

Changing Lives Together Fund

Examples

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A PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN



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Introduction

This document is designed to help clubs and organisations shape inclusive project ideas that use rowing to create positive change in their local communities. It provides practical examples of current initiatives taking place on the ground. The aim is to support projects that help more people start rowing, feel welcome and supported, and continue participating in ways that are right for them.

Activity Types

New to rowing experiences

- Learn to row sessions, Adventure Rows, social prescribing groups
- Creating opportunities that are inclusive by design
- Targeting adults or young people not currently in rowing
- Offering new, socially competitive experiences
- Ensuring participants experience a positive change through rowing (for example, feeling more confident, feeling a sense of belonging, overcoming barriers to accessing rowing, having a positive experience that encourages them to stay active)

Retention and return

- Reducing early churn (first-year members, juniors aged 11–18, parents)
- Reducing inequalities preventing continued participation
- Improving the first 90-day experience
- Providing social activities to support longer term enjoyment
- Improving the access for new rowers to decent equipment
- Ensuring participants experience a positive change through rowing (for example, feeling more confident, feeling a sense of belonging, overcoming barriers to accessing rowing, having a positive experience that encourages them to stay active)

Volunteer and workforce enablers

- Removing bottlenecks that limit participation capacity
- Onboarding, induction, lightweight training, support roles
- Improving qualifications and CPD opportunities for volunteers
- Enabling coaches and volunteers to feel more confident delivering inclusive activity
- Communities sharing best practice and learning (e.g. coastal cafes) to develop new skills, knowledge and/or ways of working

Wider rowing system change

- Partnerships with schools, councils, community groups (as examples)
- Co-creating inclusive opportunities
- Changes in practice or policy
- Sustainable participation pathways in a local area
- Learning that shapes future programmes and funding decisions

The following worked examples have been included to provide ideas for how clubs and organisations could use grant funding.

Example 1: Learn to Row Capacity-Building & Sustainable Membership Growth

(Inspired by Derby RC, City of Bristol, Norwich RC)

How does the project fulfil the purpose of the grant?

This project supports the delivery of high-quality, welcoming Learn to Row provision that creates positive first experiences and clear pathways into regular and lifelong participation. By funding coached sessions at times when water time is available, the project increases Learn to Row and development squad capacity, strengthening progression into consistent rowing. Over time, this expanded capacity will enable the club to reach targeted audiences with a well-organised and inclusive offer that builds skills, belonging and social connection beyond initial participation.

How will you make this project happen and who will you work with?

Grant funding will be used to pay qualified coaches to deliver Learn to Row sessions during periods of club availability, primarily weekend afternoons. This approach reduces the financial risk for the club and enables them to commit to a consistent, structured programme. Participants will be supported through:

- Introductory Learn to Row sessions
- Follow-on coached development sessions
- Integration into regular club activity and membership

Once a viable development squad is established and new rowers are paying regular club membership, the programme becomes self-sustaining, with membership income reinvested into coaching and delivery.

Key learnings from previous initiatives

Learning from previous programmes shows that:

- Consistent, paid coaching improves participant retention.
- Clear progression routes reduce drop-out after Learn to Row.
- Removing financial risk enables clubs to scale participation.
- Volunteer coaches are rewarded with paid opportunities.
- Membership income can sustain delivery once momentum is established.

What happens for your participants at the end of this project and how will they continue participating in rowing?

By the end of the funded period, participants will have transitioned into a development squad or full club membership. The club expects to retain between 30–50 new paying members, who will continue rowing through regular coached sessions and social activity. Participants become embedded within the club, with opportunities to progress competitively, row socially, or volunteer.

How much grant funding is required?

We are seeking £4,500 to cover Learn to Row and follow-on coaching costs during the start-up phase. This funding releases the initial financial risk for the club and establishes the programme. Based on conservative projections, retaining 50 members at £30 per month generates approximately £18,000 per year, allowing the club to continue delivering the programme independently once the grant ends.

Which elements could this project impact?

- ✓ Tackling the under-representation of our target audiences
- ✓ Improve the perception of rowing being an inclusive sport
- ✓ Improve participants' mental and physical health and wellbeing
- ✓ Improve life skills such as teamwork, resilience and self-discipline
- ✓ Improve participants' self-confidence and independence

Example 2: Targeted Entry Pathways

(Inspired by Monster the Loch, RowWindermere, Race the Thames, Great River Row)

How does the project fulfil the purpose of the grant?

This project delivers a welcoming, non-competitive rowing event designed as an accessible first experience for people new to rowing. Set against an iconic city or natural backdrop, the event reframes rowing as social, inclusive, and achievable, creating a positive 'first event' interaction with the sport. By focusing on participation and experience rather than performance, the project reduces barriers to entry and provides a clear and motivating pathway into ongoing rowing activity.

How will you make this project happen and who will you work with?

Grant funding will support the delivery of a coached, supported on-water experience in a safe, inclusive environment. Qualified coaches and volunteer safety cover will enable participants to take part with confidence. Participants will use skills they have learnt in a recent Learn to Row, and take part in a format that encourages a sense of achievement and belonging. The event will be delivered in partnership with local rowing clubs and community partners to support outreach. Participants will be welcomed, supported on the water, and signposted to follow-on social rowing opportunities.

Key learnings from previous initiatives

Learning from previous initiatives shows that:

- Non-competitive formats attract first-time and existing participants
- Iconic locations increase motivation and engagement
- Supported experiences reduce anxiety for beginners
- Clear next steps improve retention beyond initial participation

What happens for your participants at the end of this project and how will they continue participating in rowing?

Following the event, participants will be invited to take part in other social rowing opportunities - either at local clubs or signposting a network of similar events taking place elsewhere in the UK. By the end of the project, participants will have a clear understanding of how to continue rowing in a way that suits their confidence and interest, supporting progression into regular participation or club membership.

How much grant funding is required?

We are seeking **£8,500** to cover coaching, safety provision, and delivery costs. This funding removes financial risk for start up costs and enables a high-quality, inclusive event. Proof of concept and clear alignment with social rowing programmes will support ongoing, self-sustaining delivery beyond the grant period.

Which elements could this project impact?

- ✓ Tackling the under-representation of target audiences
- ✓ Improving perceptions of rowing as inclusive
- ✓ Improving physical and mental wellbeing
- ✓ Improving confidence and social connection
- ✓ Reducing social isolation

Example 3: Adaptive & Disability-Focused Provision

(Inspired by Marlow Para Programme)

How does the project fulfil the purpose of the grant?

This project delivers inclusive rowing experiences specifically designed for disabled participants, ensuring that rowing is accessible, enjoyable and empowering. Adaptive equipment, trained coaches, and personalised session planning ensure participants can engage fully and safely from their first session. The programme emphasises social connection and personal achievement, supporting participants to build confidence, develop skills, and become part of the rowing community for the long term.

How will you make this project happen and who will you work with?

Delivery will be led by the rowing club in collaboration with disability sports organisations, schools, and healthcare partners. Coaches will receive adaptive rowing and inclusion training, and sessions will be supported by volunteers to ensure appropriate assistance is available. The project will also involve families and carers, creating a supportive environment that encourages continued participation beyond the funded period.

Key learnings from previous initiatives

Experience from adaptive programmes highlights:

- The importance of coach confidence and training in adaptive delivery.
- The need for flexible session design tailored to individual needs.
- That social inclusion is as important as physical participation.

These insights directly shape the delivery model.

Which communities will this project support?

- Disabled people
- Young people with additional needs
- Families and carers connected to disabled participants

What happens for your participants at the end of this project and how will they continue participating in rowing?

Participants will be supported to continue rowing through established adaptive squads, regular coached sessions, and inclusive club activity. Clear progression routes will be communicated early, ensuring participants and carers understand how they can stay involved. The project also aims to build long-term adaptive capacity within the club, meaning opportunities remain available well beyond the funded period.

How much grant funding is required?

We are requesting £2,500 to fund specialist adaptive equipment, coaching, volunteer qualifications and training, and facility access. This funding provides a catalyst to enable accessible, safe and inclusive rowing opportunities.

Which elements could this project impact?

- ✓ Tackling the under-representation of our target audiences
- ✓ Improve the perception of rowing being an inclusive sport
- ✓ Improve participants' physical health and wellbeing
- ✓ Improve participants' mental health and wellbeing
- ✓ Improve life skills such as teamwork, resilience and independence
- ✓ Improve participants' self-confidence and independence
- ✓ Reduce social isolation and improve social cohesion

Example 4: Education & Indoor Rowing Pathways

(Inspired by Dixons Academy Trust, United Learning Trust)

How does the project fulfil the purpose of the grant?

This project uses indoor rowing as an accessible entry point to rowing, delivered in education settings where young people already feel comfortable. By embedding rowing into the curriculum and enrichment activities, the project introduces rowing as inclusive, engaging and achievable.

How will you make this project happen and who will you work with?

The project will be delivered in partnership with local colleges and academy trusts, providing equipment, teacher training and structured lesson plans. British Rowing resources and virtual competition opportunities will be used to enhance engagement and motivation. Clear links to local rowing clubs will be promoted for students who wish to progress beyond the indoor environment.

Key learnings from previous initiatives

Previous education partnerships demonstrated that:

- Teacher training is key to programme sustainability.
- Indoor rowing is particularly effective for engaging inactive young people.
- Virtual competitions increase motivation and inclusion.
- These lessons inform delivery and evaluation.

Which communities will this project support?

- Young people from low socioeconomic backgrounds
- Ethnically diverse communities
- Young people disengaged from traditional sport

What happens for your participants at the end of this project and how will they continue participating in rowing?

At the end of the project, students will have access to continued indoor rowing opportunities within their education setting, supported by trained staff and shared equipment. These could include breakfast club and after-college club activities, as well as college teams entering virtual and face to face indoor rowing competitions. Those who express interest in continuing rowing outside of their education establishment will be signposted to local rowing clubs, open days and beginner sessions. The project creates new rowing provision within schools and colleges, ensuring future cohorts can benefit beyond the initial funding period.

How much grant funding is required?

We are applying for £3,500 to support equipment provision, staff training, programme resources and delivery support. This funding enables schools to embed rowing into long-term provision with an estimated of 200 pupils per week during term time benefitting from the investment.

Which elements could this project impact?

- ✓ Tackling the under-representation of our target audiences
- ✓ Improve the perception of rowing being an inclusive sport
- ✓ Improve participants' physical health and wellbeing
- ✓ Improve participants' mental health and wellbeing
- ✓ Improve education attainment
- ✓ Improve life skills such as teamwork, resilience and self-discipline
- ✓ Improve participants' self-confidence and independence

Example 5: Justice System & Life Skills

(Inspired by HMPPS Prison Engagement)

How does the project fulfil the purpose of the grant?

This project uses rowing as a tool for rehabilitation, wellbeing and personal development. Structured indoor rowing sessions provide participants with positive physical activity, routine, and a sense of achievement, helping to build confidence and transferable life skills. The emphasis on teamwork, discipline and progression fosters a connection to sport that can continue beyond custody.

How will you make this project happen and who will you work with?

The programme will be delivered in partnership with prison education and rehabilitation teams, with rowing instructors trained to work in secure environments. Clear progression routes will be highlighted, including links to partner community rowing clubs upon release.

Key learnings from previous initiatives

Learning from prison-based delivery shows:

- Consistency of delivery builds trust and engagement.
- Qualifications and progression pathways increase impact.
- Sport can be a powerful tool for positive behaviour change.

Which communities will this project support?

- Adults from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Individuals facing social exclusion
- People with limited access to sport

What happens for your participants at the end of this project and how will they continue participating in rowing?

Participants will leave the programme with improved fitness, confidence and transferable life skills. Where appropriate, they will be signposted to partner community rowing clubs and indoor rowing opportunities upon release, with information provided on how to access inclusive beginner sessions. The project establishes rowing as a positive and accessible activity that participants can continue independently, including in a local gym.

How much grant funding is required?

We are seeking £750 to fund instructor delivery, equipment, and programme coordination within the secure environment. This ensures consistent, high-quality delivery to participants who would otherwise have no access to organised sport.

Which elements could this project impact?

- ✓ Improve participants' physical health and wellbeing
- ✓ Improve participants' mental health and wellbeing
- ✓ Improve life skills such as teamwork, resilience and self-discipline
- ✓ Improve participants' self-confidence and independence
- ✓ Reduce social isolation and improve social cohesion

Example 6: Community Partnership - Indoor to On-Water Pathway

How does the project fulfil the purpose of the grant?

This project provides inclusive, enjoyable first experiences of rowing through a trusted community setting, removing traditional barriers to entry and introducing rowing as a social, welcoming activity. By delivering indoor rowing sessions designed around fun, teamwork and fitness, participants engage with rowing in a non-intimidating way from their very first session. The project fosters a love of rowing by prioritising group activity, shared achievement and progression. A staged programme invites participants to take part in on-water rowing and club-based social activity, supporting long-term participation.

How will you make this project happen and who will you work with?

The project will be delivered in partnership with a community organisation already working with local groups to provide physical activity opportunities. Indoor rowing machines will be installed at the community venue, allowing sessions to take place in a familiar, accessible environment. Grant funding will support the purchase of four indoor rowing ergos and training for two staff members, ensuring they are confident delivering a range of inclusive sessions. Activity will include group fitness classes, fun relay challenges and friendly racing formats to encourage teamwork and enjoyment. As confidence grows, the project will be delivered jointly with a local rowing club, providing progression opportunities onto the water.

Key learnings from previous initiatives

Learning from similar partnership projects has shown that:

- Delivering rowing in community settings increases trust and participation.
- Staff training is critical to long-term sustainability.
- Fun, group-based indoor rowing formats are highly effective for engagement.
- Clear progression pathways encourage participants to continue beyond the initial programme.

What happens for your participants at the end of this project and how will they continue participating in rowing?

Within a 9-month period, participants will have built confidence, fitness and familiarity with rowing. The project will expand to include on-water sessions delivered with a local rowing club, providing a clear next step for those who wish to progress. The programme will also grow to include regular social rowing opportunities and informal Saturday afternoon coffee catch-ups, reinforcing rowing as a social, community-led activity rather than a one-off intervention.

How much grant funding is required?

We are seeking £4,000 to fund the purchase of four indoor rowing machines, staff training, and initial programme delivery costs. This investment enables sustainable provision that continues beyond the funded period and supports progression into club-based rowing.

Which elements could this project impact?

- ✓ Tackling the under-representation of our target audiences
- ✓ Improve the perception of rowing being an inclusive sport
- ✓ Improve participants' physical health and wellbeing
- ✓ Improve participants' mental health and wellbeing
- ✓ Improve life skills such as teamwork, resilience and self-discipline
- ✓ Improve participants' self-confidence and independence
- ✓ Reduce social isolation and improve social cohesion

Example 7: School-Based Indoor Rowing Breakfast Club Revitalisation

How does the project fulfil the purpose of the grant?

This project reactivates an established indoor rowing programme within a school setting, providing inclusive, accessible rowing experiences that support both physical activity and social connection. By embedding rowing into a breakfast club offer, the project introduces rowing as a positive, enjoyable start to the school day, particularly for pupils who benefit most from structured morning support. The programme fosters a love of rowing by combining fun, low-pressure activity with social interaction, helping pupils feel confident, energised and connected from their first session, while laying foundations for continued participation.

How will you make this project happen and who will you work with?

The school already owns eight indoor rowing machines, four of which are currently operational. Grant funding will be used to repair the remaining equipment and provide training and qualifications for teaching staff to deliver high-quality indoor rowing sessions. The newly appointed PE Lead will oversee delivery, supported by trained colleagues. The school will contribute by covering supply teacher costs to enable staff to attend training, ensuring long-term sustainability. The project will also explore links with a local rowing club located nearby, with the aim of introducing pupils to the wider rowing community and creating future progression opportunities.

Key learnings from previous initiatives

Previous delivery demonstrated that:

- Indoor rowing fits well within school routines and facilities.
- Breakfast club rowing sessions improved engagement and punctuality.
- Qualified staff are essential to programme continuity.
- Equipment maintenance is critical for sustainability.

These lessons inform the focus on staff training, equipment repair and shared responsibility between the school and grant funder.

What happens for your participants at the end of this project and how will they continue participating in rowing?

Participants will be able to continue accessing indoor rowing through PE lessons and the ongoing breakfast club programme. Pupil premium students, who already attend breakfast club, will benefit from regular physical activity alongside nutritional support. As confidence and interest grow, pupils will be signposted to extracurricular rowing opportunities and taster sessions with a linked local rowing club, providing a pathway beyond the school environment.

How much grant funding is required?

We are seeking £2,500 to fund equipment repair and staff qualification costs. This investment will unlock existing assets, upskill teaching staff, and enable sustainable delivery without ongoing reliance on external funding.

Which elements could this project impact?

- ✓ Tackling the under-representation of our target audiences
- ✓ Improve the perception of rowing being an inclusive sport
- ✓ Improve participants' mental and physical health and wellbeing
- ✓ Improve education attainment
- ✓ Improve life skills such as teamwork, resilience and self-discipline
- ✓ Improve participants' self-confidence and independence
- ✓ Reduce social isolation and improve social cohesion

Example 8: Targeted Entry Pathways

(Inspired by Lancaster RC Refugee Programme)

How does the project fulfil the purpose of the grant?

This project provides inclusive, welcoming first experiences of rowing for people who have traditionally faced barriers to participation. Through structured Learn to Row programmes targeted at under-represented groups, rowing is introduced as a social, confidence-building activity from the first session. Trained coaches and volunteers support enjoyment, belonging, and progression, helping participants build a lasting connection to rowing and the club community.

How will you make this project happen and who will you work with?

The programme will be delivered in partnership with local community organisations (such as refugee support groups, youth services and schools) to support outreach, recruitment and participant engagement. Sessions will be hosted at the rowing centre using club equipment, with volunteer mentors supporting participants on and off the water. Clear progression routes will be built in, including follow-on beginner courses, social and indoor rowing, and opportunities to stay involved through volunteering and club events.

Key learnings from previous initiatives

Previous Learn to Row initiatives showed that:

- Trusted community partners are essential for engagement and retention.
- Smaller group sizes and consistent coaching staff build confidence.
- Social time before and after sessions strengthens community bonds.
- Removing financial barriers significantly increases uptake.

Which communities will this project support?

- Young people from low socioeconomic backgrounds
- Refugees and ethnically diverse communities
- Individuals new to organised sport

What happens for your participants at the end of this project and how will they continue participating in rowing?

At the end of the programme, participants will be supported to move into opportunities that suit their interests and circumstances, including beginner or social rowing and continued coached sessions at the host club. Clear next steps will be provided, including information on affordable membership and informal participation routes, with opportunities to stay involved through volunteering and club events. Where needed, community partners will continue to offer support to help participants feel confident and welcomed beyond the funded activity.

How much grant funding is required?

We are seeking £1,200 to support programme delivery for 25 participants. Funding will be used to commit to session coaching costs, volunteer training and outreach activity. This investment enables low-cost access for participants who would otherwise be unlikely to engage.

Which elements could this project impact?

- ✓ Tackling the under-representation of our target audiences
- ✓ Improve the perception of rowing being an inclusive sport
- ✓ Improve participants' mental and physical health and wellbeing
- ✓ Improve participants' self-confidence and independence
- ✓ Reduce social isolation and improve social cohesion

Example 9: Improving Availability of Taster Sessions

(Inspired by Avon County, Trentham Boat Club)

How does the project fulfil the purpose of the grant?

This project supports the delivery of five welcoming, high-quality taster rowing sessions, designed to provide positive first experiences of rowing for people new to the sport. By funding paid coaching, the project ensures sessions are well-organised, inclusive, and delivered safely without extra burden on volunteers. The intention is that the initiative will reduce barriers to entry and help participants build confidence and interest in continuing to row.

How will you make this project happen and who will you work with?

Grant funding will be used to pay qualified coaches to deliver five one-hour Learn to Row taster sessions. Sessions will be delivered by a local rowing club using stable boats and beginner-friendly formats. Participants will be welcomed, supported on the water, and introduced to the club environment, with clear information on next steps and follow-on opportunities.

Key learnings from previous initiatives

Learning from previous initiatives shows that:

- Paid coaching improves the quality and consistency of delivery
- Structured taster sessions increase confidence for beginners
- Positive first experiences increase the likelihood of return
- Clear progression routes reduce early drop-out

What happens for your participants at the end of this project and how will they continue participating in rowing?

At the end of the five sessions, participants will be signposted to Learn to Row courses, social rowing opportunities, or beginner squads at the club. Participants will have a clear understanding of how to continue rowing in a way that suits their confidence, availability, and interests.

How much grant funding is required?

We are seeking **£500** to cover paid coaching for five one-hour Learn to Row taster sessions. This funding removes financial risk for the club and enables delivery of a consistent, high-quality offer that supports progression into regular participation beyond the funded period.

Which elements could this project impact?

- ✓ Tackling under-representation in rowing
- ✓ Improving perceptions of rowing as inclusive
- ✓ Improving physical and mental wellbeing
- ✓ Improving confidence and motivation
- ✓ Supporting social connection

Example 10: Building Confidence and a Routine

(Inspired by Couch to 5k)

How does the project fulfil the purpose of the grant?

This project delivers a land-based pre-Learn to Row programme designed to help people build confidence, mobility, balance, core strength, and general fitness before taking part in on-water rowing. By focusing on social connection and building a routine, the project reduces physical and psychological barriers to participation and creates a welcoming, supportive entry point into rowing.

How will you make this project happen and who will you work with?

Grant funding will support paid delivery of structured, beginner-friendly land-based sessions led by a qualified coach or instructor. Sessions will take place in a local, accessible venue and will focus on simple movement, rowing-related exercises, and group activity. The programme will be delivered in partnership with a local rowing club, ensuring a clear and reassuring link to future on-water opportunities.

Key learnings from previous initiatives

Learning from previous initiatives shows that:

- Land-based preparation improves confidence for first-time rowers
- Social, group-based activity supports habit and routine
- Reduced physical anxiety increases willingness to try on-water rowing
- Friendship and belonging improve retention

What happens for your participants at the end of this project and how will they continue participating in rowing?

At the end of the 10 week programme, participants will be supported to continue their progress with access to regular land training sessions. Where relevant, participants will have the option to take part in on-water taster sessions. Participants will move forward as a group where possible, maintaining friendships and routine, and will have a clear understanding of how to continue rowing at a pace that suits them.

How much grant funding is required?

We are seeking **£750** to cover paid delivery costs for the land-based sessions. This funding removes financial risk for the club and enables a high-quality, inclusive programme that supports confident progression into on-water rowing.

Which elements could this project impact?

- ✓ Tackling under-representation in rowing
- ✓ Improving physical mobility and wellbeing
- ✓ Improving confidence and independence
- ✓ Reducing social isolation
- ✓ Building routine and social connection