

# **Creative Connector grants for Connection Coalition members Supported by Facebook**

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# About us

## Jo Cox Foundation

The Jo Cox Foundation was established in 2016 by the friends and family of the late Jo Cox MP. The Foundation exists to build a positive legacy for Jo and to create something positive from the tragedy that was her murder. Our vision is for a kinder, more compassionate society where every individual has a sense of belonging and where we recognise that we have more in common than that which divides us.

We work in partnership to support and achieve ambitious targets. We contribute to larger networks in order to catalyse and amplify positive change, inspire activism in others and mobilise action. Our work is true to Jo's belief that we are stronger than the sum of our parts. We work across political divides, and believe that we can achieve much more when we work together.

## Connection Coalition

The Jo Cox Foundation founded the Connection Coalition in March 2020 as part of the civil society response to COVID-19. Anticipating that the nation was at risk of a crisis of disconnection - and a worsening epidemic of loneliness and social isolation - we created a platform for organisations across the country to work collectively to ensure that communities and the country emerges from COVID-19 ready to build and strengthen social relationships.

We aim to:

- **Support** organisations who work to build and maintain relationships and connections in their communities, including creating spaces for them to share experiences, increase knowledge, skills, confidence and motivation, which the ultimate aim of improving practise;
- **Encourage** organisations to capture learning from the pandemic and work with communities to carry forward relationships and connectedness with them as we adjust to living with COVID-19, helping to tackle loneliness and social isolation, and to reduce the associated stigma.

- **Influence** organisations, funders and the Government to tackle the societal conditions which create and exacerbate loneliness, social isolation and disconnection, and invest financially and in policies which prioritise the power of relationships and connectedness.
- **Ensure** we continuously capture and act on our learning, and work with the sector to shape any future plans for the Coalition so long as there is a need.

## Creative Connectors grants, supported by Facebook

We are pleased to be able to offer these grants, provided by Facebook, to support organisations within the Connection Coalition who are working to build and maintain relationships and connections in their communities. These grants aim to support Connection Coalition members to work together to test ideas and ways of creating meaningful connections, and capture and share members' learning with the wider Coalition and beyond. We believe you know best what works in your communities, and we've tried to keep the criteria non-restrictive and the process proportionate, but there are three main values behind the grants that we want you to align with: **collaboration; connection and learning.**

### **Collaboration**

"It enabled us to generate ideas and realise even more that collaboration is where the power for greater impact lies."

*Connection Coalition community of practice participant*

At the Jo Cox Foundation we believe that we can achieve much more when we work together. The future we're working towards will come sooner if we're pushing and pulling together. We believe in the power of collaboration to increase diversity of thinking, help problem-solving, speed up learning, increase motivation and inspiration, and remind us that we're not alone. That is why we are collaborating with Connection Coalition member Talking Taboos to help shape and support the delivery of these Creative Connectors grants, and why we've made it a requirement for successful members to collaborate with at least one other Connection Coalition member to deliver their project. We recognise that effective collaboration takes time, resource and effort, and we are going to try to make it as easy as possible for

you to connect with the right people and organisations for you – whether you need a critical friend, someone with a physical space to offer, someone with practical experience of something you’re trying for the first time, a cheerleader to encourage you along the way, or something else – we’ll try our best to match you up. You do not have to have a confirmed collaboration partner in order to apply.

### **Connection**

“I personally really enjoyed being able to speak to other people working and supporting their communities and actually take some time out to smile about things as we connect. So thank you for that because I hear so many of us say we feel like we have lost ourselves a little at the moment.” *Connection Coalition Informal get together participant*

The Jo Cox Foundation aims to create compassionate, well-connected communities where everyone has a sense of identity and belonging. We created the Connection Coalition at the start of the pandemic anticipating that the nation was at risk of a crisis of disconnection and worsening loneliness. That is why at their core, all Creative Connectors projects must in some way aim to enable connection. You can choose who, how and why, and we can offer support and ideas, but an understanding of the power of human connection and a desire to see it come to life through your project is essential.

### **Learning**

“I was grateful for the opportunity to meet like-minded folks in a safe facilitated space to stop and think and feel and learn.”

“I was grateful for being able to learn from the group's collective wealth of experience of work and life.”

*Connection Coalition community of practice participants*

We’re all winding our way through this world, picking up valuable experience, knowledge and wisdom and yet the known unknowns, and the unknown unknowns will always outnumber anything we think we know. We want to work with individuals and organisations who are curious, willing to try, learn and share their experiences

and insights. Only through this way of working can we make the most of our collective wisdom and use it to make the changes we want to see in the world.

# Essential information

**Aim:** To support Connection Coalition members to work together to test ideas and methods of creating meaningful connections, and capture and share their learning with the wider Coalition and beyond.

**Area:** UK-wide

**Suitable for:** Voluntary and community organisations who are members of the [Connection Coalition](#).

**Funding size:** £500- £1000

**Application deadline:** Midnight Wednesday 15th December 2021 via [this online form](#)

**Activity period:** Grant to be paid in January 2022 for activity to be completed by 30th April 2022

**Total amount available:** £8,000. We estimate that there are 100-150 active Connection Coalition members who would be eligible and interested in applying for these grants. We intend to give out 8-12 grants to lead organisations, which will aid at least 20 organisations, as each project has to involve an element of collaboration with at least one other member organisation.

**Event:** Find out more and meet other members at our online informal get together on Wednesday 1st December, 1-3pm. [Register here](#).

## Your organisation must:

- be registered in the UK as a charity, a CIO, a CIC or a social enterprise
- only benefit from one grant in this scheme
- have a UK bank account in its own name
- have a safeguarding policy if it supports children or vulnerable people

## Your project must:

- be led by one organisation, but must include collaboration between at least two or more members of the Connection Coalition. We can help you work out how best to do this.
- aim to enable connection

- demonstrate a commitment to learning from the process and sharing with others
- be a stand-alone project and work that would not otherwise be happening

### **What else we are looking for**

Beyond the essential criteria and aligning with our values of collaboration, connection and learning, we're flexible about what your project looks like. It might be:

- an evolution of existing work that allows you to test an idea that's emerged, gather around a challenge or recommendation
- a completely new bright idea that you want to give a go
- something you've wanted to do for ages because you've got a hunch that it is what is needed, but it's never the right time or you've struggled to find a cheerleader to motivate you.

Beyond looking for projects which are realistic to deliver within the budget and timeframe, we're particularly interested in projects which:

- encourage space for reflection and recuperation related to the pandemic
- help you shape your organisation or community's plans, ideas or visions for the future
- utilise bold or experimental responses to creating connections
- will prioritise support to those who are most affected by systemic oppression and/or discrimination

You don't have to know how it will turn out, just believe that it will help your mission to create and maintain meaningful connections, be prepared to give it a go, and share your process and learning with a community of other folk similarly committed to building and maintaining relationships and connections in their communities.

# Process and support

## Collaborating with other Connection Coalition members

One of the requirements of all proposals is that each lead organisation collaborates with at least one other Connection Coalition member. It's an important and exciting element of the potential of these grants, but we also recognise that it might require some additional support to make it happen in a meaningful way. We will help you connect and collaborate with other organisations within the Connection Coalition on your project. We will do this by:

- Sharing and encouraging members to add themselves to our [active member list](#) where you can see which members have been engaged in Connection Coalition activities in 2021, what skills and experience they have to offer and what they are looking for from the network. We hope this gives you an idea of who else is out there that you might want to work with, an insight into the types of organisations, skills and knowledge that might be available, and the contact details to make your own connections!
- An online informal get together on Wednesday 1st December, 1-3pm, where we can answer any questions and give space for you to connect with other members who are interested in this project to share ideas and generate collaboration inspiration.
- Matchmaking! We will ask applicants whether or not you have a collaboration in mind, and if not, if you know what kind of organisation, role, resources or skills you would like / need in a collaborator to give your project the best chance of succeeding. Alongside this, we are inviting members who don't want to submit a full application, but are keen to be involved and have something to offer, to register their interest in being matched with a successful application. Details on that are available at the end of this document. This will be more of an art than a science, it's difficult to know exactly who will come forward with what projects and needs. We know that there is a wealth of experience, knowledge and generosity within the Connection Coalition, and so long as you know what you're looking for and are open and excited about

collaborating with others, we're happy to take the majority of the responsibility to help you find an interesting connection.

We encourage you to think creatively about who you might work with and what roles you might play. Some examples we have thought of include collaborating with:

- another organisation in your geographic area
- an organisation who's already doing what you want to try and can offer practical advice and guidance
- someone who can offer a mentoring, coaching or cheerleading role to help you build confidence, remain focussed, celebrate wins, unpick what's working and what barriers you're facing, or reflect on your practice
- organisations who might provide speakers, facilitators, a physical space or some other practical contribution to your activity
- a number of members to help problem solve or come up with ideas or solutions to a challenge

This is not an exhaustive list, we're open to what works for you and will be mutually beneficial to all involved.

## The support we will provide

As well as the money and matchmaking, we aim to create a supportive community for successful applicants, so that you can access support, and share your learning with others who are similarly keen to share, experiment and learn. We're delighted that Connection Coalition member Talking Taboos will be able to offer support alongside the Jo Cox Foundation team. Between us we plan to offer the below:

### **Application process**

- Hold an informal get together for interested members to ask questions and meet others thinking of applying so you can share ideas, find people to collaborate with, get a feel for what is expected and what support is available.
- Matchmake successful applicants with other members to encourage successful collaborations. We will gather the relevant information in the application process and matchmake early in the new year.

## **January**

- Host an online kick off meeting with all successful applicants and collaborators to share plans, identify any support needs and workshop ideas around making activities meaningful spaces for connection.

## **February / March**

- Drop in support sessions available for successful applicants to ask questions / get support.
- Some 'Get Stuff Done' sessions in the calendar where you can join us online, check in, then get on with your work relating to the project. A space to be together and have some gentle accountability while being able to get on with your work!

## **April**

- Host a celebration and learning workshop with all successful applicants to celebrate what worked well, lessons learned and facilitate conversations about what this means - for individuals, organisations, the Connection Coalition and beyond.

## About Talking Taboos

Talking Taboos are a charity tackling challenging social issues that are often overlooked because they are seen as 'taboo', or not suitable for discussion. We want to reduce harm and improve lived experience for people, communities and organisations who are suffering because of taboos.

We achieve our charitable goals through activities that combine research, design and awareness-raising to confront and demystify taboo experiences, as well as through collaboration with other charities and organisations. Our work seeks to increase empathy, acceptance and compassion.

Our recent work explores community-based solutions to loneliness. We are creating a toolkit for tackling loneliness grounded in research, co-design and trialled at our own Brighton based initiative - Connect Through Cooking.

# Application form and guidance

## How to apply

Applications are open via [this online form](#). The deadline to apply is Midnight Wednesday 15th December 2021. A template text version of the questions is [available here](#) so you can see the questions and draft your responses. In a word document format we recommend that your application is a total of no more than 4 pages of A4. When it comes to submitting your final application on the online form, there will not be word limits. Shorter applications are welcome, and any applications which go significantly over the recommended limits may not be considered.

You can contact us if you have any communication support needs or any difficulties with completing the form. We're happy to talk about alternative ways for you to tell us about your idea.

## Assessment criteria

Staff from the Jo Cox Foundation and Facebook will be responsible for reviewing applications and awarding grants. Applications will be checked to ensure they meet essential criteria, and then will be evaluated in accordance with the below which outlines what we are looking for, the related question/s on the application form and what we will be assessing.

LOOKING FOR	APPLICATION QUESTIONS	EVALUATION CRITERIA
<p><b>ESSENTIAL</b>  <b>Your organisation must:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be registered in the UK as a charity, a CIO, a CIC or a social enterprise</li> <li>• only benefit from one grant in this scheme</li> <li>• have a UK bank account in its own name</li> <li>• have a safeguarding policy if it supports children or vulnerable people</li> </ul>	<p>Name of lead organisation  Aims of lead organisation  Name of lead applicant  Phone number  Email address  What is your organisational structure?  Please provide your Charity Commission number/ Company number  Do you have a UK bank account in your organisation's name?  Do you have a safeguarding policy if you support children or vulnerable people?</p>	<p>The Jo Cox Foundation will carry out a due diligence review based on these questions/answers. Facebook will do additional checks on shortlisted applications.</p>
<p><b>ESSENTIAL</b>  <b>Your project must:</b>  Be led by one organisation, but include <b>collaboration</b> between at least two or more members of the</p>	<p>Do you know which other Connection Coalition member/s you want to collaborate with?  If yes, which organisation/s and have you approached them?</p>	<p><i>Note: Applicants won't be penalised for not having an agreed collaborator ready to go, we will do our best to help match members up after the application deadline. If</i></p>

<p>Connection Coalition. We can help you work out how best to do this</p>	<p>If yes, is this a new collaboration or have you worked together previously? Please give details.</p> <p>If no, do you know what kind of organisation, role, resources or skills you would like / need in a collaborator to give your project the most chance of succeeding? Please give details.</p>	<p><i>necessary we may prioritise new collaborations over those organisations with existing working relationships.</i></p> <p>Applicants demonstrate a clearly considered approach to collaboration.</p> <p>Applicants demonstrate an understanding of their own strengths and weaknesses in relation to knowing the kind of complimentary organisation, role, resources or skills that might be needed to give the project the best chance of success.</p>
<p>Aim to enable <b>connection</b></p>	<p>What role does creating connections play in your organisation's work and how will this project help you create connections?</p>	<p>Applicants demonstrate an understanding of the importance of human connection through their existing work, and that it's central to the proposed project.</p>
<p>Demonstrate a commitment to <b>learning</b> from the process and sharing with others</p>	<p>How will you ensure you and those involved will capture learning and take lessons from your project? What risks or uncertainties exist</p>	<p>Applicants demonstrate a commitment to capturing and sharing learning from the project and understanding of methods which they might use to do this..</p>

	within your project plan?	Applicants demonstrate an understanding of, and willingness to share, potential risks and uncertainties.
Be a stand-alone project and work that would not otherwise be happening	Would this project be happening without this grant?	
<p><b>WHAT ELSE ARE WE LOOKING FOR</b></p> <p>Beyond the essential criteria, we're flexible about what your project looks like. It might be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an evolution of existing work that allows you to test an idea that's emerged, gather around a challenge or recommendation</li> <li>• a completely new bright idea that you want to give a go</li> <li>• something you've wanted to do for ages because you've got a hunch that it is what is needed, but it's never the right</li> </ul>	<p>What do you want to do?</p> <p>Why do you think this will work or should be tried?</p>	The proposed project is well-thought out, building on existing knowledge of what works for communities and connection, or aiming to explore a defined gap in knowledge.

<p>time or you've struggled to find a cheerleader to motivate you.</p>		
<p>Beyond looking for projects which are realistic to deliver within the budget and timeframe, we're particularly interested in projects which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• encourage space for reflection and recuperation related to the pandemic</li> <li>• help you shape your organisation or community's plans, ideas or visions for the future</li> <li>• utilise bold or experimental responses to creating connections</li> <li>• will prioritise support to those who are most affected by systemic oppression and/or discrimination</li> </ul>	<p>What do you hope will be the outcome of your project?</p> <p>Who will benefit from your project?</p> <p>What is the geographical location of the project?</p> <p>What is the time frame of your project? What do you want to do when?</p> <p>How much funding do you need? Applicants can apply from £500 - £1000</p> <p>Please give an outline for how the funds will be spent.</p>	<p>Beneficiaries are clearly defined.</p> <p>Outcomes are clearly defined</p> <p>Adequate time for implementation</p> <p>Budget is clearly defined and proportionate to the proposed activity</p> <p>Does this project aim to address systemic inequalities and/or support those who are most affected by systemic oppression and/or discrimination?</p> <p>Does the project fit within one of our priority areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• encourage space for reflection and recuperation related to the pandemic</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• help you shape your organisation or community's plans, ideas or visions for the future</li><li>• utilise bold or experimental responses to creating connections within the context of the organisation and their community</li></ul>
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## More information

Find out more at our online informal get together on **Wednesday 1st December, 1-3pm** where you can ask questions, meet other members who are interested in applying to share ideas and make connections for collaboration. [Register here.](#)

If you have questions not answered in this pack and you cannot attend the online event please contact [hello@connectioncoalition.org.uk](mailto:hello@connectioncoalition.org.uk).

## Creative Connector grants – the supporters

Alongside the formal application process for those organisations wanting to apply for funding and take forward their ideas, we are inviting members who don't want to submit a full application, but are keen to be involved and have something to offer, to register their interest in being matched with a successful application. You might be able to offer:

- practical advice and guidance
- a mentoring, coaching or cheerleading role to help another organisation build confidence, remain focussed, celebrate wins, unpick what's working and what's not, or reflect on their practice
- speakers, facilitators, a physical space or some other practical contribution
- relevant resources, toolkits or guides to support activity around connection
- time to help problem solve or come up with ideas or solutions to a challenge

There is no guarantee of funding through this process, though there may be a little to share out. What we do hope you'll gain is:

- Mutually beneficial collaborations which bring some insights, support and inspiration to all parties
- Being part of the Creative Connectors community with access to workshops and support
- The chance to hear what others are doing, share learning and get support on your own challenges
- New contacts and connections with others working in the connection and loneliness space who are willing to share, learn and collaborate

If you would like to register your interest as a supporter to receive updates about the grants and potentially be matched up with a successful application, please:

- Complete your details on our [active member list](#)
- Complete [this online form](#) by midnight Wednesday 15th December.

Find out more at our online informal get together on **Wednesday 1st December, 1-3pm** where you can ask questions, meet other members who are interested in applying to share ideas and make connections for collaboration. [Register here.](#)

If you have questions not answered in this pack and you cannot attend the online event please contact [hello@connectioncoalition.org.uk](mailto:hello@connectioncoalition.org.uk).