Investing in the future of organisations led by and for Black and racially minoritised women and girls

Rise Fund 2025 Application Guidance

Introduction

Black and racially minoritised women's and girls' organisations offer sisterhood, safety and support to women and girls across the UK, whilst also addressing systemic racial inequalities. It is within these organisations that future leaders of the feminist and anti-racist movements grow.

At Rosa, we believe a thriving network of Black and racially minoritised-led women's and girls' organisations brings us closer to our vision of a society where women and girls are safe, healthy and equal. These organisations have a rich history of empowering individuals and communities, collectively campaigning on issues of racism, sexism and poverty as well as discrimination due to disability, sexuality, and immigration status. History shows us that this activism drives real and lasting change.

Rise Fund recognises the unique position these powerful organisations hold within the women and girls sector. And we know many are on the brink of survival[1]. Rise Fund exists to ensure Black and racially minoritised-led women's and girls' organisations across the UK can survive, thrive and grow, continuing their transformational work across the UK.

Organisations can apply for up to £40,000 to fund areas related to organisational development, including strategy, governance, leadership, movement building, alliances,

[1] In research undertaken by PBE and commissioned by Rosa, Black and racially minoritised women's and girls' organisations were significantly more likely to have experienced an increase in demand for services, at 97% compared with 88% of non-Black and racially minoritised organisations. Underfunded, under resourced and under the radar: the state of the women and girls' social sector, 2025.

fundraising, impact, systems and processes. The Fund is for groups with an annual income of between £30,000 and £300,000.

The first round of the Fund was in 2022:

- 35 organisations funded, with 12,451 women and girls supported
- For every £1 invested in organisational development, organisations raised £2.07 in additional funding

Once you have read this guidance, please attend one of our How to Apply webinars for more information or send queries to grants@rosauk.org.

Background to the Fund

Rosa has worked with an Advisory Group comprised of Rosa Trustees and representatives of Black and racially minoritised-led women's organisations and networks from across the UK. The Advisory Group developed and agreed the details of the fund, including the type of organisations the fund will support; the aim and priorities of the fund, and how much organisations can apply for. The recommendations made by the Advisory Group were considered and approved by Rosa's Board of Trustees.

What Rosa wants to achieve with this funding

Rise Fund aims to achieve the following outcomes:

- **Women and girls** will be supported by women's and girls' organisations led by and for Black and racially minoritised women, ensuring women and girls can be safe, healthy and equal.
- **Women's and girls' organisations** will be empowered and strengthened, meaning that they will be in a stronger position to survive, thrive and grow into the future.

We want to enable organisations to be in a stronger position to survive, thrive and grow by investing in organisational development work. This means organisations will be able to report **one or more** of these changes:

- a clearer strategy
- more effective governance
- more effective leadership
- a stronger voice within the women's movement
- stronger alliances with other women's organisations
- more able to attract funding from other sources
- more able to demonstrate the impact of their work
- more effective systems and processes

Examples of the types of activities we will fund against each of these outcomes are provided later in this guidance.

Who can apply?

This fund is for **women's and girls' organisations which are led by and for Black and racially minoritised women,** that have an **income of between £30,000 and £300,000** (from their last set of signed annual accounts)**.**

In order to apply, your organisation must meet **all** the following eligibility criteria:

- Be a women's or girls' organisation which is led by, for and with Black and racially minoritised women. This means that the organisation will be governed and led by Black and racially minoritised women. It will have a Board of Trustees (or similar) where the Chair is a woman, and 75% of members are Black and racially minoritised women. 75% of the organisation's employee leadership team will be Black and racially minoritised women. The organisation will have the principal objective of working with Black and racially minoritised women and/or girls and the majority of the organisation's beneficiaries are, and will always be, Black and racially minoritised women and/or girls.[2]
- Be a not-for-profit organisation.
- Have an income of between £30,000 and £300,000 from your last set of annual accounts (these are full year accounts which have been signed off by your board).
- Have unrestricted reserves of no more than 12 months expenditure.
- Have a written governing document, e.g. a constitution or set of rules.
- Have a governing body with at least 3 unrelated members.
- Have a UK-based bank or building society account in the name of the organisation, with at least 2 unrelated signatories.
- Have an appropriate safeguarding policy in place (every organisation that delivers charitable activities has a duty to safeguard volunteers, staff members, participants and donors).
- Deliver all their work in one or more of the four UK Nations: England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland.

[2] We acknowledge that using a percentage to assess the extent to which an organisation is led by and for Black and racially minoritised women may not capture the nuance of individual's identities, or take account of the complex contexts in which organisations work. We do this in order to ensure we are funding grassroots organisations which are created from and connected to the communities they serve and which design their services based on direct, lived experience. The Advisory group for the first round of Rise Fund advised that the fund was aimed at organisations where 75% of the senior management team and trustees/governing body were Black and racially minoritised women.

Rise Fund will prioritise organisations led by and for Black and racially minoritised women, which are also:

- operating in the top 20% of the most disadvantaged areas in the UK -based on the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD);
- based in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland;
- led by and for disabled women and girls;
- led by and for LGBTQ+ women and girls.

Organisations which meet more than one of the above priorities will be given higher priority than those that meet one priority.

We are especially keen to fund organisations which are created from and connected to the communities they serve, designing their services based on direct, lived experience and involving their beneficiaries in decision-making.

In addition, organisations that have **not** previously been funded by Rise Fund will be prioritised.

How much can you apply for?

You can apply for a **2-year grant of between £10,000 (£5,000 per year) and £40,000 (£20,000 per year).**

We recommend that you do not apply for more than a third of your last year's income, per year. For example, if your income last year was £30,000, we would consider an application for a maximum of £10,000 each year (£20,000 in total).

What sort of work will Rosa fund?

We will fund organisational development work that will support your organisation to survive, thrive and grow into the future.

We know that developing an organisation takes time and resource, so through this programme **we are funding extra capacity** to help you strengthen your organisation, rather than supporting existing costs.

Strengthening an organisation requires 'thinking' and 'development' time and this is often best done by the people leading your organisation. We will therefore backfill senior staff positions in order to provide resource for this and/or pay for additional senior staff time.

Although our focus is on providing extra capacity, we encourage applicants to ask for a contribution to their general running costs through the grant, as we understand how important this is to an organisation's financial security. 25% of your grant can be for general

running costs. For example, if you are requesting £40,000 in total, £10,000 of this can be for general running costs.

The table below sets out the types of changes we want to see, as well as examples of the type of work we will fund.

The change we want to see *When we are assessing your application, we want to see that our grant will help you make one or more of the changes listed below*	**Examples of work we will fund** *Here are some of the types of work we can fund (it is not an exhaustive list). It isn't our intention to direct you to apply for these costs, but simply to give you an idea of the breadth of costs we can consider.*
Your organisation has more effective leadership	• Extra capacity to plan for the future leadership and governance of the organisation • Leadership training for senior staff members or to enable staff to take the next step into leadership roles • Specialist management or skills-based training courses • Mentoring and coaching • Organisational awaydays to support the growth and sustainability of your organisation • Extra capacity and expertise to support current staff to develop how your organisation is led and managed through a review process or by providing mentoring and coaching. • You may also want to include costs for staff self-care: we recognise that this takes many different forms.
Your organisation has more effective governance	• Commission expertise and/or extra capacity to undertake a governance review, conduct a board skills audit, or run training for the board and staff team
Your organisation has a clearer or a more detailed strategy	• Backfill the Chief Executive's role so they can develop a business plan, a new service, or a theory of change • Buy in additional capacity or expertise to help you do this
Your organisation has stronger alliances with other women's organisations	• Organise a programme of visits to other organisations doing similar work to you, in order to share learning, build partnerships and improve your work • Backfill a staff members' time to enable them to develop partnerships with other organisations • Additional capacity for staff to build relationships with women in other women's organisations, providing opportunities to develop their activism, develop critical friends and opportunities for sharing of expertise

	• Pay a membership fee, or subscription cost where this would enhance your work and your reach • Organise shared workshops to strengthen collaboration between women's organisations
Your organisation is more able to attract funding from other sources.	• Develop a fundraising strategy, employ a fundraiser, or invest in staff training. • Research how you could tap into new sources of funding such as Trusts and Foundations you haven't worked with before, crowd funding, community giving, or setting up a social enterprise.
Your organisation has a stronger voice within the women's movement.	• Develop service user spaces in your organisation to platform and amplify the voices of the women and girls you support • Develop a communications or marketing strategy for your organisation • Employ someone to develop and run your social media presence or train existing staff in how to do this • Train volunteers so they are more confident undertaking media work, or public speaking • Develop and run a training course for women who are interested in your work and who would like to volunteer for you • Undertake a recruitment drive to attract new volunteers to support your work
Your organisation is more able to demonstrate the impact of its work.	• Improve how you collect and use information about your organisation's impact. • Work towards and gain accreditation, to demonstrate the quality of your work. • Employ someone or work with a consultant that specialises in demonstrating the impact that your organisation has in driving social change and the difference you make to the lives of women and girls. • Design and implement a monitoring system, a way of collecting feedback. • Purchase a database and input your data into it. • Buy in extra resource to develop new ways of communicating your impact to stakeholders and potential funders such as using case studies.
Your organisation has more effective systems and processes.	• Design and implement a new I.T system and develop new processes such as referral systems or financial controls in order to improve your work and secure the organisation's long-term future. • Train employees in new ways of working that will improve the way services are delivered. This could include areas such

	as safeguarding, specialist assessments, policies or implementing a rights-based approach.

What cannot be funded?

We will not fund the following:

- organisations that do not meet our eligibility criteria including our definition of a women's and/or girls' organisation led by, for and with Black and racially minoritised women
- responsibilities of statutory agencies
- profit-making work
- party political activity
- activities promoting religious beliefs
- work outside the UK
- applications from individuals
- overseas travel
- interest payments on loans
- building purchase
- costs that your organisation has already incurred ('retrospective costs')

How to apply

To apply, please complete our application form **by 4pm on Monday 23rd June 2025.** We are unable to accept late applications.

Rosa will be hosting **'How to Apply' webinars** to help applicants develop their applications. Please register using the links below:

12.00 - 13.00 Thursday 5th June

16.30 - 17.30 Tuesday 10th June

If you are not able to attend either of the webinar dates, please email grants@rosauk.org and we can share the webinar recording after 5th June.

The application process has two steps:

1. Registration form and eligibility check.
2. Application form.

The links above (which are also on our website) will take you to the registration form and the application form. Please note that you need to complete the registration form before accessing the application form.

The registration form will ask for your name and contact details and the name of your organisation. You will also be asked to answer a series of eligibility questions. Please note that we can only consider applications from organisations which meet all our eligibility criteria.

Once you submit the registration form and provided your organisation is eligible for Rise Fund 2025 funding, you will receive an email with a link to the application form (this is the same link as the link at the top of this section).

If you would like to plan your answers before going online to fill in the form, the application form questions are listed at the end of this guidance document.

We encourage you to contact us if you have any queries about submitting an application. If you have any access requirements please let us know what support we can provide. The best way to contact us is to send an email to grants@rosauk.org. Please use 'Rise Fund 2025' as your email subject and provide your organisation name, contact name and contact number if you would like to speak to someone. If you have already started an application and know your application reference number, please also include this in your email. We will do our very best to respond to your queries as soon as we can.

How will decisions be made?

Stage 1

We will do basic eligibility checks before shortlisting. Applications will be shortlisted based on:

- Passing the eligibility checks
- How well the proposal fits with the aim and priorities of the fund
- Need and opportunity for strengthening your organisation at this time
- A good geographic spread of applications across the four UK nations
- A number of organisations operating in the top 20% most disadvantaged areas in the UK – based on the Indices of multiple deprivation (IMD);
- A number of organisations led by and for: disabled women; or LGBTQ+ women and girls
- The extent to which organisations are created from and connected to the communities they serve.
- A number of organisations that have not previously received a grant from Rise 1 fund.

Assessments will be carried out by Rosa grants assessors.

Stage 2

Applications that pass the shortlisting process will go through to the next stage, which will include a pre-arranged call with your organisation to discuss your application. The assessments will be carried out by the same group of assessors.

Stage 3

We take a participatory approach to our work, and value the experiences of those closest to the work we are supporting. Applications will be considered by a Grants Panel which is comprised of Rosa Trustees and representatives of Black and racially minoritised-led women's organisations and networks from across the UK. Recommendations from the Grants Panel will be approved by Rosa Trustees.

Application timetable

Closing date for applications	4pm Monday 23rd June
Notifications to applicants not shortlisted	By Monday 11th August
Call to discuss your application (if necessary)	August
Notification of outcome for all other applicants	By Friday 14th November
First payment of 50%	December 2025
Second payment of 50%	December 2026
End of grant period	December 2027

If you are successful

We look forward to building a relationship of trust and support with funded organisations and we will be here to discuss any queries regarding your grant during the funding period. We are open to discussing proposed changes to your grant, recognising that circumstances change.

Grant payments and reporting

We will pay the grant in two instalments:

- 50% of your grant will be paid in December 2025, after we receive your signed grant agreement.
- 50% of your grant will be paid in December 2026.

The grant should be spent by December 2027.

We understand how challenging reporting on grants can be, therefore we will ensure that the monitoring of this fund is light touch to prevent adding additional burden to organisations. We will also provide guidance material and be available for any queries to take you through our simple reporting process.

There will be a short mid-point grant report and a simple end of grant report form to complete, which will capture how funding has been used and the extent to which it helped.

Alongside provision of grant funding, Rosa will also provide optional capacity building support. We will contact you about this if you receive a grant.

To find out more about Rosa's work, sign up to our newsletter (on the homepage of our website www.rosauk.org) to hear about future funding opportunities.

If you are not successful

We understand the need for funding of this kind is great and that we are highly likely to receive more applications than we can support.

We will write to all organisations who are not successful, providing reasons why and offering feedback.

Registration form and application form questions

REGISTRATION FORM QUESTIONS	GUIDANCE
Your details:	
Name	
Last name	
Email address	
Your organisation:	
Please enter the name of your organisation as it appears on your governing document	
Your role:	
What is your role within this organisation?	
Please confirm your organisation's eligibility to apply for this grant.	At Rosa it is important to us that we are transparent about which organisations we can fund. We know that women's and girls' organisations are extremely busy, and we want to make it as easy as possible for you to decide whether or not to apply to us for funding. Please refer to our eligibility criteria on page 2 of this guidance under 'Who can apply?' and also below. Please note that in support of your answers to the eligibility questions above you will be expected to provide: • your governing document • a full year of accounts signed off by your board, showing an income of between £30,000 and £300,000 • Your most recent management accounts (or if you don't have

	management accounts, a brief update on your income and expenditure so far this financial year - this can be a Word document or a spreadsheet) • A copy of a bank statement from within the last 3 months. • Your organisation's safeguarding policy(ies). You will be asked to provide these later in the application process.
Your organisation is a not-for-profit organisation	**Please note that we can fund the following types of organisations:** • Registered charity • Community Interest Company limited by guarantee • Company limited by guarantee • Constituted community organisation • Charitable incorporated organisation/Scottish charitable incorporated organisation • Industrial and provident community benefit society **If you are unsure if your organisation is eligibile for Rise Fund 2025, please get in touch with us at grants@rosauk.org**
It has the principal objective of working with Black and racially minoritised women and/or girls.	
The Chair of your Board of Trustees (or similar) is a woman	
At least 75% of members of your Board are Black and racially minoritised women	
At least 75% of the organisation's employee leadership team are Black and racially minoritised women	
The majority of the organisation's beneficiaries are, and will always be, Black and racially minoritised women and/or girls	

It delivers all of its work in one or more of the four UK Nations: England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland	
It has an income of between £30,000 and £300,000 as shown on your last set of annual accounts (these are full year accounts which have been signed off by your Board)	
It has unrestricted reserves of no more than 12 months expenditure	
It has a written governing document, e.g. a constitution or set of rules	
It has a governing body with at least 3 unrelated members	
It has a UK-based bank or building society account in the name of the organisation, with at least 2 unrelated signatories	
It has an appropriate safeguarding policy in place	

Application form questions

APPLICATION QUESTIONS	**GUIDANCE**
Section 1: Your organisation	
What is the name of your organisation as it appears on your governing document	
This fund will support not-for-profit organisations run by and for women and girls. Please choose your organisation type from the drop-down list.	Please choose your organisation type from the drop-down list on the application form. If your organisation has more than one legal type (e.g. registered charity and company limited by guarantee) please select only one option and add further information in the next box.
If you have chosen Other, please add further details	Please tell us more about your organisation's legal status.
If you are a registered charity, please provide your charity registration number	
If you are a company registered at Companies House, please provide your company number	

APPLICATION QUESTIONS	GUIDANCE
Section 2: Further details about your organisation You will be asked for your organisation's address and contact details	
When did your organisation start?	Please enter the date when your organisation started.
Please confirm your organisation's location and contact details	Please use the sections here to tell us your office address, email and phone number as well as your website if you have one.
Please tell us how you are set up (150 words max)	• How many people sit on your governing body (e.g. trustees or directors)? How many are women/girls? • Is your Chair a woman? • How many paid staff do you have? How many are women? • How many employees are in your senior leadership team? How many are women? • How many unpaid workers/volunteers do you have (excluding your governing body)? How many are women? • Is there anything else you'd like to tell us about the way your organisation is set up?
Please tell us a bit about your organisation (250 words max)	Please briefly tell us about your organisation's history, purpose and work. You can split your response into sections by telling us: a) how and why your organisation was set up b) what you are trying to achieve (your aims) c) what you do (your activities) d) where your work takes place (geographic location and reach, and the characteristics of the area you work in) e) who it is for (your beneficiaries)

APPLICATION QUESTIONS	GUIDANCE
In which local authority area is your organisation based?	Please select from a drop down list.
Please tell us if your organisation is working in any geographical areas that are listed in the top 20% most deprived, in your nation's indices of deprivation. (If possible please provide the postcode)	You can use the following websites to search for deprivation data in your area. Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) – https://wimd.gov.wales/ Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) - https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/SIMD Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure – https://www.nisra.gov.uk/statistics/deprivation England Indices of Deprivation Postcode Mapper - https://www.gov.uk/guidance/english-indices-of-deprivation-2019-mapping-resources#indices-of-deprivation-2019-explorer-postcode-mapper
Please select if your organisation is led by and for Black and racially minoritised women and girls; led by and for disabled women; led by and for LGBTQ+ women and girls.	Please select if your organisation is led by and for Black and racially minoritised women and girls; led by and for disabled women; led by and for LGBTQ+ women and girls.

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If you have selected any of the options above, please tell us more about how your organisation is led by and for Black and racially minoritised women and girls, disabled women and girls or LGBTQ+ women and girls.	If you have selected any of the options above, please tell us more about this. Please make sure that you tell us the following: a) Who is your Chair of Trustees b) Who sits on your Trustee Board and how the Board meets our criteria of being led by and for Black and racially minoritised women and girls, disabled women and girls or LGBTQ+ women and girls c) Who are the employee leaders of your organisation and how does the employee leadership team meet Rise Fund criteria d) what you are trying to achieve (your aims) e) who it is for (your beneficiaries)
Section 4: Your organisation's finances	
Last financial year end date.	Please tell us the end date for your organisation's last complete financial year.
Total income for the last financial year.	Please tell us your organisation's total income for the last complete financial year.
Total expenditure for the last financial year.	Please tell us your organisation's total expenditure for the last complete financial year.
Restricted reserves at last financial year end.	Please tell us the total amount of restricted funds your organisation had at the end of the last complete financial year. Restricted reserves are funds that your organisation may hold at the end of the year which must be spent in a particular way.
Unrestricted reserves at last financial year end.	Please tell us the total amount of unrestricted funds your organisation had at the end of the last complete financial year.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS	GUIDANCE
	In order to be eligible for this fund, you must not have more than 12 months of expenditure in your unrestricted reserves.
Please tell us if there is anything of note regarding your organisation's most recent financial accounts.	This question is optional. If there is anything in your most recent financial accounts you want to highlight then please tell us here. This may include information around surplus/deficits or your reserves.
Section 4: Your grant request Please use this section to tell us what you are asking for funding for and how it will benefit your organisation.	
Amount requested	Please enter the amount you are requesting – please note that you can apply for between £10,000 and £40,000 to be spent over 2 years.
Please tell us why you need this funding now (150 words max)	Please tell us what your organisation needs in order to develop. This should relate to one or more of the areas below: • Strategy • Governance • Leadership • Voice in the women's movement • Alliances and partnerships • Funding • Demonstrating impact • Systems and processes. Briefly tell us how you know this (e.g. your staff or Trustees have identified a need, feedback from funders, advice from other organisations or consultants)

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Please tell us how you will use the funding (150 words max)	Tell us what you will do with this funding. For example, if you plan on recruiting a consultant for strategic development, tell us how you will do this. If you would like to set up an IT system, tell us how you would do this.
Please tell us how your organisation will change as a result of this funding (150 words max)	Tell us how this funding will help you meet the need you identified above. You will need to show us that this grant will help your organisation achieve one or more of these changes: • a clearer or a more detailed strategy • more effective governance • more effective leadership • stronger voice within the women's movement • stronger alliances with other women's organisations • more able to attract funding from other sources • more able to demonstrate the impact of your work • more effective systems and processes
If your organisation received a grant from the first round of Rise, please tell us how a second grant would enable your organisation to build on your earlier work. (150 words max)	Tell us what your first grant achieved, the work you still need to do and how a second grant would build on the work you did using your first grant. If you are applying to fund a post that was funded by Rise please also tell us how you would approach longer term funding for this post, once this grant has ended.
Please estimate how many women and/or girls your organisation will work with during the 2 year grant.	This means the total number of women and/or girls you hope to support over the course of the grant. You could base this on how many women and/or girls you helped last year.
Section 5: Project budget	

APPLICATION QUESTIONS	GUIDANCE
Budget	Please use the budget items below to outline, as clearly as possible, how you will spend the grant. The total figure for the budget must be the same as the total amount requested. Please use the description section below each budget item to describe the costs the grant will help to fund. **Budget items:** **Direct staff costs -** This might include a new staff post or backfilling a senior member of staff. *Please tell us where you need funding towards a specific role and where possible show how you have worked out the cost.* *Please note: Rosa is committed to supporting organisations to pay the real Living Wage. We try to ensure that grants made towards staff costs are paid at least the real Living Wage, where possible.* **Associated staff costs -** This might include management, training, travel or support for staff. **Volunteer costs -** This might include training, travel, subsistence, equipment, volunteer support. **Other Direct Costs -** This includes any other costs directly associated to the work you are delivering. For example, consultancy fees, new systems or membership fees. **General running costs** – This might include rent, utility costs, insurances and any other costs related to the day to day running of your organisation. **Up to 25% of your total request can be general running costs**. Please use the comments box to tell us which of your general running costs you are

APPLICATION QUESTIONS	GUIDANCE
	including here, but you do not need to show us how it has been calculated.
What other non-financial support do you need right now?	Rosa will work to provide additional support for the organisations we fund. It would be helpful to hear from you about what non-financial support your organisation needs so we can ensure our support is targeted and relevant to the current needs of the sector. Please select the type of support from the drop down and provide further details in the text box.
Section 6: Supporting documents	
Attachments required: • **Please upload your signed annual accounts for your most recent financial year.** • **Please upload your most recent management accounts (or if you don't have management accounts, a brief update on your income and expenditure so far this financial year - this can be a Word document or a spreadsheet)** • **Please upload a copy of a bank statement from within the last 3 months.** • **Please upload a copy of the governing document for your organisation.** • **Please upload your organisation's safeguarding policy(ies).**	As part of the assessment process, we will carry out due diligence checks. This includes assessment of finances and governance structures. Please provide all the requested documents. **Please note that if any of these accounts are available to view on the Charity Commission website you do not need to attach to this application. However, you will need to attach a note which makes it clear which accounts can be viewed online.** Your bank statement should show your account name and number as well as recent transactions and account balance. Rosa takes safeguarding very seriously and as such we expect all applicants to provide a robust safeguarding policy. You can upload multiple safeguarding policy documents. Please upload all that apply to the work that you do.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS	GUIDANCE
	Please use a zip file to submit more than one document.