

# Funding Guidelines: Social Change



The Pilgrim Trust

## Young Women and Mental Health PLUS Fund

The aim of the **Young Women and Mental Health PLUS Fund (2021-2026)** is to help improve the mental health of young women (16-25) in the UK through increasing their access to high quality, age and gender specific mental health services. The Trust is making available £5m over five years. In its first year (2021), which is seen as a pilot, the programme is open to charities in Greater Manchester and Northern Ireland.

The fund is part of a range of activities that we plan to undertake in order to achieve our goal. See our Theory of Change [here](#) for more information.

## Background to the fund

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When Edward Harkness established The Pilgrim Trust in 1930, he did so to help meet some of the more 'urgent' needs of the UK with a view to promoting wellbeing. The Trust has a long history of supporting people in the UK who live tough lives, and over the last decade we have paid particular attention to improving the life chances of women and girls.

Following a review of funding and in light of recent research, the Trust has decided to look at how it can support improvements in the mental health of young women. We intend to build on existing evidence of the value of age and gender appropriate mental health provision in pursuing this goal. We aim to showcase models of good practice and facilitate greater collaboration, as well as supporting efforts to bring about policy changes.

There has been a sharp rise in the prevalence of mental health problems among women. In particular, young women have emerged as the most likely group of people to develop mental ill health. Over a quarter of them experience mental disorders such as anxiety, depression and self-harming - almost three times the rate of young men. There is also evidence that the Covid-19 pandemic has had a disproportionate impact on young women.

Social factors, including lower income, caring responsibilities, as well as the trauma of domestic and sexual abuse, all contribute to the mental health problems experienced by young women. Their situation may worsen when inequalities linked to race, ethnicity, sexuality, immigration status, disability and other factors, lead to reduced access to appropriate services.

Three-quarters of all mental health problems manifest before the age of 24. The transition from children and young people's mental health services to adult ones is often described as

a 'cliff edge' of support, and many young people are left behind. By finding effective ways of helping young women at this crucial stage in their lives, we want to give them a better chance of living happy, healthy and fulfilled lives.

## Purpose of the fund

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Our new five-year funding programme (2021-2026) aims to support mental health services working with young women aged 16-25. We therefore want to fund charities that directly engage with young women and offer sustained and fully integrated programmes of support.

We want all grant recipients to join our learning-set, in order to share best practice, explore the need for policy change, and build a supportive peer-network (see below).

## The type of work we fund

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- We want to support organisations delivering high quality services specifically designed to respond to the needs of young women experiencing mental health difficulties. We particularly welcome applications from organisations leading the way in good practice or innovation relating to age and gender informed approaches to mental health provision. We will prioritise those that work collaboratively with partners to extend their impact and share expertise, and that champion fair and equal access to mental health services.
- This funding is focused on the needs of young women aged 16-25 years old. However, we recognise that some charities may have services that span a slightly wider age band. Therefore, we will also consider funding projects where at least 80% of the participants of the work fall within the 16-25 age band.
- We will fund mental health services that support young women with existing and increasingly entrenched mental health problems. Their mental health needs may not have been formally diagnosed, but will have a clear impact on their ability to cope. Examples of what we will fund:
  - Young women who are falling between the gaps in statutory child and adult mental health services.
  - Young women who face structural barriers to accessing mental health provision (e.g. gender, language, or cultural needs).
  - Young women who have presented at other services (housing, domestic abuse etc.) and have been identified as having mental health needs.

The fund is NOT for:

- Prevention work
- Generalised wellbeing initiatives
- Acute care services
- Work offering mainly one-off advice or signposting to other services
- Generic mental health youth services where the service has not been designed to be gender or age specific.

## Who can apply

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To be eligible to apply to the **Young Women and Mental Health PLUS Fund** your organisation must fulfil the following:

- Registered or exempt UK charity
- Annual income of between £100,000 and £1 million  
*This should be based on the average of your last three years of funding to allow for any fluctuations caused by Covid-19 emergency funding or recent changes.*
- Operating for a minimum of three years

Organisations that do **not** meet these requirements will be classified as ineligible.

We will not fund:

- Individuals
- Non-UK registered charities or charities registered in the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man
- Not-for-profit organisations that are not registered charities including CICs and Social Enterprises

## Funding available

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We receive far more applications than we can support. From 2021 we have chosen to fund fewer organisations, providing larger grants.

In the 2021 round of funding, we aim to award around 10-12 grants. Organisations can request between £60k to £90k, spread over three years. We are interested in making grants that span three years because of our approach to use learning-sets and to have grantees be part of a three-year community (see Fund outcomes for further details).

Funding can be tailored to meet the needs of your project. You can apply for project delivery costs as well as core costs (e.g. a contribution toward your organisation's general running costs such as the salaries of your core staff and building overheads). We do not provide unrestricted funding.

## Exclusions

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We will not consider applications for:

- Any retrospective costs
- Building work or capital costs associated with buildings
- Work which is a statutory responsibility
- Activities promoting religious beliefs
- One-off activities and events
- Projects taking place outside of the UK, including overseas travel

## Approaches we encourage

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We are seeking to fund charities that exemplify **our PLUS approach**. We believe that the following **four pillars** are key to the provision of **high-quality mental health support** for young women:

**Gendered approach:** Research shows that gender differences exist in the nature of mental health problems suffered, patterns of seeking help by those affected and responses of the health sector and society as a whole. A number of factors interact to contribute to these differences, including socially constructed differences between women and men in roles and responsibilities, the higher prevalence of violence and abuse suffered by females and biological factors. Mental health services should be mindful of these differences in experiences and tailor their provision to meet the specific needs of females.

**Age appropriate:** People's mental health needs can vary at different points in their lives. This funding is focused on the needs of young women aged 16-25 to reflect the challenges around this transition point out of childhood and the complexities of moving from statutory children to adult mental health services.

**Integrated:** Poor mental health is often part of a wider web of support needs. Mental health services should be integrated with other support options and adopt a whole person approach to identify and meet the full range of an individual's needs (e.g. housing or domestic abuse); this can be in-house or through partnership arrangements.

**Substantive Equality:** Mental health services should recognise and respond to the social and structural inequalities in the UK. Young women should not have to work harder and overcome more barriers to access the help they need. We want to fund mental health services that seek to redress disadvantage, address stigma and accommodate difference. Young women must have access to mental health services that respect their rights to safety, economic justice and to have their voices heard.

## How will we identify strong bids?

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Funding will be targeted at organisations that understand the needs of young women and demonstrate a track record in running mental health provision.

The Pilgrim Trust has created eight '**fund-principles**'. These will be used in the assessment process to identify bids from organisations that most closely meet our values.

We are looking for organisations that can demonstrate all of the following to us:

- A track record of working with young women aged 16-25 years old
- A track record of delivering mental health services including those that are trauma-informed
- Offer wrap-around support (in-house OR through partnerships and referral pathways) that meets the holistic and practical needs of young women
- Provide safe, women-only services and/or spaces that are accessible and welcoming to young women
- Involve those with lived experience in the design of their services. This goes beyond consultation and takes a more collaborative approach
- Have staff and trustees that are representative of the communities that they work with
- Develop and share learning with their peers
- Have an impact that reaches beyond immediate beneficiaries of the work.

## Fund outcomes

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We want all funded organisations to sign up to a shared learning objective:

*Our service can evidence and will work to share, models of good practice relating to age and gender informed mental health services.*

Pilgrim Trust is supporting a relational model of learning within this fund.

- Each year the 10-12 Grantees that we fund will form a learning-set that will meet approximately twice a year.
- The learning set will be a mix of online and face-to-face meetings, led by an expert facilitator that the Pilgrim Trust will commission.
- The learning set will not only be a valuable opportunity to create a support peer network with other charities delivering gendered mental health services, but will also reduce much of the reporting burden often associated with project-based grant-funding.

The learning sets will incorporate a series of discussions that explore the changes brought about by grant funding such as:

- How grantees achieve improvements in young women's mental health.
- How young women can be best supported in their transition from childhood to adulthood.
- Whether mental health provision can help young women manage practical and/or financial aspects of their life.
- Coping strategies versus 'recovery'.
- How mental health provision can help clients build increased agency in their lives/ increased awareness of their rights and/or capabilities.
- What policy changes are needed to improve the life chances of girls and young women with mental health problems.

## How to apply

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Potential applicants must book a **telephone conversation** with our Grants Manager to talk through your proposal and answer any questions you might have by [filling this form](#). You cannot submit an application in advance of this conversation.

If your project looks like a good fit, we will release an application form to you, and this is where you set out your proposal in full.

## Timeline in 2021

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- 12 July to 13 August – Book a conversation during this time period to discuss your potential application.
- 20 September – Deadline to submit application
- 25 November – Notification of the outcome of your application.

## For more information

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If you have any questions about the Fund, please contact us at: [applicants@thepilgrimtrust.org.uk](mailto:applicants@thepilgrimtrust.org.uk) or call us on +44(0)20 7834 6510. Please note: we will ask all applicants to [fill in our form](#) to book a conversation with our Grant Manager.