# Forever Manchester Funding Programmes:

# Survey Findings

**Prepared for: Forever Manchester**

**October 2024**

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# Summary of key findings

## FUNDING NEEDS

**Organisations need funding most for:**
- Project specific costs
- Core costs
- Staff costs

**94.6%** of organisations have been impacted by the rising cost of living. Commonly reported impacts include:
- Increased costs for project supplies and equipment
- Increased core costs (e.g. rent, utilities)
- Increased demand for services from the community

## APPLYING FOR FUNDING

**37.1%** say a grant of £3,000 would best suit their needs.

**60.0%** would prefer one, larger grant per year.

**83.2%** would like flexible funding to spend on whatever the organisation needs.

## THE FUNDING APPLICATION PROCESS

**92.5%** say it's clear which funds are most suitable for their organisation to apply for.

**65.8%** think it's reasonable to spend less than one hour on a small grant application.

**71.9%** would prefer to complete an application form online.

**73.3%** would prefer to discuss their application with Forever Manchester via email.

# SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

### Aim

Forever Manchester wanted to better understand the funding needs of grassroots community groups operating in Greater Manchester, and how organisations find the Forever Manchester application process.

### Methodology

Forever Consulting conducted a survey in August 2024 to gather feedback from community groups operating in Greater Manchester. The survey covered:

- Current and anticipated future funding needs of organisations and the impact of the rising cost of living.

- How organisations prefer to apply for funding over a 12-month period.

- How organisations find the application process, including the support and guidance available to help groups navigate and complete an application.

Survey findings will be used to understand the type of support that is most helpful to community groups, and to refine Forever Manchester's funding programmes and processes accordingly.

The survey was circulated to community groups on the Forever Manchester mailing list and advertised on the Forever Manchester website. 175 organisations responded to the survey.

This report explores the survey findings. Full data tables are in the appendix.

# SECTION 2: ABOUT THE RESPONDENTS

This section summarises the characteristics of organisations who responded to the survey.

## Over half of respondents are constituted community groups or registered charities…

Around one-third (33.1%) of respondents are constituted community groups, one-fifth (20.0%) are registered charities, and 14.9% are community interest companies.

*Chart 2.1: What type of organisation are you? (n=175)*
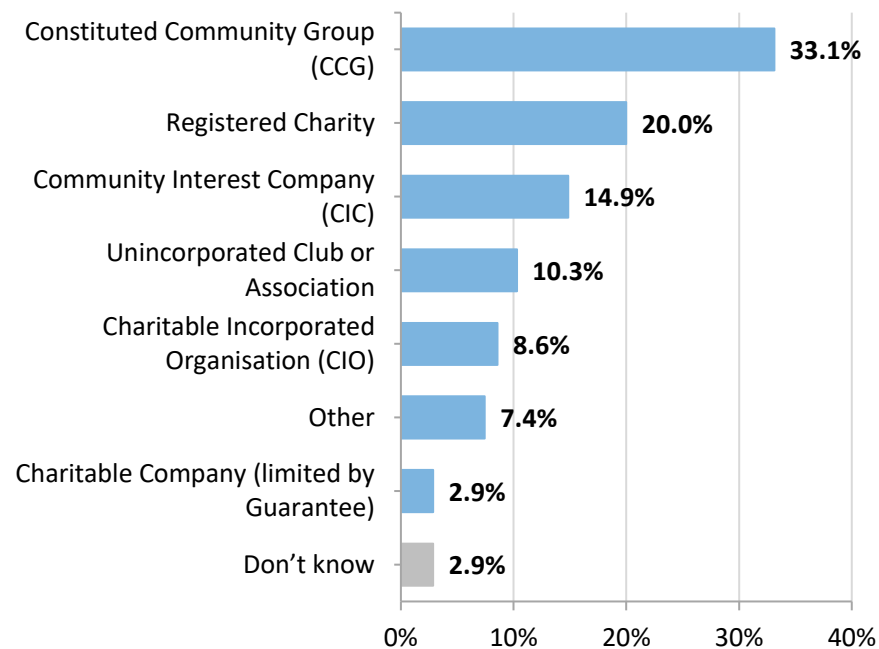


## Over one-third of organisations had an income of less than £5,000 in the last financial year…

Almost two-thirds (64.0%) of organisations who responded to the survey had an income of less than £25,000 in the last financial year, and over one-third (36.6%) had an income of less than £5,000. Organisations with an income greater than £100,000 accounted for 12.0% of respondents.

*Chart 2.2: What was your organisation's income in the last financial year? (n=175)*
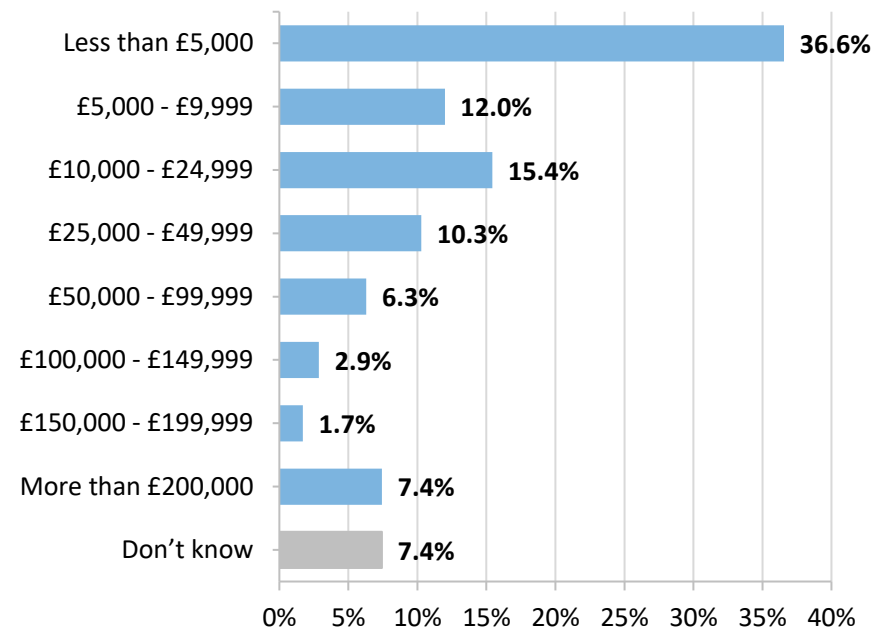
## Over three-quarters of respondents operate in Manchester, Tameside and Wigan…

Of the organisations who responded to the survey, almost one in five (17.7%) operate in more than one local authority or across Greater Manchester.

The most common local authorities that organisations operate in are Manchester (33.7%), Tameside (22.9%) and Wigan (20.6%).

The least represented local authorities by respondents include Bolton (10.9%), Rochdale (13.1%) and Oldham (14.9%).

## Most respondents have received funding from Forever Manchester before…

Most organisations (70.9%) who responded to the survey have been awarded funding from Forever Manchester in the past. More than one-tenth (13.7%) have applied for funding but have been unsuccessful, or have not applied for funding from Forever Manchester before (10.9%).

*Chart 2.3: Has your organisation applied for funding from Forever Manchester before? If so, were you awarded funding? (n=175)*
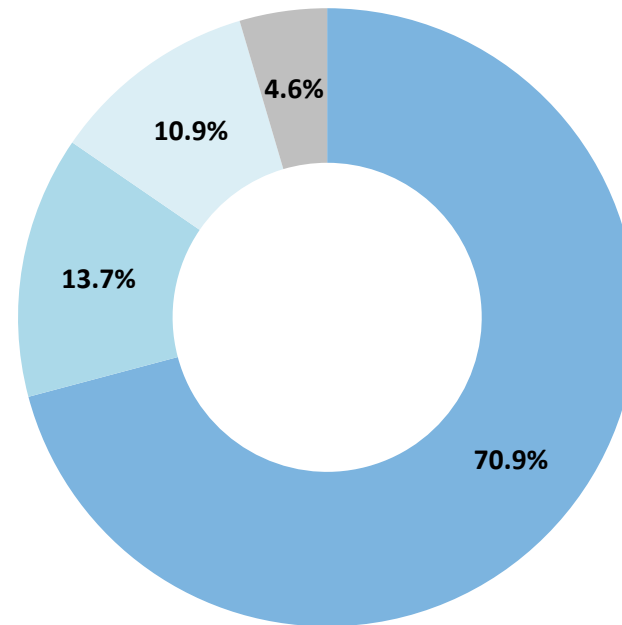


- Yes, we have received funding from Forever Manchester
- Yes, we have applied for funding from Forever Manchester, but we were not successful
- No, we haven't applied for funding from Forever Manchester
- Don't know

# SECTION 3: FUNDING NEEDS

This section explores the funding needs of organisations now, and over the next two to five years, and the impact of the rising cost of living.

## Organisations are currently most in need of funding for project specific costs…

Most organisations (70.5%) say they currently need funding for project specific costs, e.g., equipment, venue hire, and supplies. This is followed by core costs (41.6%) including rent and utilities, and staff costs (28.9%).

## …and anticipate similar needs over the next two to five years…

Similarly, over the next two to five years, organisations anticipate needing funding most for project specific costs (65.5%), core costs (44.2%), and staff costs (30.9%).

## Most organisations have been impacted by the rising cost of living…

**94.6%** say their organisation has been impacted by the rising cost of living.
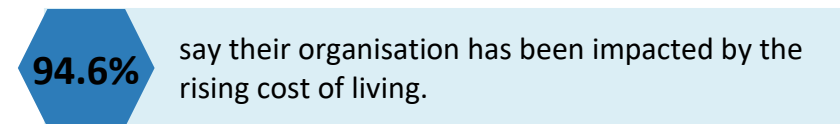
The most common ways organisations have been impacted include:

∞ Increased costs for project supplies and equipment (59.0%)

∞ Increased core costs (e.g. rent, utilities) (51.2%)

∞ Increased demand from services from the community (50.6%)

A small number of organisations (5.4%) report no impacts of the rising cost of living.

*Chart 3.1: Has your organisation been impacted by the rising cost of living in any of the following ways (n=166)*
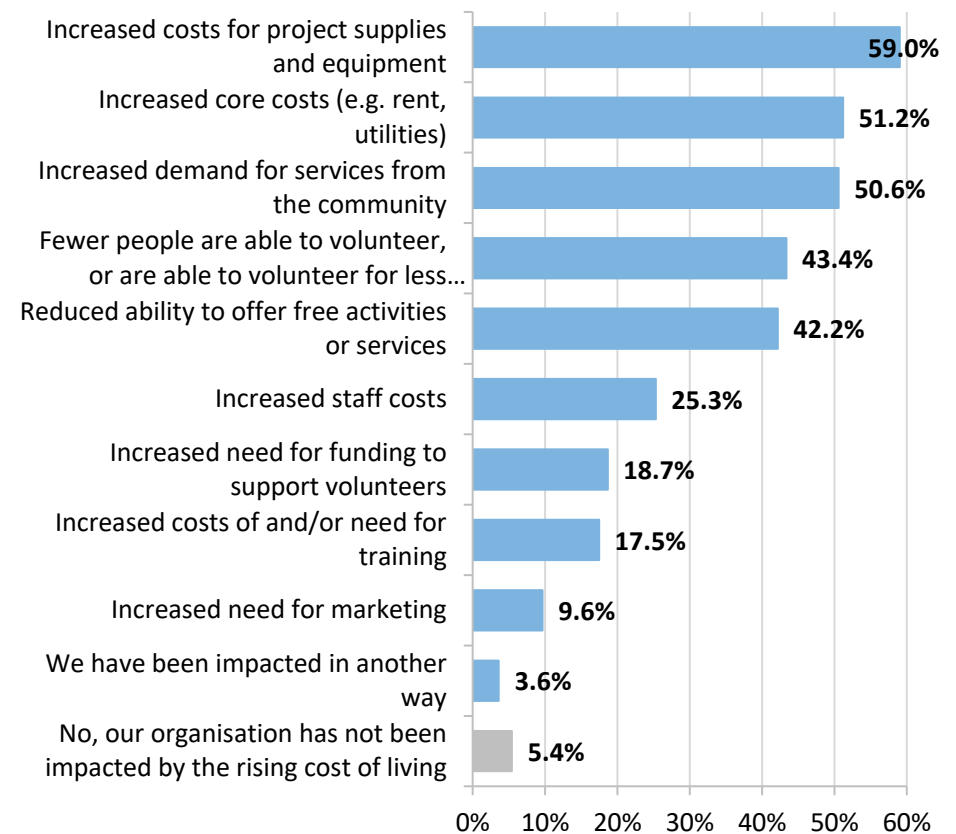
# SECTION 4: APPLYING FOR FUNDING

This section explores how organisations prefer to apply for funding, including preferred grant sizes and frequency of funding.

## Over one-third of organisations would like a grant of £3,000…

**37.1%** say a grant of £3,000 would best suit their needs.

Currently, most Forever Manchester grants are for £1,000. Around one-fifth (20.5%) of organisations feel this grant size best suits their needs. However, over one-third (37.1%) of respondents say a grant of £3,000 would best suit their needs.

A small proportion of organisations (7.3%) feel a smaller grant of £500 would best suit their needs.

Organisations with an annual income of less than £10,000 were more likely to select a grant size of £1,500, followed by £500, £1,000, and £2,000. Those with an annual income between £10,000 and £24,999 were more likely to select a grant of £2,500, followed by £1,000 and £3,000, while organisations with a higher annual income of £25,000 or more were more likely to select a grant of £3,000.

Respondents were asked an open-ended question to explain why they responded this way. Those who would opt for a grant size of £500 or £1,000 say this amount is most suitable because (n=35):

∞ Funding would contribute to project specific costs including activities, supplies, staff (37.1%)

∞ It meets the needs of the organisation (25.7%)

∞ Funding would contribute to community/one off events (14.3%)

For those who said a larger grant of £1,500 - £3,000 would best suit their needs, common reasons include (n=93):

∞ To contribute to project specific costs including activities, supplies, staff (25.8%)

∞ To cover rising costs (20.4%)

∞ To reduce the number of, or time spent on funding applications (15.1%)

*Chart 4.1: Currently, most of our grants are for £1,000. We would like to know if this is sufficient, or if a different amount would better support your group's needs. Please select the amount closest to what would best support you. (n=151)*
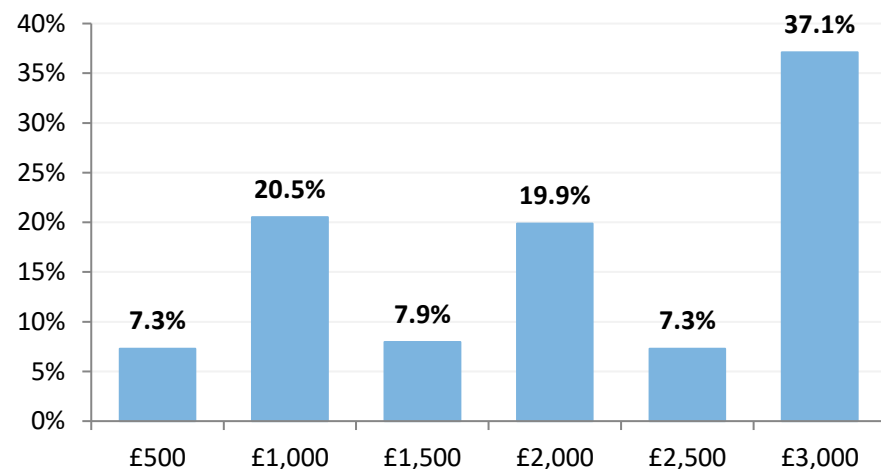
## Over half of respondents would prefer one, larger grant per year…

Respondents were asked how they would prefer grants to be distributed over a 12-month period.

vs.

**60.0%**
**One larger grant per year**

**29.3%**
**2-3 smaller grants per year**
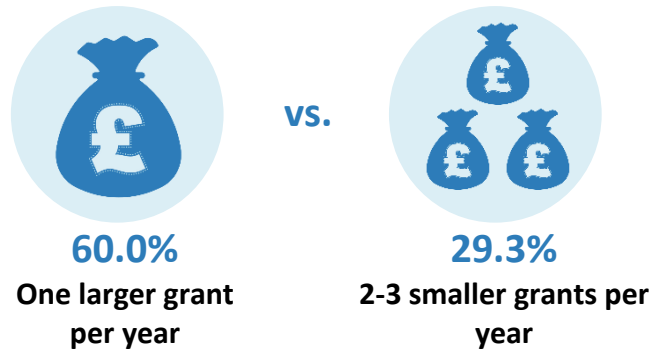
Three in five (60.0%) respondents would prefer one, larger grant of £2,500 - £5,000 per year, compared to less than one-third (29.3%) who would prefer two to three smaller grants of £1,000 - £1,500 per year. Around ten percent (10.7%) of respondents would prefer grants to be distributed in another way.

Organisations with an annual income of less than £10,000 were more likely to select two to three smaller grants per year, while those with an annual income of £10,000 or more were more likely to select one, larger grant per year.

Respondents were asked an open-ended question to explain why they responded this way. For those in favour of one, larger grant per year, common reasons include (n=73):

∞ Reducing the time spent completing applications, administering or monitoring grants (31.5%)

∞ To support project or operating costs (23.3%)

∞ To help with planning and budgeting (20.5%)

"Making grant applications is time consuming and it is better to get things right once."

For those who would prefer two to three smaller grants per year, common reasons include (n=25):

∞ It's better, or easier to manage when received in stages (28.0%)

∞ It allows organisations to better respond to changing need, or unexpected costs or opportunities (24.0%)

∞ It gives organisations more opportunities to be successful (16.0%)

"It's easier to manage and budget when you have money coming in at regular intervals."

## Most organisations want spending flexibility to respond to changing needs…

**83.2%** of organisations would prefer flexible funding.

Over four-fifths (83.2%) of organisations would prefer flexible funding which can be used for whatever the organisation needs, whilst 16.8% would prefer funding which is restricted to specific costs as per the grant applied for.

Respondents were asked an open-ended question to explain why they responded this way. For those who would prefer flexible funding, common reasons include (n=84):

∞ Greater ability to respond to changing need/to re-allocate funds (63.1%)

∞ To fund ongoing core/staff/operational costs, or ad-hoc costs (15.5%)

For those who would prefer restricted funding, common reasons include (n=21):

∞ To keep funding ringfenced for specific costs as applied for/agreed on (42.9%)

∞ To deliver a specific project (23.8%)

# SECTION 5: THE FUNDING APPLICATION PROCESS

This section explores how organisations find the funding application process, including the support and guidance available to help groups navigate and complete an application.

## Most respondents think it's clear which funds are most suitable for their organisation to apply for...

**92.5%** say it's clear which funds are most suitable for their organisation to apply for.
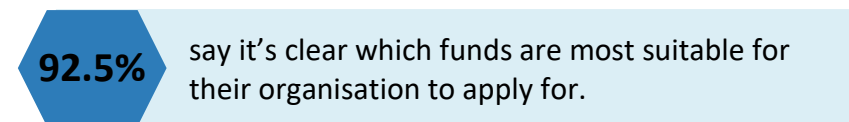
Few respondents (4.8%) say they find it fairly confusing to know which funds to apply for.

*Chart 5.1: We administer several different funds, each with different criteria. How clear is it which funds are most suitable for your organisation to apply for? (n=147)*



| 48% | 44% | 5% | 3% |

■ Very clear  ■ Fairly clear  ■ Fairly confusing  ■ Don't know
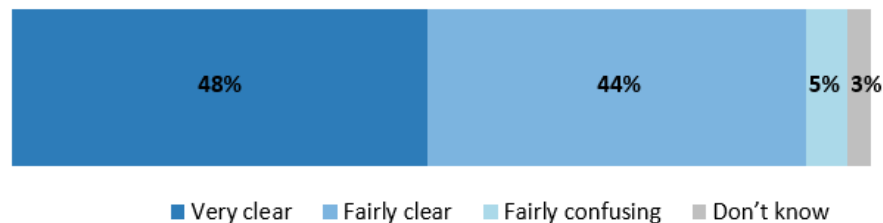
## Respondents think management committee details and case studies are least appropriate to provide...

Organisations were asked what information they think is appropriate to provide for a small grant application. Less than 50% of respondents think it is appropriate to provide:

∞ A description of the organisations mission and vision for the future (49.0%)

∞ Online information, including details of the organisation's website and social media presence (46.3%)

∞ A case study about the organisation's impact (35.4%)

∞ Management committee details (34.7%)

## ...and case studies can be challenging to provide for some...

Respondents were also asked which pieces of information are challenging to provide for a grant application. Around half of respondents answered this question (49.7%), and of those who did, more than one-fifth find it challenging to provide:

∞ A case study about the organisation's impact (32.2%)

∞ Governing documentation, e.g., objectives, membership rules, governance, annual meetings and decision making, dissolution clause, etc. (28.7%)

∞ Online information, including details of the organisation's website and social media presence (23.0%)

∞ Annual accounts (20.7%)

## Around two-thirds of respondents want to spend less than one hour on a small grant application…

Around two-thirds (65.8%[1]) of respondents think that it is reasonable to spend less than one hour to complete a small grant application. Just under one-third (31.5%) would spend between two and four hours, whilst only 2.7% think it's reasonable to spend between five and eight hours.

*Chart 5.2: What do you think is a reasonable amount of time to spend completing a small grant application (including submitting supporting documentation)? (n=146)*



## Most respondents would prefer to complete an application form online…

Most respondents (71.9%) would prefer to submit an online application for funding or complete a downloadable application form which can be returned by email (20.5%). A small proportion of respondents would prefer to submit application responses written in an email (2.7%), through a downloadable application form returned by post (1.4%), or through a video submission (1.4%).

## Many respondents would like to see an example of a successful application…

When asked what sort of information would be useful for organisations when completing a funding application, respondents prefer written guidance in a variety of formats:

- ∞ Almost three-quarters (70.5%) would like to see a written example of a successful application

- ∞ Over half (51.4%) would like written guidance in downloadable PDF/Word/PowerPoint format

- ∞ Around two-fifths (41.1%) would like written guidance on the Forever Manchester website



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[1] Figure does not correspond exactly to the data shown in chart 5.2 due to rounding.

## Organisations would like a variety of ways to get in touch with Forever Manchester before applying…

More than four-fifths (84.2%) of respondents would be encouraged to get in touch with Forever Manchester before submitting a funding application if there are a variety of ways to do so (e.g., via phone, email, online meetings, regular drop-in sessions).

Around two-fifths (41.1%) say assurance of a timely response would encourage them to get in touch, while around one-third (32.2%) would be encouraged if there was clear information on the benefits of doing so before completing an application.

## Respondents would prefer to discuss their application with the Forever Manchester team via email…

Respondents were asked how they would like to discuss their application with the Forever Manchester team before submitting. The most preferred ways to get in touch are through:

- Email (73.3%)
- A phone call (56.8%)
- An online chat (27.4%)

*Chart 5.3: How would you like to discuss your application with our team before submitting? Please select all that apply. (n=146)*

| Method | Percentage |
|---|---|
| Email | 73.3% |
| Phone call | 56.8% |
| Online chat | 27.4% |
| Virtual meeting (e.g. Zoom, Microsoft Teams) | 19.2% |
| In-person drop-in application advice sessions | 15.1% |
| Online contact form | 11.0% |
| Online drop-in application advice sessions | 6.8% |
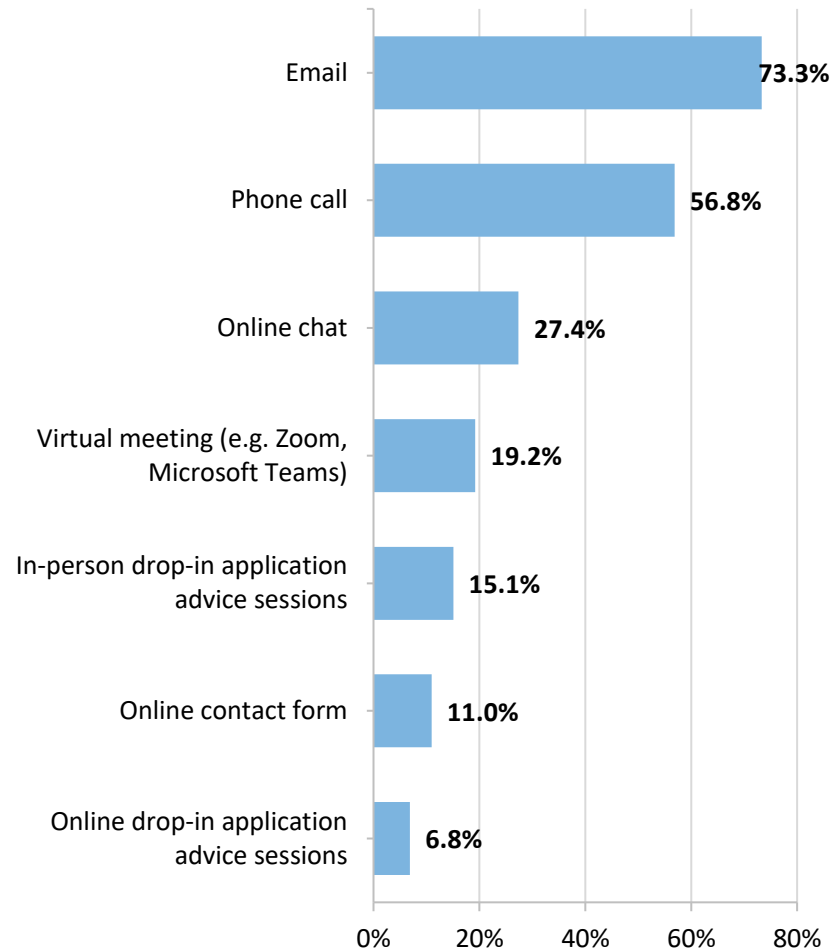
## Almost half of respondents have no suggestions on how Forever Manchester can further help organisations to access funding...

Respondents were asked an open-ended question about how Forever Manchester can help organisations to access their funding programmes. Of 39 organisations who responded to this question, just under half (48.7%) have no suggestions, and many of these respondents have provided positive feedback on the existing support on offer.

"No, I have always found Forever Manchester clear and precise, and staff to be very helpful."

"I think most funding processes are pretty straight forward at the moment which is really helpful."

"The help and information I have had when applying has been efficient and informative.  If it ain't broke - don't fix it."

"I'm still newish to the volunteer sector and always learning. But from what I have seen, read, and applied for through your portal is absolutely great. Your staff have been extremely helpful over the phone and encouraging. You're amazing and thank you."

A small number of organisations suggest:

- Ensuring the support on offer and the application process is clear and simple, and accessible to people of all abilities (6 respondents)
- Forever Manchester should get in touch with groups or send out alerts when funds open (5 respondents)
- Forever Manchester should review the income threshold for applicants (3 respondents)

"I feel applications need to be made simpler and accessible for all academic abilities to complete. Many smaller organisations do great work in their local communities but often lack the infrastructure of larger organisations – consequently, this places stress and demand on what are already overrun organisations."

"There are a lot of different things listed on the website, and these seem to open and close throughout the year. It's really hard to work out what schemes you can apply for, when they open and close, and if you miss an opportunity - when it will next open."

"The restrictions on the total income a charity has means that we are often excluded from applying because we have lots of small grassroots projects under the charity's accounts."

# APPENDIX: DATA TABLES

*Q1. What type of organisation are you? (n=175)*

| Response | Percentage | Count |
|---|---|---|
| Constituted Community Group (CCG) | 33.1% | 58 |
| Registered Charity | 20.0% | 35 |
| Community Interest Company (CIC) | 14.9% | 26 |
| Unincorporated Club or Association | 10.3% | 18 |
| Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) | 8.6% | 15 |
| Other | 7.4% | 13 |
| Charitable Company (limited by Guarantee) | 2.9% | 5 |
| Don't know | 2.9% | 5 |

*Q2. Which area(s) does your organisation operate in? (n=175)*

| Response | Percentage | Count |
|---|---|---|
| Manchester | 33.7% | 59 |
| Tameside | 22.9% | 40 |
| Wigan | 20.6% | 36 |
| Salford | 19.4% | 34 |
| Stockport | 18.9% | 33 |
| Trafford | 17.1% | 30 |
| Bury | 16.0% | 28 |
| Oldham | 14.9% | 26 |
| Rochdale | 13.1% | 23 |
| Bolton | 10.9% | 19 |
| Operate in more than one local authority or Greater Manchester wide | 17.7% | 31 |

*Q3. What was your organisation's income in the last financial year? (n=175)*

| Response | Percentage | Count |
|---|---|---|
| Less than £5,000 | 36.6% | 64 |
| £5,000 - £9,999 | 12.0% | 21 |
| £10,000 - £24,999 | 15.4% | 27 |
| £25,000 - £49,999 | 10.3% | 18 |
| £50,000 - £99,999 | 6.3% | 11 |
| £100,000 - £149,999 | 2.9% | 5 |
| £150,000 - £199,999 | 1.7% | 3 |
| More than £200,000 | 7.4% | 13 |
| Don't know | 7.4% | 13 |

*Q4. Has your organisation applied for funding from Forever Manchester before? If so, were you awarded funding? (n=175)*

| Response | Percentage | Count |
|---|---|---|
| Yes, we have received funding from Forever Manchester | 70.9% | 124 |
| Yes, we have applied for funding from Forever Manchester, but we were not successful | 13.7% | 24 |
| No, we haven't applied for funding from Forever Manchester | 10.9% | 19 |
| Don't know | 4.6% | 8 |

*Q5. Thinking about the current needs of your organisation, what are the main costs you need funding for? (n=166)*

| Response | Percentage | Count |
|---|---|---|
| Project specific costs (e.g. equipment, venue hire, supplies) | 70.5% | 117 |
| Core costs (e.g. rent, utilities) | 41.6% | 69 |
| Staff costs | 28.9% | 48 |
| Unrestricted funding | 25.9% | 43 |
| Volunteer costs | 22.3% | 37 |
| Training | 19.9% | 33 |
| Technology (e.g. broadband, computers/laptops, printers, mobile devices) | 16.3% | 27 |
| Marketing | 15.7% | 26 |
| Other* | 12.0% | 20 |

*Other responses include:*

| Response | Percentage | Count |
|---|---|---|
| Facility upgrades/building maintenance | 6.0% | 10 |
| To reduce participation costs for members | 1.2% | 2 |
| One-off event costs | 1.2% | 2 |
| Transport costs | 1.2% | 2 |
| Affiliation costs | 0.6% | 1 |
| Day trip costs | 0.6% | 1 |
| Community engagement | 0.6% | 1 |
| To reduce reliance on donations | 0.6% | 1 |
| Non-project specific supply costs | 0.6% | 1 |
| Operational costs | 0.6% | 1 |
| Technology costs | 0.6% | 1 |

*Q6. Thinking about the needs of your organisation in the next 2-5 years, what are the main costs you anticipate needing funding for? (n=165)*

| Response | Percentage | Count |
|---|---|---|
| Project specific costs (e.g. equipment, venue hire, supplies) | 65.5% | 108 |
| Core costs (e.g. rent, utilities) | 44.2% | 73 |
| Staff costs | 30.9% | 51 |
| Unrestricted funding | 29.7% | 49 |
| Training | 26.1% | 43 |
| Volunteer costs | 20.0% | 33 |
| Technology (e.g. broadband, computers/laptops, printers, mobile devices) | 17.6% | 29 |
| Marketing | 13.9% | 23 |
| Other* | 10.9% | 18 |

*Other responses include:*

| Response | Percentage | Count |
|---|---|---|
| Facility upgrades/building maintenance | 4.2% | 7 |
| Operational costs | 1.2% | 2 |
| Day trip costs | 1.2% | 2 |
| One-off event costs | 1.2% | 2 |
| Non-project specific supply costs | 1.2% | 2 |
| Affiliation fees | 0.6% | 1 |
| To reduce participation costs for members | 0.6% | 1 |
| Travel costs | 0.6% | 1 |
| Transport costs | 0.6% | 1 |
| To expand service offer | 0.6% | 1 |
| Don't know | 0.6% | 1 |

*Q7. Has your organisation been impacted by the rising cost of living in any of the following ways: (n=166)*

| Response | Percentage | Count |
|---|---|---|
| Increased costs for project supplies and equipment | 59.0% | 98 |
| Increased core costs (e.g. rent, utilities) | 51.2% | 85 |
| Increased demand for services from the community | 50.6% | 84 |
| Fewer people are able to volunteer, or are able to volunteer for less time, due to other pressures on them | 43.4% | 72 |
| Reduced ability to offer free activities or services | 42.2% | 70 |
| Increased staff costs | 25.3% | 42 |
| Increased need for funding to support volunteers | 18.7% | 31 |
| Increased costs of and/or need for training | 17.5% | 29 |
| Increased need for marketing | 9.6% | 16 |
| No, our organisation has not been impacted by the rising cost of living | 5.4% | 9 |
| We have been impacted in another way* | 3.6% | 6 |

*Other responses include:*

| Response | Percentage | Count |
|---|---|---|
| Lower attendance due to membership cost | 1.8% | 3 |
| Fewer donations | 0.6% | 1 |
| Deterioration in facilities during covid | 0.6% | 1 |
| Greater competition for funding | 0.6% | 1 |

*Q8. Currently, most of our grants are for £1,000. We would like to know if this is sufficient, or if a different amount would better support your group's needs. Please select the amount closest to what would best support you. (n=151)*

| Response | Percentage | Count |
|---|---|---|
| £500 | 7.3% | 11 |
| £1,000 | 20.5% | 31 |
| £1,500 | 7.9% | 12 |
| £2,000 | 19.9% | 30 |
| £2,500 | 7.3% | 11 |
| £3,000 | 37.1% | 56 |

*Why is this amount appropriate for your needs?*

*For those who selected £500 or £1,000 (n=35)*

| Response | Percentage | Count |
|---|---|---|
| To contribute to project specific costs including activities, supplies, staff | 37.1% | 13 |
| It meets the needs of the organisation | 25.7% | 9 |
| To contribute to community/one off events | 14.3% | 5 |
| Organisation has low level of spending | 8.6% | 3 |
| To maximise impact/reach | 8.6% | 3 |
| To contribute to operating costs | 5.7% | 2 |
| To contribute to core costs | 5.7% | 2 |
| To contribute to transport costs | 5.7% | 2 |
| So more organisations can benefit from funding | 2.9% | 1 |
| To help the organisation plan ahead | 2.9% | 1 |
| To control spend | 2.9% | 1 |
| To contribute to volunteer costs | 2.9% | 1 |
| To contribute to increased training costs | 2.9% | 1 |

*For those who selected £1,500 - £3,000 (n=93)*

| Response | Percentage | Count |
|---|---|---|
| To contribute to project specific costs including activities, supplies, staff | 25.8% | 24 |
| To cover rising costs | 20.4% | 19 |
| To reduce the number of, or time spent on funding applications | 15.1% | 14 |
| To contribute to equipment costs | 12.9% | 12 |
| To run larger/longer term projects | 11.8% | 11 |
| Due to increased need or demand for services | 9.7% | 9 |
| To increase the service offer | 8.6% | 8 |
| To contribute to facility improvements/maintenance | 7.5% | 7 |
| To achieve greater impact | 6.5% | 6 |
| To support more people | 4.3% | 4 |
| To contribute to core costs | 4.3% | 4 |
| To alleviate pressure/provide financial cushion | 3.2% | 3 |
| To contribute to operating costs | 3.2% | 3 |
| To contribute to advertising/marketing costs | 3.2% | 3 |
| To offer free or subsidised activities | 3.2% | 3 |
| Due to increased difficulty accessing funding | 2.2% | 2 |
| To fund a day out for members | 2.2% | 2 |
| To contribute to volunteer costs | 2.2% | 2 |
| Greater amounts allow for match funding | 2.2% | 2 |
| To contribute to training costs | 2.2% | 2 |
| To increase sustainability | 2.2% | 2 |
| To plan ahead | 1.1% | 1 |
| To contribute to accountancy costs | 1.1% | 1 |
| Other | 2.2% | 2 |

**Q9. Thinking about the application process and your funding needs, which of these options would you prefer? (n=150)**

| Response | Percentage | Count |
|---|---|---|
| One grant (approximately £2,500 - £5,000) in a 12 month period | 60.0% | 90 |
| Two to three grants (approximately £1,000 - £1,500) in a 12 month period | 29.3% | 44 |
| Another option* | 10.7% | 16 |

*Other suggestions include:*

| Response | Percentage | Count |
|---|---|---|
| One grant of £1,000 per year | 2.0% | 3 |
| One grant of £2,000 per year | 1.3% | 2 |
| One small grant per year (amount not specified) | 0.7% | 1 |
| One grant per year (amount not specified) | 0.7% | 1 |
| One grant of £500 - £1000 per year | 0.7% | 1 |
| One grant of £5,000 per year | 0.7% | 1 |
| Two grants of £500 - £1,000 per year | 0.7% | 1 |
| Two grants of £3,000 per year | 0.7% | 1 |
| More than one grant per year (amount not specified) | 0.7% | 1 |
| More than one large grant per year (amount not specified) | 0.7% | 1 |
| Three to four grants of £5,000 per year | 0.7% | 1 |
| Any grant distributed in any way | 0.7% | 1 |
| A mixed approach for different project sizes | 0.7% | 1 |

*Please would you let us know why you say this?*

*One grant (approximately £2,500 - £5,000) in a 12 month period  (n=73)*

| Reason | Percentage | Count |
|---|---|---|
| To reduce the time spent applying for, administering, or monitoring grants | 31.5% | 23 |
| To support with project/operating costs | 23.3% | 17 |
| To help planning/budgeting | 20.5% | 15 |
| To extend length/increase size of projects | 8.2% | 6 |
| To expand service offer | 5.5% | 4 |
| To support more people | 4.1% | 3 |
| To increase impact | 4.1% | 3 |
| For easier management of applications | 2.7% | 2 |
| To cover rising costs/higher cost items | 2.7% | 2 |
| To align with annual financial evaluation | 1.4% | 1 |
| To reduce the uncertainty of success | 1.4% | 1 |
| To pay costs upfront | 1.4% | 1 |
| To enable free activity to service users | 1.4% | 1 |
| To fund facility improvements | 1.4% | 1 |
| To reduce the need for other/complementary funding | 1.4% | 1 |
| To be less reliant on member contributions | 1.4% | 1 |
| Other | 6.8% | 5 |

*Two to three grants (approximately £1,000 - £1,500) in a 12 month period (n=25)*

| Reason | Percentage | Count |
|---|---|---|
| Funding is easier to manage when received in stages | 28.0% | 7 |
| To better respond to need/unexpected costs or opportunities | 24.0% | 6 |
| It provides more chances to be successful | 16.0% | 4 |
| To fund smaller projects/stages of bigger projects | 8.0% | 2 |
| It depends on what can be applied for | 4.0% | 1 |
| It keeps recipients accountable | 4.0% | 1 |
| To cover a wider range of services/target groups/support reasons | 4.0% | 1 |
| It's fairer for everyone | 4.0% | 1 |
| It reduces the wait time if unsuccessful | 4.0% | 1 |
| Other | 8.0% | 2 |

*Another option (n=16)*

| Response | Count | Reason |
|---|---|---|
| One grant of £1,000 per year | 3 | ∞ It meets the organisations needs<br>∞ Most costs are covered by internal fundraising<br>∞ To support operational costs/reduce cost to members |
| One grant of £2,000 per year | 2 | ∞ To support project activity<br>∞ To pay for higher cost goods |
| One small grant per year (amount not specified) | 1 | To support project activity |
| One grant per year (amount not specified) | 1 | ∞ To support operational costs<br>∞ Reduce cost to members |
| One grant of £500-£1000 per year | 1 | To buy/repair equipment |
| One grant of £5,000 per year | 1 | To reduce time completing applications |
| Two grants of £500-£1,000 per year | 1 | To reduce reliance on grants |
| Two grants of £3,000 per year | 1 | To extend length of projects |
| More than one grant per year (amount not specified) | 1 | ∞ To respond to need<br>∞ Reduce wait time if unsuccessful |
| More than one large grant per year (amount not specified) | 1 | To reduce wait time if unsuccessful |
| Three to four grants of £5,000 per year | 1 | To cover rising costs |
| Any grant distributed in any way | 1 | To support more people |
| A mixed approach for different project sizes | 1 | Adds flexibility to what can be applied for |

*Q10. And which of these options would you prefer? (n=149)*

| Response | Percentage | Count |
|---|---|---|
| Flexible funding that can be used for whatever your organisations needs | 83.2% | 124 |
| Restricted funding for specific costs as applied for | 16.8% | 25 |

*Please would you let us know why you say this?*

*Flexible funding that can be used for whatever your organisations needs (n=84)*

| Response | Percentage | Count |
|---|---|---|
| To respond to changing need/re-allocate funds | 63.1% | 53 |
| For ongoing core/staff/operational costs, or ad-hoc costs | 15.5% | 13 |
| For costs which are commonly restricted | 7.1% | 6 |
| To distribute to more than 1 project/to fund a range of service offers | 7.1% | 6 |
| To be more flexible in service delivery | 6.0% | 5 |
| Flexible funding is what is needed most but hardest to get | 4.8% | 4 |
| Organisations should be trusted to spend funds to best suit their organisation | 3.6% | 3 |
| Flexibility allows more creativity in projects/service offer | 2.4% | 2 |
| So new projects don't always have to be created | 2.4% | 2 |
| It provides more opportunity for some groups to be funded | 1.2% | 1 |

*Restricted funding for specific costs as applied for (n=21)*

| Response | Percentage | Count |
|---|---|---|
| To keep funding ringfenced for specific costs as applied for/agreed on | 42.9% | 9 |
| To deliver a specific project | 23.8% | 5 |
| It's easier to justify/administer/monitor | 19.0% | 4 |
| To focus attention on targets/outcomes to achieve | 19.0% | 4 |
| For transparency/accountability | 9.5% | 2 |

*Q11. We administer several different funds, each with different criteria. How clear is it which funds are most suitable for your organisation to apply for? (n=147)*

| Response | Percentage | Count |
|---|---|---|
| Very clear | 48.3% | 71 |
| Fairly clear | 44.2% | 65 |
| Fairly confusing | 4.8% | 7 |
| Very confusing | 0.0% | 0 |
| Don't know | 2.7% | 4 |

*Q12. What type of information do you think is appropriate to provide for a small grant application? (n=147)*

| Response | Percentage | Count |
|---|---|---|
| A description of your organisation | 85.0% | 125 |
| Details of what you will spend the funding on | 78.9% | 116 |
| A description of your organisation's role in the community | 74.2% | 109 |
| A description of who the funding will benefit, e.g., gender, age, ethnicity, etc. | 72.8% | 107 |
| A bank statement | 70.7% | 104 |
| Safeguarding policies | 59.9% | 88 |
| Governing documentation, e.g., objectives, membership rules, governance, annual meetings and decision making, dissolution clause, etc. | 54.4% | 80 |
| Annual accounts | 50.3% | 74 |
| A description of your mission and vision for the future | 49.0% | 72 |
| Online information, including details of your website and social media presence | 46.3% | 68 |
| A case study about your organisation's impact | 35.4% | 52 |
| Management committee details | 34.7% | 51 |

*Q13. Is there any information which is challenging to provide? (n=87)*

| Response | Percentage | Count |
|---|---|---|
| A case study about your organisation's impact | 32.2% | 28 |
| Governing documentation, e.g., objectives, membership rules, governance, annual meetings and decision making, dissolution clause, etc. | 28.7% | 25 |
| Online information, including details of your website and social media presence | 23.0% | 20 |
| Annual accounts | 20.7% | 18 |
| Management committee details | 17.2% | 15 |
| A description of who the funding will benefit, e.g., gender, age, ethnicity, etc. | 14.9% | 13 |
| A description of your mission and vision for the future | 12.6% | 11 |
| Safeguarding policies | 11.5% | 10 |
| A description of your organisation's role in the community | 9.2% | 8 |
| Details of what you will spend the funding on | 5.7% | 5 |
| A bank statement | 5.7% | 5 |
| A description of your organisation | 4.6% | 4 |

*Q14. What do you think is a reasonable amount of time to spend completing a small grant application (including submitting supporting documentation)? (n=146)*

| Response | Percentage | Count |
|---|---|---|
| Less than 30 minutes | 13.0% | 19 |
| 30 minutes to 1 hour | 52.7% | 77 |
| 2-4 hours | 31.5% | 46 |
| 5-8 hours | 2.7% | 4 |
| More than 8 hours | 0.0% | 0 |

*Q15. What is your preferred method for submitting a funding application? (n=146)*

| Response | Percentage | Count |
|---|---|---|
| Online application form | 71.9% | 105 |
| Downloadable application form, returned by email | 20.5% | 30 |
| Submitting application responses written in an email | 2.7% | 4 |
| Downloadable application form, returned by post | 1.4% | 2 |
| Video submission | 1.4% | 2 |
| In another way | 2.1% | 3 |

* Other suggestions include in person visits to the organisation, and a funding forum for applicants with support on hand.

*Q16. Thinking about funding criteria, what sort of support and information would be useful to help you understand what is needed during the funding application process? (n=146)*

| Response | Percentage | Count |
|---|---|---|
| A written example of a successful application | 70.5% | 103 |
| Written guidance in downloadable PDF/Word/PowerPoint format | 51.4% | 75 |
| Written guidance on our website | 41.1% | 60 |
| Information sessions – online via MS Teams or Zoom etc. | 18.5% | 27 |
| Video explainers | 17.8% | 26 |
| Information sessions – in person | 11.6% | 17 |
| Visual infographics or flowcharts | 11.0% | 16 |
| Something else | 4.1% | 6 |

* All six respondents who selected 'something else', say they would like someone to be available to talk to.

*Q17. We encourage all groups to contact us so we can support you with your application before it is submitted. What would encourage you to do that? (n=146)*

| Response | Percentage | Count |
|---|---|---|
| A variety of ways to get in touch (e.g. phone, email, online meetings, regular drop-in sessions) | 84.2% | 123 |
| Assurance of a timely response | 41.1% | 60 |
| Clear information on the benefits of contacting us | 32.2% | 47 |
| Positive testimonials from other organisations | 12.3% | 18 |
| Something else | 2.1% | 3 |

* Three organisations who selected 'something else' suggest clear contact details, or a specific contact or guide.

*Q18. How would you like to discuss your application with our team before submitting? (n=146)*

| Response | Percentage | Count |
|---|---|---|
| Email | 73.3% | 107 |
| Phone call | 56.8% | 83 |
| Online chat | 27.4% | 40 |
| Virtual meeting (e.g. Zoom, Microsoft Teams) | 19.2% | 28 |
| In-person drop-in application advice sessions | 15.1% | 22 |
| Online contact form | 11.0% | 16 |
| Online drop-in application advice sessions | 6.8% | 10 |

*Q19. Have you got any other suggestions as to how we can help you access our funding programmes? (n=39)*

| Response | Percentage | Count |
|---|---|---|
| No suggestions/positive feedback on existing support | 48.7% | 19 |
| Ensure the support on offer and the application process is clear and simple, and for people of all abilities | 15.4% | 6 |
| Send alerts/get in touch with groups when funds open | 12.8% | 5 |
| Review the income threshold | 7.7% | 3 |
| Review application requirements on directors | 5.1% | 2 |
| Don't ask for personal details of applicants/trustees | 5.1% | 2 |
| Make spending requirements more flexible | 5.1% | 2 |
| Offer support via phone call | 2.6% | 1 |
| Offer support face-to-face | 2.6% | 1 |
| Offer support via email | 2.6% | 1 |
| Provide examples of application responses | 2.6% | 1 |
| Reduce the number of application questions | 2.6% | 1 |
| Make applications proportionate to grant size | 2.6% | 1 |
| Allow organisations to provide webpage links for certain documents/policies when required (e.g. safeguarding policy) | 2.6% | 1 |
| Cross check organisation information with the Charity Commission instead of asking for information in the application | 2.6% | 1 |
| Allow applications from unregistered charities | 2.6% | 1 |

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