was recognised that this survey data was typically not fully representative of the needs of the sector. This meant that there was a limited understanding of the state of the sector, including who was doing what, and the challenges and issues they were facing, that was based on robust, granular data rather than anecdotal evidence. This had implications for making the case for funding, which in the absence of hard data, led to a tighter focus on funding organisations and services that were going to be most needed by the people and communities disproportionately affected by the crisis. This was highlighted as an ongoing challenge to overcome so that in the future, it is possible to have an understanding of what the sector looks like at any one time, including the value it brings from a public services perspective and its role in preventing the need for more acute services, or conversely, the value lost when an organisation or group of organisations close. Evidencing this value was acknowledged as difficult but that the pandemic further emphasised the need for finding a better measure. The Value for Money strand of the current evaluation should help contribute to addressing this gap in evidence on the value of the work of civil society.

“One of the obvious things that was challenging was the lack of robust evidence on the impact that would be felt on the sector. We were very reliant on survey data that was being pulled together by some of the representative organisations to get an indication of what the impact might be on funding streams. An ongoing challenge, and one that we’ve taken away from the whole COVID experience into our future strategy, is how we can work to have a much better live understanding of the state of our sectors at any one time, and the challenges and issues they might be facing.” Stakeholder, DCMS

There were differing expectations regarding the reporting of management information in relation to the CCSF. Participants noted that there were differences in the expectations, priorities and culture between Government and The Fund, which were attributed to different approaches depending on whether funding comes from taxpayer money or National Lottery money. For example, one participant described the former as placing greater emphasis on data while the latter placed greater emphasis on people and organisations funded. These tensions perhaps needed more time early in the process for discussion to support embedding ‘the why’ among teams. However, it was noted that the monitoring information collected on CCSF applicants was slightly different to usual and that The Fund were able to meet all of the reporting requirements of DCMS.

“Ministers care a lot about numbers and data and NLCF, as an organisation, is much more about people, and the organisation in the lead, and the learning for that organisation for the future. That created a little bit of tension throughout the process.” Stakeholder, DCMS

There was significant pressure on staff given the pace and volume of work. The Fund staff were dealing with a very large volume of applications meaning they were required to adapt to working through more applications than usual while also adjusting to working from home and more generally responding to the pandemic on a personal level. Together with the fact that applications often covered distressing topics, the wellbeing of staff was at risk of being negatively affected. This was recognised by senior leaders with The Fund, who implemented a range of initiatives to support staff wellbeing which were considered effective.

5.4 What was the role of context?

The following contextual factors played a role in influencing the design, implementation and distribution of the CCSF.

During the time that CCSF was being designed and developed, key stakeholders were having to make a range of practical changes in order to support continuity of working. At the start of the pandemic and national lockdown, both The Fund and DCMS had to enact change management processes quickly. This included, for example, sending laptops and mobiles to staff and adapting to virtual working environments. The Fund advice line was down for one day prior to the launch of CCSF to enable the transition of staff to work from home. Although these practical challenges were experienced across the country, it is important to recognise the context in which the teams were working to design, develop and mobilise the CCSF.

It was important that the CCSF did not duplicate other pots of funding. Significant efforts were made to conduct rapid scoping about what the needs were and what types of services needed support. As mentioned above, a key success factor was the commitment, communication and collaboration across The Fund, DCMS and Treasury to ensure that the CCSF provided additionality and filled gaps. However, the lack of data about the (expected) impact on the sector was a barrier to this assessment.

“We were able to identify the list of things that were coming in from other Government departments, what that would cover, and what the gaps were, so that we could ensure that the criteria that we were taking forward would be flexible enough to make sure that there was support available to wider Civil Society organisations, and wasn't treading on the toes of more direct support that might be made available.”

Stakeholder, DCMS

The circumstances led to a greater realism about what to fund compared to usual. The focus shifted drastically to thinking about what people needed, where money was needed most, and what was feasible. For example, The Fund did not previously fund food delivery or PPE and it was therefore new territory to determine whether the funding should be used in these ways or whether this would duplicate other efforts.

The protracted length of the crisis and varying local restrictions confirmed the flexible approach but also raised issues. Initially, the crisis was expected to be a 'short, acute emergency' but instead it became clear that it was a 'protracted crisis situation'. Over this period, grantholders worked within the constraints of multiple national lockdowns and local restrictions, for example, areas of the North West under prolonged periods of local lockdowns. This confirmed the need for the CCSF grant to be used flexibly by grantholders:

"Even though, perhaps, by the time they got the money, they were having to make different decisions because the guidance or tier they were then in, all of that was continuing [...] We are going to have to trust them as we have throughout in terms of their ability to flex, because we are saying these people know their communities and are best placed to work with them [but] the type of activity, what that looks like, is going to have to change." **Stakeholder, The Fund**

However, it was also noted that some struggled to spend the money as planned because they had to redesign their services and redistribute their funding each time restrictions changed. As such, more flexibility to allow projects to be extended for a short period was considered desirable among some participants.

The CCSF did not have a focus on recovery. The CCSF was designed as emergency response funding and therefore did not cover projects with a focus on recovery or organisational resilience. This meant that projects applying on this basis had to be rejected or diverted to other funding pots, including the NL COVID emergency funding being distributed by The Fund. However, all CCSF grantholders were given the opportunity to engage with a Learning Hub, which included some activities focussed on recovery.

5.5 What are the lessons?

Overall, based on the perceptions among DCMS and The Fund stakeholders, **the CCSF was found to have represented an effective route to distributing emergency response funding.** The findings presented throughout this report indicate that there have been many lessons learned about specific processes. An advantage in the future would be that all the learning would be available should a similar response be needed; however, it was recognised that it would greatly depend on the time and resources available.

There are also four overarching lessons for the future design and implementation of emergency response funding that are highlighted here, with further discussion on each included in the conclusion:

- **If time permits, the approach should be strategic and aim to generate impact that is sustainability in the longer-term, recognising that this is not always possible or appropriate in the context of emergency funding.**
- **It should create a reflective environment by building in regular feedback loops to generate live insights and enable effective and timely adaptation when issues arise.**

- **At the planning stage, careful consideration should be given to the resources, processes and systems required to distribute funding at this scale and pace and early measures taken to put these in place.**
- **Building on established relationships between policy makers and partners with existing grant distribution processes and relevant experience represents an effective approach to distributing emergency funding efficiently and effectively.**

"If we can get that kind of spirit in a future COVID package, in a future emergency, then that's what we need to get to. How do you do that, other than the sheer panic? I don't know. [...] I have never seen the entirety of Government lift itself up in terms of how it responded in the way that we did here." **Stakeholder, DCMS**

6 Conclusions

This document has reported on the key findings from the process evaluation of the CCSF. This final chapter presents summary conclusions based on these findings, which are structured around the key questions that this strand of the evaluation was seeking to address.

6.1 Has the funding reached the organisations as set out in the funding criteria?

This evidence suggests that CCSF was successful in reaching the organisations as set out in the funding criteria. Most of the funding went to small or medium sized organisations who intended to deliver targeted support to people and communities disproportionately impacted by COVID.

CCSF appears to have been successful in reaching those people and communities in need. CCSF grant funding was distributed to every region and almost every local authority in England. The regions with the highest levels of CCSF funding were also those with the highest concentrations of deprivation, suggesting that the funding reached communities who were facing economic and social challenges prior to COVID. A quarter of CCSF grant funding went to organisations targeting people with disabilities and a fifth went to organisations targeting activities and support at Black and Minority Ethnic communities.

The targeted outreach work delivered at the regional level was successful in broadening the reach of the CCSF beyond the usual customer base of The Fund. Almost half (45%) of CCSF grantholders had not received funding from The Fund previously. Key factors found to have worked well included having Funding Officers based within local communities, taking a strategic and planned approach to national and regional outreach activities and working through partners to reach people and communities most in need.

6.2 How well has the process of distributing the funding worked for customers and staff from The Fund?

Most grant applicants were satisfied with the speed at which award decisions were made. Grant award decisions were made in an average of 61 days and funding was distributed within an average of 9 days from decisions being made. Funding staff were less satisfied with the speed at which applications were processed and the lack of communication on progress with these. This seems to have stemmed from the fact that the overall grant award process as a whole took longer than normal grant programmes and they had less oversight and involvement in the process.

Grant applicants were also found to be generally satisfied with the application process and the level of clarity provided by The Fund in relation to their application. The only areas highlighted for improvement related to providing greater clarity on how applications would be assessed and their chances of success, which aligns with the feedback from funding staff noted above.

The consensus was that the right balance was achieved between getting the funding out at pace and managing risk. The Fund staff reported that Standard grant applications were subject to a higher degree of scrutiny than their usual approaches, particularly in relation to the level of financial information that was requested from grant holders. They did question whether this was the right approach given the emergency nature of the funding, with a view amongst some that there should have been a higher appetite for risk. However, a balance was required to ensure alignment with expectations of Government funding programmes.

Overall, the processes for distributing the funding were considered effective in enabling distribution of the funding within the required timescales. Key enablers included The Fund Grant Management System (GMS), the decision to align the application processes for CCSF and NL COVID and gathering early customer experience insights and communicating these in a timely manner. The main challenge faced was the volume and nature of applications received, which put unprecedented pressure on funding staff during a time when they were adapting to remote working and other issues associated with the pandemic and associated restrictions (such as home schooling and being isolated from friends and family).

6.3 To what extent has the funding been used as intended?

The CCSF has contributed to keeping some small and medium sized charities operating during the pandemic. Whilst application data would suggest that relatively few CCSF grants were intended to address liquidity issues faced by small and medium sized organisations in the sector, evidence from the grantholder survey and interviews suggest that this was in fact how it was used by many organisations. The evaluation found that these two purposes cannot be easily separated, with most community organisations dependent on grant funding to enable them to continue delivering activities and support.

Despite the rapidly changing context, including the periods of local and national lockdown restrictions, the majority of grantholders were able to use the grant in the way they had intended. There was an element of flexibility built into grantholder agreements to enable them to adapt delivery if required and this was deemed critical to enabling them to deliver appropriate support to people and communities in need. However, most were able to be flexible and adaptive to this changing context and continue to deliver mainly as intended.

CCSF was found to have facilitated increased partnership working amongst organisations in the sector. Almost half of survey respondents worked with at least one other organisation to deliver activities and support through CCSF, most commonly registered charities and community groups. This is a key finding relating to the impact and potential legacy of the CCSF.

Grant management processes were intentionally light touch for the CCSF given the short term and emergency nature of the funding. The consensus was that this was right and appropriate. However, there were some challenges identified around capacity of funding offers to manage the volume of grants that had been awarded and ensuring they were clear on the latest policies and processes for this.

6.4 What can internal stakeholders tell us about CCSF's funding approach to help us learn and improve for future emergency funding programmes?

CCSF was found to be an effective route to distributing emergency response funding. The findings presented throughout this report indicate that there have been many lessons learned about specific processes. An advantage in the future should be that all of this learning is available should a similar response be required.

The evidence points to four overarching lessons for the future design and implementation of emergency response funding:

- **If time permits, the approach should be strategic and aim to generate impact that is sustainability in the longer-term, recognising that this is not always possible or appropriate in the context of emergency funding.** When the CCSF was launched, the crisis was expected to be short term but instead it turned into a protracted situation. Small and medium sized

organisations struggled to spend the grant in the short timescales available due to the changing context. In some cases, enabling greater flexibility for them to focus on recovery and resilience, rather than just supporting the response to the pandemic, may have resulted in a better use of the funding.

- **It should create a reflective environment by building in regular feedback loops to generate live insights and enable effective and timely adaptation when issues arise.** Once the CCSF was up and running, decisions based on real-time learning were critical given that most of the usual processes associated with the design, development and implementation of grant funding of this scale could not be delivered in the timescales prior to launch.
- **At the planning stage, careful consideration should be given to the resources, processes and systems required to distribute funding at this scale and pace and early measures taken to put these in place.** The work required to manage the volume of applications was unprecedented and put significant pressure on funding teams, particularly when the fund was initially launched. A range of measures were put in place to address this once the CCSF was live, such as bringing in temporary staff and redeploying resource from other parts of the organisation. In future, anticipating this and putting measures in place earlier could help ease that initial pressure on delivery teams.
- **Building on established relationships between policy makers and partners with existing grant distribution processes and relevant experience represents an effective approach to distributing emergency funding efficiently and effectively.** The open and constructive relationship established between The Fund and DCMS, driven by a shared endeavour to get the funding out to the people and communities most in need, was a critical success factor in enabling CCSF to be mobilised and delivered at pace.

Annex A: Process Evaluation Framework

Table 6.1: Extract of CCSF Evaluation Framework (Process)

ToC component	Example data collection questions	GMS	Reflected learning from THE FUND & DCMS	CX Survey	Qualitative interviews with grant holders (x300)	Case studies (x40)	Grant holder survey	Volunteer survey
1. Fund management								
Promotion & engagement <i>Activity</i>	How effective were the processes for promoting CCSF and engaging eligible applicants? How did applicants find out about CCSF? Were the aims and objectives clearly communicated? What was the success rate for applicants? Were any types of organisations (and the communities they support) over / under-represented in the applications / grant awards i.e. what types of organisations did not apply? How did this vary by region?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Applications received & success rate <i>Output</i>								
Assessment of applications <i>Activity</i>	How effective and timely were the processes for assessing CCSF applications? How clear was the eligibility criteria? How consistently was this applied? How effective were the new processes introduced for CCSF (including the rapid review / joint decision panel / additional application fields) and how effectively did they assess and mitigate risks? What were the key reasons for rejecting applications, and what types of organisations were rejected? What are the lessons? Were any displacement or substitution effects observed and if so, what unintended outcomes did this bring about?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Distribution of funding <i>Activity</i>	How effective were the processes for distributing CCSF funding? What were the timescales from application to funding award? How does this compare to other emergency funding responses? What worked well / less well? What are the lessons? How much funding was awarded in total? How were the funds distributed by factors such as type of grant / type of org / activities delivered / target beneficiaries / geographical location of delivery?	✓	✓		✓			
Amount of funds distributed <i>Output</i>								
Eligible organisations receive funding <i>Output</i>	How many organisations were funded in total? Was the approach rational and successful in selecting organisations in line with the funding criteria? How many grantholders are seeking to address liquidity issues compared with using funds to address	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	

ToC component	Example data collection questions	GMS	Reflected learning from THE FUND & DCMS	CX Survey	Qualitative interviews with grant holders (x300)	Case studies (x40)	Grant holder survey	Volunteer survey
	increased/changed demand? What is the financial health of grantholders and how does this vary?							
Grant management <i>Activity</i>	How effective were the processes for managing grant awards? Was the level of oversight considered appropriate / proportionate by grantholders? How effective were the systems for monitoring and reporting CCSF activity / delivery? What worked well? What could have been improved?	✓	✓		✓		✓	
Lessons learned about the distribution of crisis response funding <i>Learning</i>	Does the approach to delivering CCSF represent an effective route to distributing emergency response funding? What can we learn about the pace at which CCSF was designed, launched and delivered? What has worked well / less well? What have been the challenges and what approaches have been taken to overcome these? What lessons can be learned about managing the flow of emergency funding, including the balance between efficiency of distribution and fiduciary risk?		✓		✓	✓		
2. Grantholders								
Customer journey	How satisfied were customers / grantholders with ease of access and progression to each stage of the grant making process? How does this compare to satisfaction levels for other funding programmes (derived from the routine CX survey used by The Fund) and wider emergency funding programmes? Which elements were well / less well received? What are the recommendations for improvement?	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Use funding to address liquidity issues; and/or respond to increased / changed demand <i>Activities</i> Activities delivered <i>Output</i>	To what extent did grantholders use the funding as intended (to address liquidity issues; and/or respond to increased / changed demand)? How did the use of funds vary within each category and by grant size i.e. different types of activities? What are the lessons? To what extent did grantholders deliver activities as intended? What types of activities were delivered? What were the reasons for any differences in what was delivered relative to what was planned?	✓			✓	✓	✓	
Partnership funding and collaboration <i>Activity</i>	What proportion of the funding was formally distributed to partnerships? To what extent did other CCSF grantholders develop partnerships? Were partnerships new or existing? How did activities	✓			✓	✓	✓	

ToC component	Example data collection questions	GMS	Reflected learning from THE FUND & DCMS	CX Survey	Qualitative interviews with grant holders (x300)	Case studies (x40)	Grant holder survey	Volunteer survey
	delivered by partnerships differ from individual grantholders? What are the lessons about funding partnerships and/or collaboration?							
Lessons learned within VCSE sector <i>Learning</i>	What lessons can be learned about delivering activities to support those disproportionately affected by the crisis? Which activities have worked well / less well? What have been the challenges and what approaches have been taken to overcome these?		✓		✓	✓	✓	
3. Staff								
Retain staff <i>Activity</i>	What proportion of CCSF grantholders used funding to retain staff, including those on furlough? How did this vary by type of grant / type of org?				✓	✓	✓	
Staff maintained <i>Output</i>	To what extent did CCSF funding enable staff to retain their jobs, including those on furlough, that would otherwise be at risk due to the impact of COVID-19? How does this compare to non-funded organisations (where possible)?							
Redeploy staff / Increase staff hours <i>Activity</i>	Were any staff redeployed to meet changes in the scale / nature of demand resulting from COVID-19, including unfurloughing staff? In what ways were staff redeployed? What worked well / less well when upskilling / redeploying staff? How did this vary by type of grant / type of org?				✓	✓	✓	
Recruit staff <i>Activity</i>	To what extent were the CCSF funds used to recruit new staff? What were the reasons for recruitment e.g. to address increased or changed demand? What worked well / less well when recruiting staff in the current circumstances? How did this vary by type of grant / type of org?							
Staff unfurloughed <i>Output</i>	How did CCSF funding affect staff resourcing? Did CCSF funding enable an increase in staff / increase in staff time / changed use of staff time? What were the reasons for this? How did this vary by type of grant / type of org?							
Altered staff resources e.g. increased overall staff time <i>Output</i>								
4. Volunteers								
Maintain volunteers <i>Activity</i>	To what extent did the funding enable the mobilisation of existing volunteers? How did this compare to other approaches to mobilising volunteers within local communities? What proportion were locally vs centrally coordinated volunteer approaches? What		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓

ToC component	Example data collection questions	GMS	Reflected learning from THE FUND & DCMS	CX Survey	Qualitative interviews with grant holders (x300)	Case studies (x40)	Grant holder survey	Volunteer survey
Volunteer hours maintained <i>Output</i>	was the profile of volunteers mobilised (including whether formal / informal)? Did CCSF funding enable organisations to maintain the number of volunteers or amount of time volunteering (recognising the context and influence of lockdown restrictions)? How did this vary by type of grant / type of org? How does this compare to non-funded organisations?							
Redeploy volunteers / Increase hours <i>Activity</i>	To what extent did the funding enable the redeployment of existing volunteers or the recruitment of lapsed/new volunteers? How did this differ from the usual profile of volunteers that grantholders work with? What lessons can be learned about redeploying / recruiting volunteers?		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Recruit lapsed / new volunteers <i>Activity</i>	How well or otherwise were grantholders able to manage volunteers (both existing and new) to redeploy them? What training and support was provided? How was this delivered? What worked well / less well? What were the challenges and how were these overcome? What are the lessons? How did this vary by type of grant / type of org?							
Altered volunteer resourcing e.g. new volunteers; more volunteer hours <i>Output</i>	How many additional volunteer hours were delivered as a result of CCSF? How did this vary by type of grant / type of org? How did CCSF funding affect volunteer resourcing? Did CCSF funding enable organisations to increase the number of volunteers or amount of time volunteering (recognising the context and influence of lockdown restrictions)? How did this vary by type of grant / type of org? How does this compare to non-funded organisations?							
5. People & communities								
People directly engaged <i>Output</i>	How many beneficiaries were reached as a result of the CCSF funding? What is their profile in terms of demographic characteristics and support needs? Did grantholders reach those they intended to reach from the outset, or those expected to be most disproportionately affected by COVID-19? What were the reasons for any differences in the profile of beneficiaries reached (relative to what was intended)?	✓			✓	✓	✓	

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