

# SPORT FOR CHANGE

COMIC RELIEF



## A GUIDE TO APPLYING FOR SPORT FOR CHANGE FUNDING

**Comic Relief** is a major charity based in the UK, with a vision of a just world, free from poverty. Since being founded in 1985 we have awarded grants to the sum of over £1 billion in the UK and in some of the world's poorest communities.

Comic Relief has been funding Sport for Change projects since the first Sport Relief campaign in 2002. As of 2018 we have funded almost 400 projects in the UK and internationally using Sport for Change, to the sum of over £55 million. These projects tackle a wide range of issues, from increasing community cohesion to addressing issues affecting women and girls, using a variety of sports, including skateboarding, surfing, football, martial arts and boxing. Comic Relief funds pilots for new and innovative work, as well as the continued development of projects that have demonstrated their impact. We also fund campaign and advocacy work and research projects.

In addition to funding projects, Comic Relief brings organisations together, strengthening the Sport for Change sector in the UK and internationally, and building capacity of Sport for Change organisations and voluntary sector organisations that want to use sport in their approach.

**Comic Relief** defines Sport for Change as bringing about positive social change for individuals and communities through the intentional use of sport and physical activity.

# WHY USE SPORT FOR CHANGE?

## **The power of sport**

Sport brings people together across culture, language, gender and social class. Its popularity and universality makes it uniquely placed to reach socially isolated or hard-to-reach groups. Sport is a tool to engage stakeholders and policy makers, often used to communicate messages on difficult issues that many would otherwise avoid.

## **Social connection**

Sport gives people the chance to be part of something bigger, offering the opportunity for engagement across generations or territories, working in teams and building relationships. It is a powerful tool to foster community cohesion.

## **Skills development**

Sport is in a unique position to offer ways for people of all abilities to achieve and develop skills, which builds their confidence in other areas. Sport can reinforce key life-skills, such as decision-making, leadership, team-work and how to manage stress.

## **Challenging stereotypes**

Sport can be a powerful way to challenge harmful stereotypes that are a reality for many individuals and groups across the world, such as the expectations and cultural traditions that exist for some women and girls, or the stigma faced by many disabled people.

## **The business of sport**

Sports organisations and clubs provide opportunities to gain work experience, volunteer, and be exposed to the business of sport, offering a range of employment and entrepreneurial pathways. You don't actually have to play sport to learn from it.

## **Mental and physical health**

Participants of Sport for Change projects can enjoy increased levels of fitness, improved mobility, and better mental health. For some sports the repetitive nature can be particularly effective for those who have experienced trauma, as it provides stability.

# WAVES FOR CHANGE – SURF THERAPY

Young people in the deprived and historically marginalised townships on the outskirts of Cape Town, South Africa are often faced with violence and crime. These experiences frequently lead to post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Comic Relief funds Waves for Change, an organisation that is transforming the lives of hundreds of these young people through weekly after-school surfing activities, and in-group and individual therapy sessions.

The programme is helping young people to deal with their experiences, increase their emotional resilience and confidence, and gain new skills and qualifications so they are better equipped to make positive choices and feel more optimistic about their future.





# MASLAHA – MUSLIM GIRLS FENCE



As a result of the complex issues faced due to their faith and their gender, many Muslim girls in the UK face strong negative stereotypes and disproportionate social inequalities in areas including education, employment and healthcare. Comic Relief funds 'Muslim Girls Fence' in London and Birmingham, working with young Muslim girls aged 11-14 through the sport of fencing. The project, run in schools and communities, explores identity and self-expression, challenging misperceptions of and raises aspirations among young Muslim women helping them develop confidence and resilience.

## WHAT MAKES A GOOD SPORT FOR CHANGE PROJECT?

### Ground Rules

- Safeguarding must be embedded throughout the organisation and all its activities. Analysing and addressing the risks to participants at all levels is a priority.
- Good governance should be in place across the whole organisation, from leadership through to programme delivery.
- It is important that as well as responding to the symptoms of the issues the project is tackling, it also address the causes. This requires an understanding of the economic, social, policy and government context.
- Organisations with local ownership, rooted in the culture and traditions of the community with staff that understand the local issues, will deliver programmes with the biggest impact. They should build local partnerships, develop networks, and help communities take ownership.
- There must be a clearly designed programme, with evidence the work is needed that draws on consultations, a clear end goal, and well defined social outcomes.
- Projects should have robust monitoring, evaluation and learning systems that focus on the impact of the work.

### Programme Principles

- There should be an intentional use of sport, where the sport is chosen and adapted to meet the specific needs of the participants.
- Sport alone will not deliver positive social change so it should be part of broader programme.
- There should be a clearly articulated link between the sport activities and the outcomes of the project.
- Programmes should be targeted yet inclusive. This goes beyond open access and requires understanding of the needs of the target group.
- Strong and trusting relationships are key to a successful programme, and sport is an effective means of building these relationships.
- Projects must create a safe environment for participants and facilities should be appropriate for the location and context.

# USE THIS CHECKLIST TO HELP YOU BEFORE YOU APPLY FOR A GRANT.

## Organisation

- Why are we the right organisation to deliver this work?
- Are our safeguarding policies and practices for children and vulnerable adults embedded across the entire organisation?
- Do we have good governance, including strong financial management, inclusion, and values?

## Positive Social Change

- What long term change would we like to achieve?
- What is the evidence that this change is needed?
- Have we designed SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-bound) outcomes?
- How and what will we measure to see whether change has taken place?
- How will we know we have been successful?
- What do we want to learn from our project?

## Relationships

- Have we developed local partnerships and networks to ensure the work is embedded in the community and is using a locally relevant approach?
- Have we carried out comprehensive checks on any partners we intend to work with? Does their governance and safeguarding match our own standards?
- Who else can help us to deliver our work, e.g. role models and mentors?

## Wider Programme

- What other activities will we deliver to achieve the desired outcomes?
- How well have we integrated the other activities with the sport to create a coherent programme?
- What pathways to future opportunities do we have in place for participants?

## Sport and Physical Activity

- What type of sport or physical activity is most likely to help us deliver our objectives/outcomes?
- Is the sport or physical activity relevant and appropriate for the target group?
- Do we have the skills to deliver our activities or do we need to bring in experts or partners?
- Do we have a strategy for engaging our target group?

## Target Group

- Why have we chosen our target group and how well do we understand their needs?
- Can we be confident that our choice is based on evidence rather than assumptions?
- Have we consulted with participants from this group?
- How will we recruit our target group/participants?
- Do we listen to our participants and take on board their feedback?

## Environment

- Are the facilities appropriate for the participants, community, location and context?
- How will we create a positive and nurturing environment that feels safe and values personal achievement?
- How will we help the participants to develop relationships of respect and trust, both with staff and with fellow participants?

This document has been produced based on Comic Relief's own learning of delivering Sport for Change funding, alongside research undertaken by Consultants Sue Cook and Cathy James for Comic Relief in 2017. We are indebted to them for this work and to all the organisations they spoke to during their research.

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