



Expression of Interest (EOI)

Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Support for Migrants, Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Brighton & Hove

April 2026

Introduction

UOK Brighton & Hove is a partnership of voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) organisations working alongside NHS and council services to improve mental health and wellbeing across the city.

We are inviting expressions of interest from VCSE organisations to deliver a community-based mental health and wellbeing service for migrants, refugees and asylum seekers living in Brighton & Hove.

Community organisations play a vital role in supporting people who may face barriers to accessing mainstream services. Through trusted relationships, culturally informed support and community knowledge, these organisations are often best placed to provide accessible and meaningful wellbeing support.

Background

Migrants, refugees and asylum seekers living in Brighton & Hove can face a range of barriers when trying to access mental health and wellbeing support.

For some people, experiences before arriving in the UK may include trauma, persecution, conflict or displacement. After arrival, these experiences can be compounded by challenges such as insecure immigration status, poverty, housing instability, racism and discrimination, language barriers and social isolation.

Work carried out through the **UOK Integrated Migrant Pathways project** (2024–2025) involved conversations with people with lived experience of migration as well as organisations supporting migrant communities in the city. These discussions highlighted ongoing gaps in accessible and culturally informed mental health support.

People spoke about the difficulty of navigating unfamiliar systems, finding support in their own language, and identifying safe and welcoming spaces where they could talk about their wellbeing. Support for migrant, refugee and asylum seeker communities also needs to recognise the wider structural barriers people may face when accessing services. These can include immigration policy, racism and discrimination, poverty, housing instability and language barriers. Community organisations often have deep knowledge of these realities and strong relationships within communities, and this project aims to support that expertise.

Aim of this project

This project focuses on improving mental health and wellbeing for migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in Brighton & Hove through accessible, community-based support.

The service should:

- reduce isolation and strengthen wellbeing
- provide early support before needs escalate to crisis
- help people access appropriate health, wellbeing and community services
- build on existing community connections and peer support networks
- reduce inequalities in access to mental health support

Funding

Grant amount: £37,500 total

Funding period: 9 months + 12 months (June 2026 – May 2028). Funding must be used within this timeframe, with all funds spent by May 2028.

Scope of the service

The funded organisation will deliver community-based mental health and wellbeing support for migrants, refugees and asylum seekers who are experiencing low to moderate mental health needs: anxiety, depression, and/or stress related to migration experience.

The service should combine one-to-one support, peer support and help navigating services.

- **One-to-one support:** Support may include emotional support, space for people to talk about their wellbeing and practical help navigating services. This might include helping people identify goals, connecting them with NHS or community services and signposting to other support where needed.
- **Peer support groups:** Peer groups should offer welcoming spaces where people can meet others with shared experiences, build social connections and support one another. Groups may include discussions or activities focused on wellbeing, social connection, and navigating services in the UK.
- **Navigation and information:** The service should help people understand how to access mental health and wellbeing support in Brighton & Hove and connect them with appropriate services.

Delivery principles

The service will be shaped by the experiences and needs of migrant and refugee communities.

Support should recognise the impact of trauma and be delivered in ways that feel safe and respectful. Services should also be culturally informed and take account of different languages, cultures and migration experiences.

The service should build on existing community relationships and work in partnership with other relevant organisations across Brighton & Hove.

Expected outputs

Applicants should outline the scale of delivery they propose. For example, the number of people receiving one-to-one support, the number of peer groups delivered and number of people participating in the groups, and the number of people signposted to other services. Applicants may suggest other/additional outputs.

Monitoring and learning

The organisation delivering the service will work with the UOK Partnership Lead to monitor delivery and share learning. Monitoring requirements will be proportionate to the size of the grant.

Who can apply?

We welcome applications from VCSE (Voluntary, Community, Social Enterprise) organisations working in Brighton & Hove with experience supporting migrant, refugee or asylum seeker communities.

Partnership applications are encouraged. Smaller or community-led organisations that may not meet every requirement individually are welcome to apply as part of a partnership with another organisation that can provide additional governance or infrastructure support.

Submitting an expression of interest

Please submit an expression of interest using the Grants Application Form outlining:

- Your organisation and the work you already do with migrant, refugee or asylum seeker communities, especially any experience of one-to-one support and peer group support
- Your proposed approach to delivering the service
- How the service will be culturally, and trauma informed
- How you work with other organisations in Brighton & Hove

The metrics you will use to measure your reach and impact (see appendix 1 below for suggested metrics)

Please limit responses to 500 words per question

We are keen to have applications from small and volunteer-led organisations. Please use clear examples from your work rather than formal language.

Your expression of interest should be emailed to: brooke.joyce@southdown.org

Assessment process

Applications will be reviewed by a panel including UOK partners and people with lived experience of migration, asylum seeking or refugee status in Brighton & Hove.

Assessment criteria

Applications will be assessed against the following criteria.

Criteria	What we will be looking for
Understanding of the communities and needs	Demonstrates knowledge of the experiences, barriers and needs of migrant, refugee and asylum seeker communities in Brighton & Hove.
Approach to delivering the service	A clear and practical proposal for delivering one-to-one support, peer support and navigation support.
Community relationships and trust	Evidence of trusted relationships with migrant communities and experience working in culturally informed and trauma-informed ways.
Partnership working	Ability to work collaboratively with other organisations and services across the city.
Reach and impact	A realistic approach to reaching people and measuring the difference the service will make.

Scoring approach

Each criterion will be scored using the following scale.

Score	Judgement	Description
5	Excellent	Exceeds expectations in some or all aspects; very clear, well-evidenced and strong response.
4	Good	Fully meets expectations; clear and appropriate response.
3	Satisfactory	Meets expectations in the majority of aspects; good response with some gaps.
2	Unsatisfactory	Meets some expectations but fails to meet the majority; basic response with notable gaps.
1	Poor	Limited response; significant gaps and fails to meet most expectations.
0	Failed	No evidence provided or does not meet expectations at all.

Commitment to fairness

We recognise that organisations have different levels of experience in writing funding applications. The panel will focus on the strength of the proposed approach and community relationships, rather than the style of writing.

Timeline

- EOI launch: 9 April 2026
- Information webinar: 20 April 2026 ([please sign up via Eventbrite](#))
- EOI deadline: 11 May 2026
- Shortlisting: 12–22 May 2026
- Decision and notification: Week commencing 25 May 2026. Followed by collection of due diligence documentation (listed below)
- Mobilisation: From 1 June 2026
- Service start date (mobilisation continues): 1 July 2026
- Service fully operational: 1 September 2026

General Conditions

Submitting an expression of interest does not guarantee funding. Organisations are responsible for their own costs when preparing their expression of interest.

We expect that all responses to this EOI will be provided in good faith to the best of their ability in the light of information available at the time of their response.

If an organisation is selected, further discussions will take place to finalise delivery arrangements and performance monitoring and reporting.

Once the preferred organisation is selected Southdown/ UOK and the organisation will work to ensure that appropriate due diligence is carried out, after which the grant can be awarded.

All bidders should keep their proposal viable for three months post 11 May 2026, should any complications occur with the lead bidder.

For queries about this opportunity please contact: Brooke Joyce – brooke.joyce@southdown.org

Appendix 1

Examples of ways you might measure the reach and impact of your service

In your application we ask you to explain how you will measure the reach and impact of your service.

This does not need to be complicated. We understand that different organisations have different levels of capacity for monitoring and evaluation.

You may already collect some information about the people you support and the difference your work makes. You can build on your existing approach where possible.

The examples below are provided as suggestions only. You do not need to use all of them.

It can be helpful to include a mix of:

- simple activity measures (how many people you support)
- feedback or outcome measures (what difference the support makes for people)

Examples of activity measures

These help show the reach of the service.

You might record things like:

- Number of people receiving one-to-one support
- Number of peer support groups delivered
- Number of people attending peer support groups
- Number of people supported to access other services (for example through signposting or referral)

Examples of outcome measures

These help show the difference the support makes. You might ask people simple questions before or after they receive support, for example:

- whether they feel less isolated
- whether their wellbeing has improved
- whether they feel more confident about accessing services
- whether they feel more connected to others in their community.

This feedback can be collected through short surveys, conversations, or group discussions.

Accessibility and inclusion

Because this service is focused on migrant, refugee and asylum seeker communities, applicants may also want to show how their service is welcoming and accessible.

For example: feedback from participants about whether the service felt safe and culturally appropriate, whether people felt comfortable taking part in the service and partnership and community connections.

Applicants may also wish to show how they work with other organisations. This might include: referrals to or from other local services, collaboration with other community organisations, or participation in local networks

Monitoring and reporting will be proportionate to the size of the grant and the scale of the service.

We are particularly interested in hearing participants' experiences of the service and what difference it makes for them, alongside simple information about how many people are supported.

Due Diligence Requirements

Documents and information we will request to receive by **27 May 2026**

- Financial Documents:
 - Budget
 - Last 2 years of audited accounts
 - New Supplier Form (bank details for payment of invoices)

- Insurance Documents:
 - Employers liability £10m for each and every claim
 - Public Liability £5 million for each and every claim
 - Professional Indemnity £250k for each and every claim

- Additional Documents:
 - Contact details for key roles in your organisation who oversee areas such as data protection and safeguarding e.g. Safeguarding Lead, Information Governance Lead, Caldicott Guardian, Senior Information Risk Owner, Data Protection Officer (where required by Data Protection legislation). We will provide a form for you to complete.

Documents and information we will request to receive by **5 June 2026**

- Policy Documents:
 - ICT
 - Data Protection/GDPR
 - Conflict of Interest
 - Safeguarding (Adults and Children)
 - Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)
 - Complaints
 - Health and Safety
 - Lone Working (if not included within the Health and Safety Policy)

We understand that the titles of the policies listed above may differ from those used within your organisation. If this is the case, please provide confirmation and copies of alternative policies that you

have in place, which cover the relevant information required. For example, 'Safe Recruitment policy' instead of separate 'DBS policy'.

Documents and information we will request to receive by **31 August 2026**

- Policy Documents:
 - Anti-Fraud Policy/Financial Management
 - Risk Management
 - Integrity at Work/Professional Boundaries
 - Business Continuity/Disaster Recovery
 - Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
 - Whistleblowing
 - Communications (including Accessible Information Standard)
 - Sustainability and/or Environmental

- Additional Information Required:
 - Completion of the NHS Data Security and Protection Toolkit