

In this issue, we share highlights from the Hong Kong & Ukraine Pathways Celebration Event, marking achievements from our Employment Support Programme. You can now submit your EOI for our upcoming funding workshop, and with Lunar New Year approaching, we feature free guided tour from the Hong Kong Cultural Community. esea contemporary are organising an Exhibition Preview: 'Thresholds of Becoming'. We also share updates on Migrant Support ESOL classes across Manchester and Lancashire, and the latest funding opportunities locally, regionally and nationally 😊

HK & Ukraine Pathways Celebration Event



Join us and celebrate the amazing achievements from the HK & Ukraine Pathways Employment Support Programme.

The dedicated employment support programme for Hong Kong BN(O) and Ukraine Scheme Visa Holders in the North West is coming to an end. We want to invite you to celebrate the amazing achievements and hard work of the Hongkongers and Ukrainians that have been on the programme, as well as the fantastic employment support providers that have aided them along the way.

Please **join us on 26th February from 9:30am to 1pm in central Manchester** to hear about the outcomes, meet Hongkongers and Ukrainians that have been on the programme, hear from the organisations that supported them and from employers and businesses that are seeing the benefits to hiring Hongkongers and Ukrainians in their organisations.

[Please register for tickets here](#)

💡 **Upcoming Funding Workshop**

✦ **A few places remaining!** ✦

Following the fantastic feedback from our first workshop delivered by **Sector 3 Stockport** and commissioned by **RSMP**, we're delighted to confirm our next online Funding Workshop will take place on **Tuesday, 24th February 2026, from 12pm to 3pm via Microsoft Teams** .

This **FREE**, interactive session is designed to help **VCFSE organisations working with migrant communities in the North West** improve their chances of successful funding bids.

Priority will be given to smaller or newly established groups supporting **Hongkong BN(O), Afghan and Ukrainian communities**, especially those new to funding or applications.

If you or someone in your network would like to attend, please complete the Expression of Interest (EOI) form here:

[Expression of Interest: 2nd Funding Workshop – Getting Started with Funding – Fill in form](#)

EOIs will close at 11:59pm on Tuesday, 10th February 2026.

💡 **Community Choice Funding Opens for 2026**



The Health Lottery Foundation has launched its first funding opportunity of 2026, **Community Choice**, offering ten grants of £1,000 to small charities and CICs supporting health and wellbeing across Britain.

Organisations with an annual income of £300,000 or less can be nominated between Monday 2 February at 9am and Friday 27 February at 5pm. Eligible groups must have been operating for at least two years and hold a bank account in the organisation's name.

Nominations must be submitted via the official form by an employee or volunteer and take around ten minutes to complete. Ten organisations will be selected at random and contacted in early March.

For more info, please click the link:

[Community Choice - The Health Lottery Foundation](#)

Hong Kong Cultural Community × Readfirst Bookshop



● Lunar New Year Fair – Free Guided Tour

Looking for a welcoming way to explore Manchester and learn about a new culture this Valentine's weekend?

Join our **free guided walk** through Manchester's Lunar New Year Fair and discover the stories, symbols, and flavours behind one of the world's most widely celebrated festivals — enjoyed across East and Southeast Asia and by communities around the world.

This short and relaxed tour is open to **people from all backgrounds**, including those who are new to the UK. No prior knowledge is needed. We'll explain why red and gold are everywhere, what Lunar New Year represents, and how everyday traditions, decorations, and rituals are used to welcome good fortune, health, and new beginnings. Along the way, we'll introduce traditional New Year foods, popular street snacks, and market items, sharing the meanings and stories behind them in an accessible and friendly way. The tour is **free to attend**.

If cost or transport is a barrier for you, please feel free to contact us in advance — we may be able to offer **travel support or a food subsidy**, depending on need. All enquiries will be handled sensitively.

Dates: 14 & 15 February | **Times:** 11:00 & 15:30 | **Meeting Point:** Market Street (Outside Boots), Manchester, M1 1PL | **Sign up:** <https://vms.hkcc.org.uk/events/lny-guided-tour/>

Exhibition Preview 'Thresholds of Becoming'



esea contemporary marks its 40th anniversary in 2026 with *Thresholds of Becoming*, a new group exhibition bringing together six artists whose practices probe the architectures of transition and the fragile ecologies of the in-between: Nicole Coson, Xin Liu, Charmaine Poh, Minoru Nomata, Yang Yongliang, and Yin Aiwen.

From our beginnings as a grassroots Chinese Visual Arts Festival to our evolution into an artist-run space and later a National Portfolio Organisation, our history reflects continual transformation.

Our revising in 2022 and reopening in 2023 reaffirmed our commitment to supporting artists of East and Southeast Asian heritage while imagining new forms of cultural work.

This exhibition gathers practitioners who embrace instability as a generative force, inviting us to consider how relationships, uncertainties and acts of care might guide the futures we create together.

Several of the artists will be present at the preview, including Nicole Coson, Charmaine Poh, Yin Aiwen, and Xin Liu.

On from Feb 21st, 2026, until May 17th, 2026.

Opening Hours
Tue to Sat: 10am–5pm, Sun: 12–5pm.

Advance booking for this free event is recommended due to limited capacity.

For more information, please visit: [esea contemporary](https://eseacontemporary.org.uk)

Migrant Support ESOL Classes

Migrant Support is offering ESOL classes for Hong Kong BN(O) Visa Holders, Homes for Ukraine (HfU) and Ukraine Permission Extension (UPE) Visa Holders and Eligible Afghan Households under Communities for Afghans (CfA).

Classes will be available in **Manchester** and **Lancashire**.

For more details and to register, please refer to the two posters below

ESOL CLASSES IN MANCHESTER

ESOL CLASSES IN LANCASHIRE

Funding Opportunities in the North West and Nationally

In the following section, we will share new **external** funding opportunities available across different regions in the Northwest and nationally that may be useful and worth considering. Please note that some of the funding opportunities from the newsletter I sent previously are still open. Feel free to reach out to me if you have any questions.

Please Note – the funding below is external to the RSMP and is shared with you after researching funding across the region and nationally. The RSMP has no role in the drafting, commissioning or awarding of funding. Please ensure you read all eligibility criteria associated with each funding opportunity.

Stronger Communities Fund (Manchester)	
Focus/Aims of Fund	Support community-led projects across Manchester that strengthen local neighbourhoods, improve wellbeing, reduce isolation, enhance public spaces, support early years development and provide positive youth activities. The fund empowers communities to act on their own ideas and priorities
Specific Eligibility Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding priorities include Helping in the Early Years by supporting children aged 0–4 and their parents with early learning, health, and nutrition; Combating Loneliness & Social Exclusion by supporting people at risk of isolation (e.g., older people, disabled people); Protecting & Improving Open Spaces by maintaining and enhancing community green spaces or improving access; and Offering Positive Youth Activities by structured programmes that help young people live safely and successfully organisations must support or work with communities within the City of Manchester (not Greater Manchester) must deliver community-focused activity aligned with at least one of the above fund's core themes
Grant amount	Up to £4,000
Location	Manchester
Deadline	3 rd March 2026
Contact	welovemcrcharity@manchester.gov.uk
Website	STRONGER COMMUNITIES FUND We Love MCR Charity

Let's Live Well Healthy Hearts (Bury)	
Focus/Aims of Fund	Tackle the causes of heart disease and help residents in Bury live longer, healthier lives, with a focus on reducing heart-related hospital admissions
Specific Eligibility Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must be a constituted voluntary, community or social enterprise (VCSE) organisation must be based in Bury or have a strong proven track record of delivering in Bury must have an organisational bank account with two unrelated signatories, or access to a holding account through a supporting organisation
Grant amount	Up to £3,500
Location	Bury, Greater Manchester
Deadline	25 th February 2026
Contact	grants@buryvcfa.org.uk

Website	Grants Bury VCFA
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Rochdale Recovery Communities Fund (Rochdale)	
Focus/Aims of Fund	Strengthen the VCFSE sector in supporting lived-experience initiatives and recovery support services that help people begin and sustain recovery from problem drug and alcohol use. The fund promotes a visible and positive recovery community, early intervention, stigma reduction, awareness-raising and wider community engagement
Specific Eligibility Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be a VCFSE organisation locally rooted or active in Rochdale • must be a member of Action Together CIO (free registration available) • must be a formally constituted group
Grant amount	Up to £5,000
Location	Rochdale Borough
Deadline	Wednesday 18 th February
Contact	laura.augustine@actiontogether.org.uk
Website	Rochdale Recovery Communities Fund £5k Action Together

Salford Centenary Fund (Salford)	
Focus/Aims of Fund	Support community celebration events and activities marking 100 years since Salford became a city. The fund aims to enable voluntary and community organisations, social enterprises and council departments to deliver cultural, creative, heritage and community activities across Salford's neighbourhoods between April and December 2026
Specific Eligibility Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be based in Salford <i>or</i> have a strong track record of delivery in Salford • must have an organisational bank account with at least two unrelated signatories • must be a constituted VCSE organisation with a governing document or a Salford City Council department delivering community-facing activity • groups not formally constituted may partner with an eligible organisation • only one application per organisation (unless invited to reapply with a significantly different project)
Grant amount	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small grants: up to £1,000 • Large grants: up to £10,000
Location	Salford
Deadline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large grants: Friday 13th February 2026 at 12pm • Small grants: Assessed periodically throughout 2026
Contact	centenary@salfordcvs.co.uk
Website	Salford Centenary Fund Salford CVS

Impact Fund: Tackling Health Inequalities (Wider Determinants of Health) (Salford)	
Focus/Aims of Fund	Support VCSE-led projects tackling health inequalities by addressing wider determinants of health (e.g., poverty, housing, education, climate, transport, digital connectivity)
Specific Eligibility Criteria	Applicants must:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be a constituted VCSE organisation • be a full member of Salford CVS • be based in Salford or have a strong delivery track record in Salford • have turnover between £100,000 and £5m • have an organisational bank account with two unrelated signatories • be up to date with grant reporting to Salford CVS.
Grant amount	Up to £30,000 for 12-month projects
Location	Salford, Greater Manchester
Deadline	13 th February 2026 (12pm midday)
Contact	grants@salfordcvs.co.uk
Website	Impact Fund: Tackling Health Inequalities (Wider Determinants of Health) Salford CVS

Cheshire west and Chester Council Sanctuary Funding to Support Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Vulnerable migrants (Cheshire West and Chester)	
Focus/Aims of Fund	Support voluntary and community sector organisations working with refugees, asylum seekers and vulnerable migrants in Cheshire West and Chester. Funding aims to help organisations deliver projects that align with the Council's agreed aims, objectives, and outcomes around integration, safety, support and reducing vulnerability
Specific Eligibility Criteria	Organisations must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be not-for-profit with a management committee and constitution • have effective financial management • be based and/or operating in Cheshire West and Chester • align with and support Council policies • be non-party political • have safeguarding policies, including DBS checks where required • work towards sustainable funding for migrant/refugee support work <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note: complete application form (which I have attached to the main body of this email) and submit electronically to: refugeesupport@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk
Grant amount	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up to £10,000 for 12 months • Up to £20,000 over 24 months (£10,000 per year)
Location	Cheshire West and Chester
Deadline	5pm on Friday 20 th February 2026
Contact	Shelah Semoff , Refugee & Asylum Seeker Team Manager: shelah.semoff@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk Stephanie Ward , Integration & Partnership Manager: stephanie.ward@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk
Website	Home Cheshire West and Chester Council

Eric Wright Charitable Trust (Lancashire, Greater Manchester and South Cumbria)	
Focus/Aims of Fund	Support charities and projects that help young people realise their potential, make informed life choices and become active and

	responsible members of society. Focus areas include mental wellbeing, skills development and advancing education
Specific Eligibility Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be a registered charity • projects supporting: youth employment and skills development; child and family support; mental health and wellbeing; young and young adult carers (under 25); education and training; programmes for children who are persistently absent from school, leaving school with no qualifications or in/leaving care • must complete an eligibility checker before applying
Grant amount	£10,000 or £20,000 per year for 3 years
Location	Lancashire, Greater Manchester and South Cumbria
Deadline	13 th February 2026
Contact	info@ericwright.co.uk
Website	Open Funding Eric Wright Group

Merseyside Police Community Cashback Fund (Merseyside)	
Focus/Aims of Fund	Support grassroots community projects that contribute to crime prevention, community cohesion, equality, diversity, inclusion, and the prevention of hate crime. The fund is generated through assets recovered under the Proceeds of Crime Act.
Specific Eligibility Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisations must have been established for at least 12 months before applying • must contribute to key policing themes: community cohesion; promoting equality, diversity and inclusion; preventing hate crime • projects must focus on primary prevention (reducing risk/opportunity for crime and strengthening community structures) and/or secondary prevention (early interventions for those at high risk) • organisations receiving a grant in the previous round (Decisions Jan 2025) cannot reapply in 2026 • ineligible: Individuals; statutory services; vehicle costs; private businesses/CICs limited by shares; political or exclusively religious activities; academic research
Grant amount	Up to £5,000
Location	Merseyside
Deadline	4pm, 13 th February 2026
Contact	applications@cflm.org.uk
Website	Merseyside Police Community Cashback Fund - CFM

Lancaster Community Fund (Lancaster District)	
Focus/Aims of Fund	Support local volunteer-led organisations delivering projects that benefit residents of the Lancaster District. The fund prioritises community involvement, sustainability, carbon reduction and individual/community wellbeing
Specific Eligibility Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be a local charity, voluntary organisation or community group operating in Lancaster District • projects must align with at least one of the three priorities: community involvement & resilience; carbon

	<p>reduction & sustainability; individual or community wellbeing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • applications are particularly welcomed from groups in disadvantaged communities or smaller grassroots groups with low income • must be a volunteer-run organisation seeking support for project delivery
Grant amount	Up to £1,000
Location	Lancaster District
Deadline	1 st March 2026
Contact	sharonphillips@lancastercvs.org.uk
Website	Funding Opportunities - LDCVS - Lancaster District Community & Voluntary Solutions

Blackburn with Darwen Community Fund (Blackburn with Darwen)	
Focus/Aims of Fund	Support small grassroots community groups to deliver neighbourhood-based activities that encourage volunteering, community-led solutions and local improvements. Part of the borough's Community Pledge
Specific Eligibility Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must have a constitution/governing document and a committee of 3+ unrelated people • must have a bank account with two signatories or a partner organisation able to hold funds • must be a not-for-profit organisation (no statutory bodies or private sector organisations) • activities must take place within Blackburn with Darwen and benefit its residents
Grant amount	Up to £1,000
Location	Blackburn with Darwen
Deadline	Friday 1 st May at 12pm
Contact	office@communitycvs.org.uk
Website	Blackburn with Darwen Community Fund – Community CVS

Migration Fund (Paul Hamlyn Foundation) (the UK)	
Focus/Aims of Fund	Supports organisations working towards migrant justice, tackling harmful immigration policies, building collective power in migrant/diaspora communities, strengthening movement infrastructure and creating long-term systemic change rooted in anti-racism, care and solidarity
Specific Eligibility Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UK not-for-profits, including new/unincorporated groups • work must align with the fund's values (anti-racist practice, shifting power to migrants, care-centred culture, collaboration) • priority to migrant-led organisations; groups in underfunded regions; small organisations (turnover under £500k); groups with less access to funding • organisations with turnover up to £120k may receive grants covering up to 50% of annual income • funding covers core costs, salaries, organisational development, safeguarding, programme work and partnerships related to systemic change for migrant justice • enquiry call required before applying
Grant amount	Up to £60,000 per year (3–4 years) or £50,000 per year (5 years)

Location	The UK
Deadline	Rolling (no fixed closing date)
Contact	information@phf.org.uk
Website	Migration Fund Paul Hamlyn Foundation

A B Charitable Trust – Migrants and Refugees Priority (the UK)	
Focus/Aims of Fund	Create a fair immigration system where migrants, refugees and asylum seekers are welcomed, treated with dignity and supported to maximise their potential. Funding supports work that addresses systemic challenges and promotes rights, dignity and agency
Specific Eligibility Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UK registered charity delivering work in the UK • mission aligned with one of A B Trust's four priority areas (must be main focus) • annual income between £150k and £1.5m • operated for at least one year with audited/independently examined accounts • must provide governing document, safeguarding policy, and financial information
Grant amount	£10,000 – £30,000 (most grants fall within this range)
Location	The UK
Deadline	24 th April 2026
Contact	Email: mail@abcharitabletrust.org.uk
Website	The A B Charitable Trust, an independent grant-making organisation