

Unite

Foundation

Funding for fun!

The Unite Foundation – the only charity in the UK that supports both estranged and care experienced students – is lending its support to [All of Us](#); the community for estranged and care experienced students across the UK.

To help get this off the ground, we have dedicated team members, working with the student community to set up and grow an [online social network](#), help students plan events and meet ups and help us all understand better what students want from this growing movement.

We also have some funding and support available to students who would like to organise their own community event. If this is something you'd like to do, here's a guide to setting up an event and applying for funding.

So, first things first...

WWWWW.

What?

What is your event going to be? Maybe you know exactly what you want to do, or maybe you can chat with other people on the All of Us social network to see what people would like to do or go to? Use the newsfeed or polls to see what people are interested in!

Who?

Who is your event for? People in a specific group, at a certain university, on a particular course, anyone who lives within walking, bus, train, plane distance?! Or a click away...

Who is going to organise it? Are you going solo or are you organising it with another person or group of people?

Where?

Where will it be? Will it be online? Will it be in person? If it's in person, do you have a venue or location in mind?

When?

When will it be? Consider when people have free time around their college and uni work and other commitments.

Why?

What do you want people to get out of it? It can be as simple as meeting new people and having a chat 😊

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How?

How will you do it? What do you need to promote and run your event? The following guidance explains what the Unite Foundation might be able to help you with – this ranges from advice, to merchandise through to funding.

If you would like Unite Foundation support, complete the Create Your Own Fun form. It might be useful to chat with Ira before you fill this out to talk through your ideas and what you might need. You can email ira.hakim@unitefoundation.org.uk or send a DM in the All of Us social network!

How could we support you?

The Unite Foundation could help you with things like event planning advice, putting you in touch with people who could help you, a small grant (money towards running your event) or help promoting your event.

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, speak to them or your SU first.

Depending on the size and nature of your event, if we help with funding, we can either pay for what you need upfront or you can purchase smaller things and then claim back costs with a receipt.

Who is your event for?

Local students

Is your event just for students in just your uni/HE institution or SU/Guild/Student Association)?

We can support you with anything on the 'What is Available?' list below.

But you do need to contact your student union/association/guild or HE institution first for funding. This is so we don't duplicate the funding they already offer.

Students in your town or city

Is your event for students in your town, city or across several HE Institutions?

We can support you with anything on the 'What is Available?' list below

Students in your region or across the UK

Is your event UK-wide, across a particular nation (Wales, Northern Ireland, Scotland, England) or in a certain region (e.g., North Yorkshire, Greater London, Pembrokeshire)?

We can support you with anything on the 'What is Available?' list below

Exactly what support is available?

This is not an exhaustive list, just some good examples of what we mean when we talk about event support. If you need some help that isn't listed here, let us know when you complete the 'Create Your Own Fun' form and we'll see what we can do for you!

Funding is awarded on a case-by-case basis. We can't promise we can fund everything (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
- + Event organising tips and help with planning

Grant funding – smaller scale

(Low cost items you can purchase upfront and then claim back)

We can help you financially with a grant to run a small-scale event with funding anywhere between £0 to £100. 'Small 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 you don't have to spend that much to qualify for help, you may just need a few bits and pieces and that's fine!

You will need to keep any receipts for these purchases and then email them to Ira so we can refund you. **You will need to let us know in advance what you intend to purchase via the application form**, or we won't be able to refund you.

If your event costs will be over £100 and/or you aren't able to purchase smaller scale resources under £100 upfront, see the larger scale funding information.

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 event in your town or city or a regional or national event where you think costs will be over £100 and/or you aren't able to purchase small scale resources under £100 upfront, the Unite Foundation can make purchases for you in advance.

Some examples:

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

Help promoting your event

We can:

- + Advertise your event/meet up on the This Is Us community platform
- + Share information about upcoming events in the Unite Foundation newsletter
- + Post to This Is Us social media to advertise upcoming events/meetups
- + 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.
- + Provide some free stuff, like stickers or badges for everyone going to the event

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 already friends with too.)

The rules for all events!

1. Events may be in-person or virtual, but they must open to both care experienced and estranged students.
2. If you are running an event supported by us, it needs to be shared within the All of Us social network, letting people know when and where and how they can attend if they want to.

Now what?

Complete the 'Funding for Fun' form to apply for the help you need!

<https://www.tfaforms.com/5002593>

It's important to complete this form 3–4 weeks before you intend to hold your meet up or event so the Unite Foundation has time to look at what you need, help you with any promotion (if you need us to) and to make any necessary bookings or payments.

Appendix 1

Event examples and suggestions for what you might include in your application form.

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

Example 1: 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.

Example 2: 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.

Example 3: 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

but 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.

Example 4: 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.

Example 5: 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.

Example 6: 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.

Example 7: Book Club

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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.

Appendix 2

Top tips

- + Be sensible and don't give out your personal address
- + Run events and meetups in a public place
- + Use the All of Us social network to share your ideas and get people interested
- + Tap into relevant groups
- + Create an event listing in the All of Us social network so everyone can see what's going on
- + Not all events will need support from the Unite Foundation, but make sure you share anything you organise, the more meet ups, the merrier!

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](#)