

# Culture Matson Community Chest

## Terms of reference



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### Purpose

The alliance is a coalition of organisations that work together to support community-powered projects. It has grown over time and is now self-sustaining and self-governing.

This is a practical multi-agency group focussing on providing support and funding to projects that will make a difference to the people who live in Matson, Robinswood and White City.

Starting as an informal group in 2017, when there was no cultural infrastructure, it has now developed into a much larger group of people who represent schools, community groups and organisations in the area.

**“We never set out to become a place-based alliance. We have just worked that out as we’ve gone along!”**

PIPPA JONES, CREATE GLOUCESTERSHIRE FOUNDER AND DIRECTOR

### Background

The alliance was kickstarted by an invitation from Nick Clitheroe ([RIO](#)) to support a meeting about setting up an after-school club in Robinswood & Moat School allowing creative people to run workshops and after school activities; there were none at that time. Slowly other people started to come along, and it became a meeting about people wanting to increase the opportunity to get involved with creative and cultural activities.

The primary driver was young people in Matson who didn’t have the opportunity to see anything or go to anything that challenged the world that they grew up in.

The alliance received ‘Great Place funding’ to interview people and to create a visual illustration of Culture Matson, asking everyone why they had been coming to Culture Matson every six weeks for the last four years and why they kept coming. The Matson Map was developed. APPENDIX 1

In 2022 Create Gloucestershire’s Create Health programme of work placed a further spotlight on the alliance with a health lens. Create Gloucestershire’s ‘Create Health’ Programme tests and widens our understanding of ‘living well’. *We view arts, creativity and culture as a fundamental part of living well, supporting recovery and contributing towards a sense of wellbeing for individuals and communities.*

A review of Culture Matson activity and reports showed that the trust and structure developed over time closely align with the principles of Elinor Ostrom. Professor Eleanor Ostrom was the first and only woman to win the Nobel Prize in Economics for her groundbreaking research on the ways that people organise themselves to manage resources.

This includes agreed behaviours based upon the design principles of locality, autonomy and diversity, and adapted 'Rules of the Commons' applied for a thriving community chest fund shared between a neighbourhood; *owned by no body, available to all with rules to prevent abuse with defined management requirements.*

**“Systems – including the way that resources are managed, rules are designed, and decisions are made – should be originated within, and appropriate for, the particular places where they operate”**

ELINOR OSTROM

## **Principles and Values**

At the beginning of every meeting attendees are reminded that the purpose of the meeting is to create a place that is more creative and more equal and more fun.

The infrastructure enables the community to have access to an infrastructure that enables decision making power over local funding.

- Key principles of locality, autonomy and diversity are defined in APPENDIX 2.
- Alliance members share and sign up to the care values defined in APPENDIX 2.

Scrutiny, risk and reward is shared amongst alliance partners.

The creative catalyst also resolves issues as the neutral person who bridges any gaps.

## **Management**

A 'Frequently Asked Questions' (see APPENDIX 3) and a 'How to apply for funding' (SEE APPENDIX 4) information sheets support the funding application process.

## **Membership**

Membership has representatives from within local schools, library, social prescribing service, Matson Baptist church, arts organisations (GASP), Strike A Light, Glos Community Policing, Youth Engagement Officer (Glos City Council), Local Ward Councillors, Gloucestershire Gateway Trust, Community Organisations (charities and CIC's), NHS, Social Housing Providers (Glos City Homes, Elim)

## **Finance and Administration**

Some of the administration (including minute taking, application process, bidding panels and evaluation) is undertaken by the Creative catalyst. In addition to other admin support which is currently co-ordinated by GL4.

Fundraising is a collective task amongst all members.

The structure of the community chest enables the locality to receive donations from grants, NHS, personal and business. Create Gloucestershire has the role of fiscal host.

# Meetings

The alliance meets every six weeks with the option of additional meetings on request.

## APPENDIX 1 - THE MATSON MAP



## APPENDIX 2 - KEY PRINCIPLES AND CORE VALUES

# Culture Matson Principles & Values

**1. What is a Community Chest? What makes it different?**

**2. Key principles**

**3. Core values**

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**1. What is a Community Chest? What makes it different?**

- It is hyper local. Community owned, innovative, inclusive and collective.
- Explores other funding partners
- Happens without money too
- Not all partners need funding from the Community Chest and are there to either part fund or just to support and deliver within the community
- Challenging current systems

**CULTURE MATSON**

## Community Power

Behaviour that unlocks and builds positive potential through arts within Culture Matson

### Locality

- People remain engaged because we build momentum across partnerships
- Ideas are driven by the community
- Each of us represents a different area of the community
- The meetings rotate around community venues; building connections across the estate

### Autonomy

- Our dominant culture is a 'can do' principle of reciprocity
- People talk, meet, listen and are supported to present ideas or requests for help
- Decisions are shared and underpinned by mutual respect, always asking 'what help do you need?'
- Trust is built because we 'begin well' with crispy facilitated individual updates

### Diversity

- Change is constant and we will adapt and thrive
- Every citizen has a voice and has a different (but equally valid) role and place
- We are focussed upon relationships
- The spark that gives direction and shared enquiry is that we say 'yes' first (and then work it out) rather than 'no

**2. Key principles**

- Shared pot of funds
- To support creativity and community in Matson, White City and Robinwood
- Owned by nobody/available to anyone
- Decisions made by Culture Matson
- Light touch approach based on trust and respect.
- Process for deciding funding allocation agreed and implemented by Culture Matson
- Rules to prevent abuse agreed and implemented by Culture Matson. (to be agreed)
- All applications are discussed in the group before an application is made
- Decisions open and transparent with sharing on a digital platform
- Admin costs as low as possible so as maximum investment goes to activity
- Culture Matson responsible collectively for ensuring the pot doesn't empty
- However, whilst funding is much needed things can still happen through collaborative working
- Lobbying for mainstream funding for projects that demonstrate strong impact

**3. Core values**

- Debate and dialogue first
- Light touch process for when consensus can't be achieved
- Local people making decisions about local funding with input from specialists to see wider picture/perspectives
- Seek for consensus at all times
- Embed flexibility of how people can contribute to funding discussions. Not everyone can come to meetings
- All applications for the community chest are circulated to all CM members who may not have been able to attend the meeting. So, everyone gets the opportunity to input
- Transparency so everyone knows the process and what the funding is for
- Learning about what has gone wrong is most valuable

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## APPENDIX 3 – FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

# Culture Matson Community Chest Funding Process

**FAQs**

1. What do I do if I have an idea for funding?
2. Is the funding for one off projects or can I apply for recurrent funding?
3. Is there a limit to how much funding I can apply for?
4. How do I know if I should apply for Culture Matson Funding?
5. How do I apply for funding?
6. What happens after my bid has been submitted?
7. What happens if there are objections to my application?
8. What happens after I have my funding and I deliver my project?
9. What happens if I don't spend all of the funding or my project doesn't go to plan?

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1. **What do I do if I have an idea for funding?**  
If you have an idea for funding, then bring it to the Culture Matson meeting. This is a chance for you to share your ideas and for the Culture Matson group to explore and talk through your assumptions and potential costs. The group can also look at other funding routes that may be available so that the funds in the Community Chest can go further.
2. **Is the funding for one off projects or can I apply for recurrent funding?**  
Funding is available for one off funding and recurrent funding. Just let the group know when you talk through your ideas at the Culture Matson meeting. If applications are recurrent then the group can look at whether longer term funding streams may be available. There is a question on the form where you will be asked what you need.
3. **Is there a limit to how much funding I can apply for?**  
Funding is not capped and each application is discussed with the advice before an application is made. The Community Chest budget is part of the group every month so it is worth checking how much is remaining before you ask for funding.
4. **How do I know if I should apply for Culture Matson Funding?**  
After you have talked through your idea at the meeting, the group will be able to tell you if they think the bid is strong and if it can't be funded anywhere else. If this is the case please apply. They may also have ideas to strengthen/adapt your bid that you can consider.



**CULTURE  
MATSON**

5. **How do I apply for funding?**  
There is an application form which you can fill in online. This is a document shared on a digital platform, Airtable, and the information on it can be seen by everyone in Culture Matson. You will have received access to this document with Culture Matson minutes but if you haven't you can request access to it from:  
Sarah O'Donnell. Email [sarahodonnell@g4.org.uk](mailto:sarahodonnell@g4.org.uk)  
Debbie Christie. Email [hello@creategloucestershire.co.uk](mailto:hello@creategloucestershire.co.uk)  
The form will ask you about your project idea, how you have consulted with the community, look at costs and if you have any match funding. **You do not need match funding to receive funding.** If you need any support with completing the form please contact Sarah or Debbie.
6. **What happens after my bid has been submitted?**  
The application will be circulated to all Culture Matson members. There is a 14 day deadline for members to object. If there are no objections the funding will be allocated. If you are successful you will be contacted by Debbie Christie and advised how to invoice for your funding. It is normally paid within 7 days of receipt of your invoice.
7. **What happens if there are objections to my application?**  
If there is an objection to the bid, then a small group will be formed to review the application. This group will be made up of three members of Culture Matson, who have no interest in the bid. They have the final decision as to whether or not your application should be accepted for funding or refused. If it is accepted, you will be contacted by Debbie Christie and advised how you can access your funding. If the bid is refused, then the group will be able to offer advice and support of other potential funding options or ways in which the bid may be strengthened or adapted.
8. **What happens after I have my funding and I deliver my project?**  
Everyone who receives Culture Matson funding should gather data to evaluate their project. This can be returned in a variety of formats - impact statements, statistics, photographs, or videos. This information can then be shared with members of the Culture Matson group and our funders. This information will be an opportunity for us all to share our learning and ideas for the future.
9. **What happens if I don't spend all of the funding or my project doesn't go to plan?**  
Sometimes funding is allocated and the project may not be delivered for a variety of reasons. If there are problems talk them through with the group as another partner may be able to support you. If the project cannot be delivered after other options are explored then the funding should be returned to the Community Chest. This money can then be used for future projects.

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## APPENDIX 4 – HOW TO APPLY

# HOW TO Apply for Culture Matson funding



**CULTURE  
MATSON**

**SHARE YOUR IDEA**

**01**

Bring your idea to the Culture Matson meeting with any estimated costs. Feedback from community consultations or match funding.

**REFINE IT**

**02**

The Culture Matson group will talk through the idea to test it, to input their knowledge and suggest other ideas for funding.

**FILL IN THE FORM**

**03**

Use the application form on Airtable. The link to the form is on Culture Matson meeting minutes or you can request it from Debbie or Sarah.

**04 wait!** The application will be shared with all Culture Matson members. They have 14 days to object.

✓ Yes or No... ✗

**If there are no objections...**  
the funding will be allocated. You will be contacted by Debbie Christie who will let you know how to invoice for your funding. It is normally paid within 7 days of receipt of your invoice.

**If there are objections**  
then a small group of 3 members of Culture Matson, who have no interest in the bid will be formed to review the application and make a final decision.

**DELIVER**

**05**

Get started with planning and delivering your project.

**SHARE WHAT YOU LEARN!**

**06**

Everyone who receives this funding gathers data to help evaluate the project, so all the members and our funders are able to benefit from the learning. Data could be impact statements, statistics, photographs or videos.

**Accepted?**  
If it is accepted you'll receive your funding and you can go to step 5.

**Refused...**  
If the bid is refused then the group will be able to offer advice and support for other potential funding.

**Need help?**  
Contact Culture Matson Creative Centre  
[hello@creategloucestershire.co.uk](mailto:hello@creategloucestershire.co.uk)

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