



Small Grants Guidance Document: Create your own community fun

How do I run an event, meet-up or activity?

There are three simple steps to getting your event off the ground. It works much like running an event in your local student union, guild, or association. Be sensible and don't give out your personal address – run events and meetups in a public place. N.B. You can run your own events and advertise them in the community too, you don't have to go through the Unite Foundation form. You can also share events other people are running. The more, the merrier!

Step 1 – Planning: What is Your Idea?

Work out: 'What is your event going to be and will it be online or in-person?'

Step 2 – Resources

What resources do you need? Check what we at the Unite Foundation can help you with (see the guidance below), this includes free branded merch such as [flag badges](#)

Step 3 – Complete the Form

If you would like Unite Foundation support with your idea, complete the 'Create Your Own fun' [form](#)



Step 1 – Planning: What is Your Idea?

Things to think about:

- What do you want your event to be? (where/when/with who/etc)
- Will your event be virtual/online or in-person?
- Who is helping to organise it with you? (if applicable)
- Your aim: What is the purpose of the event, what do you want people to get out of it?

How do I come up with an idea?

Talk to other people in the online community platform and/or other care experienced and estranged students you know and come up with a plan together. There have already been many events in the community so far, so other people can give you tips and advice. You can run an event by yourself, although this may be more hard work!

We'd recommend you arrange a chat with Ira if you want someone to help with your initial ideas before you submit your 'Create Your Own fun' form. Email: Ira.Hakim@unitefoundation.org.uk or drop a message on the community.

Top Tip: If you have an idea for an event, your best first step is to put a post up on the This Is Us community platform or in your local group to share your idea and get other people interested!

For example, you might want to run a group trip to an escape room in London.

- ✓ Write a post in The London Community group to share your idea and ask who would be up for helping you run it.
- ✓ If you need resources to help run the event, look at Step 2 below, then submit a 'Create Your Own TIUC Event form'
- ✓ Once the event is all planned, you can create an Event in the This Is Us community to let everyone know it is going on

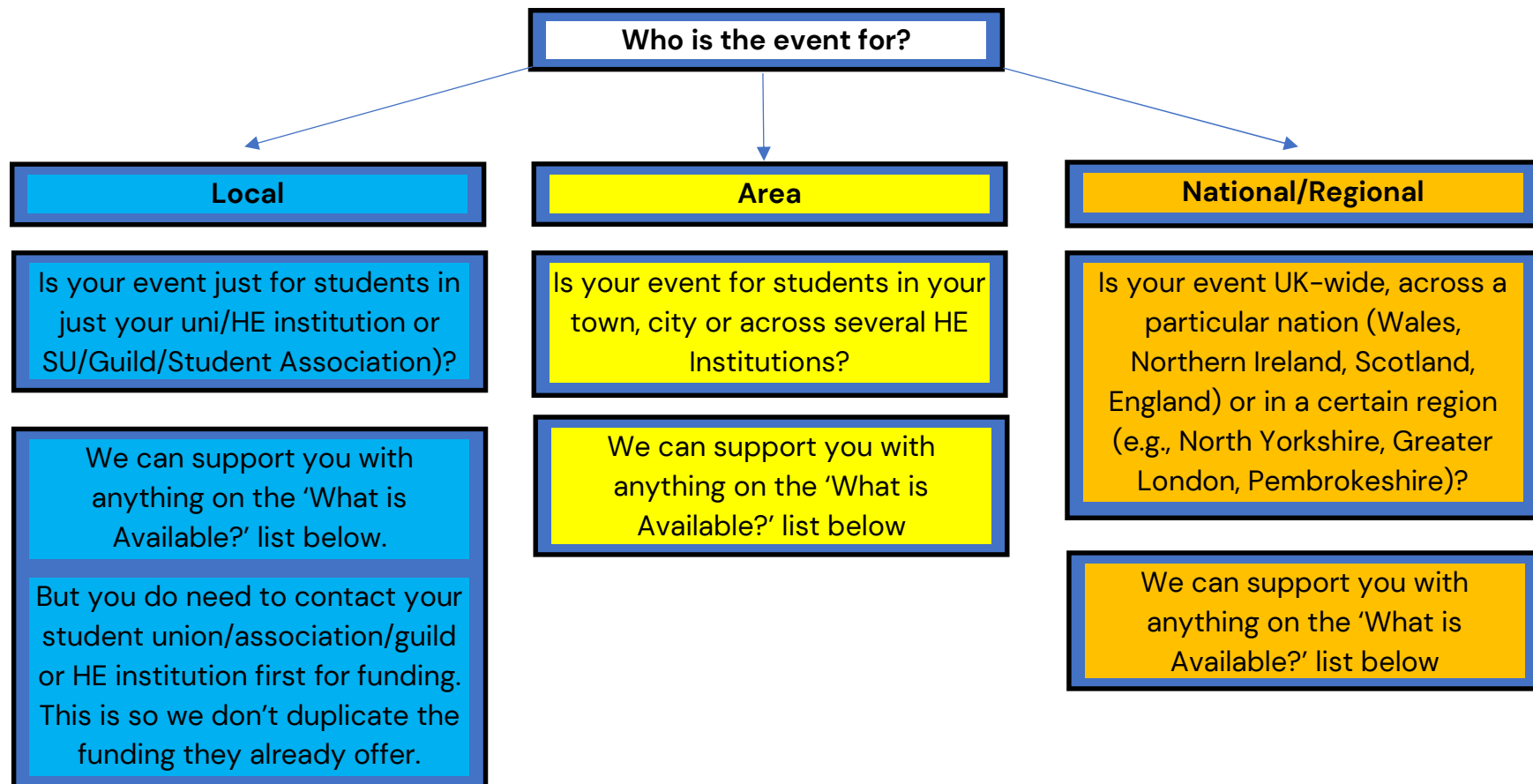
See the 'Annex: Examples' for more suggestions...



Step 2 – Grant & Resources Explained

The Unite Foundation can help resource your event with things like a small grant (funding), contacts, planning advice and advertising. We're not trying to duplicate what your student union/association/guild already offer though. So, if you are running events just for people at your Higher Education (HE) institution, go to them or you SU first.

Finances: Depending on the size and nature of your event, we'll either pay for all your resources upfront or you can purchase smaller things and then claim back costs with a receipt.





Unite Foundation Support – What is Available?

This is not an exhaustive list, if you have something you think we can support you with that is not on here, let Ira know in your 'Create Your Own fun' form and we'll see what we can do for you. Funding is done on a case-by-case basis. *We can't promise we can fund everything (and trips to Mars aren't quite in the budget yet) but it is always worth asking.*

Advice

- ✓ A listening ear – someone to bounce your ideas off and provide tips or suggestions
- ✓ Contacts – where we can, we'll link you up with anyone we know who can help
- ✓ Events organising tips and planning aid

Grant Funding – small scale (small costs you can purchase upfront and then claim back)

We can support you financially with a grant to run a smaller scale event with funding anywhere between £0 to £100. Smaller scale means that the costs involved in the event are things you can afford to buy upfront and then can claim back. (The limit is £100 but we don't expect you to spend £100). If your event costs will be over £100 and/or aren't able to purchase smaller scale resources under £100 upfront, see the larger scale funding info. You need to keep the receipts for these purchases and then email them to Ira so we can refund you. You do need to let us know in advance what you intend to purchase via the form, or we won't be able to refund you.

Small-scale cost examples include:

- ✓ Resources for the event e.g., craft materials, stationery, board games, sports equipment, books
- ✓ Printing costs, e.g., for posters and flyers to advertise your event
- ✓ Light refreshments (think tea/coffee/milk/ biscuits/cake)



Grant Funding – larger scale

If you are running an Area or National/Regional event where you think costs will be over £100 and/or aren't able to purchase small scale resources under £100 upfront, the Unite Foundation can purchase these for you in advance. Some examples:

- ✓ Having a speaker/workshop leader at the event (payment for their time and travel expenses)
- ✓ Room or location hires
- ✓ Tickets/entry fees for a group booking
- ✓ Minibus travel
- ✓ Other costs, done on a case-by-case basis

Resources

- ✓ Advertise your event/meet-up on the This Is Us community platform
- ✓ We can share information about upcoming events in the Unite Foundation newsletter
- ✓ Posts on the This Is Us social media to advertise upcoming events/meetups
- ✓ The Unite Foundation can help you get in touch with your HE institution/university, student union and other local/national partners to let them know the event is going on and get them to help advertise it.
- ✓ Free merch, such as [flag badges](#) for everyone going to the event

What we won't cover:

- Trips abroad
- Alcohol or drugs purchase
- Activities exclusive to an existing group of friends. (You can run an event and invite care experienced and estranged students who are friends, but the event must be open to those you're not friends with too.)



Step 3 – Complete the Form

Once you've read through the guidance here and have an idea for the event...

- Complete the short 'Create Your Own fun' form to apply for resources: <https://www.tfaforms.com/5002593>
- See the Annex: Examples on the final page to get an idea of how you might complete the form

You must complete this form at least 2 weeks before you intend to hold your event so the Unite Foundation has time to look at your form and help get together the resources you request. If you hold a meetup but haven't completed a form in advance, the Unite Foundation will be unable to help you resource (including fund) your event.

We have two rules as a community:

1. Events may be in-person or virtual, but they must open to both care experienced and estranged students.
2. If you run an event, you need to share that it is going on in the online community platform so people know how they can get involved.

Here are some real-life examples of events students have run:

- Lisa's blog [How to create your own event with the This is Us Community](#)
- Kez's blog [Running my First Ever Meetup: Behind the Scenes](#)



Annex: Examples

Remember you can run events online/virtual or in-person!

Local

- a) Coffee and Catch-Up: You want to organise a local regular meetup for care experienced and estranged students at your university in London. The plan is for approximately 8-12 people to gather for tea/coffee and biscuits/cake on Wednesdays from 4pm+ in a room in your Students' Union.

In your 'Create Your Own fun' form you ask the Unite Foundation to help advertise your event by putting it on the This Is Us social media and helping you get in touch with people at your university and SU to raise awareness. You also ask for a half hour chat with Ira just to chat through your plan for the event because you've not done something like this before and want some advice on running it.

You then reach out to other people in the London Community to ask if they are at the same uni as you and want to help run the event. You also contact your student union to ask them to help you set up the group and ask them to provide funding for the tea/coffee and biscuits/cake for the meetups. If they can't provide any, you reach out to Ira at the Unite Foundation who is able to cover the cost for you.



Area

a) Casual Meet-Up in Manchester: you live in Manchester and want to run an event for all care experienced and estranged students in the city to meet up at Bundobust for some street-food and then go for a casual walk along by the canal area after. In your form, you say you are going to print out lots of posters to stick up to advertise the meet-up so need to claim back printing expenses with a receipt after the event, which will be about £5.

b) Five-a-side Footie: You live in Cardiff and want to run some laid-back games for local care experienced and estranged students on a Saturday in September. You need a hand with affording to rent a local football pitch for the day and want to provide some light refreshments for players. You'd like the Unite Foundation to pay for the pitch hire for you (£100) but will buy the soft drinks and snacks yourself and then claim them back after (around £20). You ask for these things in your form and state it will cost around £120 total.

c) Cross-Stitch and Creativity Online: A group of you in Aberdeen want to run an online craft evening with other students in your city. The plan is to hold an informal Zoom session where you play chilled-out music, chat and create some small cross stitch pieces. You ask the Unite Foundation for advice on how to run the event, help with advertising it and for funding to purchase/put together the cross-stitch packs to send out in the post to attendees. Numbers: you allow up to 15 people to sign up to the event and provide their emails and addresses (for the packs). You might ask UF to purchase the packs upfront for those who have signed up and either get these sent to your address to pass on to attendees or ask UF to send them out to attendees directly.



National/Regional

- a) Graduating Group: You want to set up a group for yourself and other final year students who are nervous about graduating and invite recent graduates along. You want a space where you can meet and online fortnightly for an hour to vent, ask questions and to share hints and tips. In your form you ask the Unite Foundation to help advertise the group, to share it in their newsletter and to provide some funding to send some helpful resources in the post to people within the group.
- b) Change Conference: You want an Annual Conference for all care experienced and estranged students in Northern Ireland. The plan is to meet in-person for a day in Belfast where you can network, exchange contacts, talk about activism and support each other. You guess that around 100 students will turn up to this event. Things you might ask the Unite Foundation for support with include: light refreshments for the event (catering approx. £800), funding to pay speakers' fees and transport (£120), a transport allowance of up to £50 for all attendees to claim back themselves after the event, advice on how to run something this big, contacts to help you get the word out about the event, support advertising, etc.
- c) Book Club: you'd like to arrange a monthly virtual book-club for care experienced and estranged students anywhere in the UK. The write in your form that you plan to hold it on Zoom on Thursday evenings for around 10 people at first but think more might join in future. You ask people in the community to sign-up each month for the next month's book club session and to borrow the book from their local library or purchase the book themselves in their preferred format (e-book or physical), and then claim the cost back from the Unite Foundation, with a receipt. Your ask for support with purchasing/accessing the books (approx. £80 per session) and advice for how to run a virtual book group.