

ACTIVATE FUND LAUNCHES IN 2026

In April 2026, we will re-open the Activate Fund to award grants of up to £30,000 to enable Fellows to turn their brilliant ideas into action. The Fund is infused with the same spirit of optimism and practicality as the Fellowship and will support Fellows who, inspired by their Fellowship learning, have a clear vision and plan for how they will activate the change they want to see.

WHO CAN APPLY?

Churchill Fellows who have completed their overseas learning, had their Fellowship report approved for publication and have not already received an Activate grant will be eligible to apply. Each year that the Fund is open, we will set a report publication deadline for eligibility. The publication deadline for the first round of funding is 27th March 2026. Eligible Fellows will be automatically invited to apply each year and repeat applications will be permitted if you are unsuccessful.

We will be actively encouraging joint applications between Fellows to support inter-disciplinary approaches and inter-generational exchange, as long as one Fellow acts as the lead applicant.

WHAT TYPE OF PROJECTS WILL ACTIVATE SUPPORT?

Head of Activate, Abigail Campbell, explains more: "We are looking forward to

receiving applications that represent the breadth and diversity of the Fellowship community and the incredible range of issues that Fellows are tackling in every part of the UK. We expect activity supported by Activate to be focused on at least one of these pathways to change":

- Seed funding to set up a new organisation to do things differently
- Pilot projects to test if an idea for change really works
- Organising and mobilising with others to create change

HOW LONG WILL THE FUND BE OPEN?

The Activate Fund will be open for at least five annual award cycles so there is time to think carefully about a project application and to plan when is the best time to push forward your vision for change.

HOW MANY GRANTS WILL ACTIVATE AWARD?

We expect to award 20 grants in the first year as we test and refine our approach, growing to 30 each year by 2028. Three grants in each of the first three years will be awarded to nurses, as part of our partnership with The Burdett Trust.

HOW COULD AN ACTIVATE GRANT SUPPORT MY VISION FOR CHANGE?

These case studies from our pilot scheme that ran in 2020 are great examples of how an Activate grant can turn an idea into action.

For more information about Activate plus funding opportunities from other organisations, please do look at the [Fellows' Resources](#) section on our website.



John Harrison (above and below) at work at Solidarity Farm CIC

SEED FUNDING TO SET UP A NEW ORGANISATION TO DO THINGS DIFFERENTLY

John Harrison (CF 2019)

John applied to the Activate Fund in 2022 following his Fellowship in Canada and Belgium which explored the therapeutic use of farming practices to reduce homelessness. Emerging from the Covid 19 pandemic, John saw the need to apply his learning to support children and young people whose education had been disrupted and were struggling to return to conventional classrooms.

John was awarded £26,400 seed funding for a farm-based social enterprise in Northumberland to offer alternative outdoor therapeutic education. This Activate grant allowed John to spend two days per week setting up Solidarity Farm CIC. He worked with

local schools to co-design alternative educational programmes supporting children and young people to gain skills, qualifications and confidence in the freedom and safety of a natural environment. John now works full time on the farm, has secured grants from several other funders to grow his team and the farm is benefitting 350 young people a year.

"It is very difficult to secure revenue funding to start a social enterprise, and The Activate Fund gave me the resources to test our offer, learn through doing and secure other sources of funding to help us develop the infrastructure and ultimately turn what was once a dream into a reality."





Amanda Walters, centre behind placard, with fellow campaigners in front of the Houses of Parliament

ORGANISING AND MOBILISING WITH OTHERS TO CREATE CHANGE

Amanda Walters (CF 2018)

For her Fellowship, Amanda travelled to the US and Brazil to learn how to build a movement of low-paid migrant workers to campaign to improve their working conditions in the UK.

On her return, Amanda built the first Labour-Community Alliance in the cleaning industry in the UK and in 2021 she was awarded £30,000 for the Alliance to activate its first campaign to

change national policy on sick pay.

The Activate grant enabled Amanda to train 150 low-income migrant workers in campaigning and being media spokespeople; raise public awareness via a high profile media campaign; organise teams of cleaners and community organisations in 13 regions to take public action on sick pay; leverage the support of Trade Unions and business partners for the

campaign and win cross-party support from MPs and Peers for migrant workers' right to statutory sick pay.

"Thanks to this start-up funding we were able to build a national campaign for Safe Sick Pay that is about to see four of its policy recommendations becoming law through the Employment Rights Bill, which will improve the sick pay for one in three employees in the UK."

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—Amanda Walters, Churchill Fellow 2018

THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY APPEAL: ACTIVATING YOUR AMBITIONS

This year we have been marking the remarkable milestone - 60 years of the Churchill Fellowship. As part of our celebrations, we proudly launched our 60th Anniversary £10 million Appeal, to support the ambitious new chapter in the Fellowship's future: the Activate Fund.

Fellows are visionary people, driven by big ideas and a shared passion for positive change. Yet, time and again, we've seen how much further - and faster - their work could progress with the right support. The Activate Fund is designed to do just that. Building on the success of the 2020 pilot programme, it will provide funding, mentoring and

PILOT PROJECTS TO TEST IF AN IDEA FOR CHANGE REALLY WORKS



AFRUCA residential training programme attendees

Debbie Ariyo (CF 2019)

Debbie Ariyo, Founder and CEO of AFRUCA, received a Churchill Fellowship, co-funded by The Linbury Trust, to investigate international approaches to tackling human trafficking and modern slavery. Her Fellowship examined how frontline organisations overseas build resilience and leadership capacity among survivors, and how anti-trafficking responses could be adapted for the UK context.

Debbie was awarded £23,605 for AFRUCA to pilot a 3-day residential

training programme to build the practical capacity of 14 anti-trafficking innovators from different regions in the UK to play a direct role in shaping anti-trafficking policy and services. The project addressed the under-representation of people from minoritised racial groups in decision-making roles across the sector, despite their frontline expertise and lived experience. Participants reported a significant increase in knowledge, skills and confidence to influence local and national policy, secure funding, and deliver effective support services.

“I am really delighted with what we achieved as a result of the Activate grant. The overall objective was to support grassroots community leaders so they could be more impactful in the anti-trafficking space. Most of the 14 participants have grown their anti-trafficking work as a result, attracting new funding to support those affected in their communities and developing innovative services to help meet their needs.”

— Debbie Ariyo, Churchill Fellow 2019

Churchill Fellows continue to turn inspiration into action - for the next 60 years and beyond.

Thank you to all Fellows and friends whose generosity has made the launch of our new Activate Fund possible through our 60th Anniversary Appeal.



Scan to donate

churchillfellowship.org.
In the New Year, we'll be launching the Supporters' Circle, recognising Friends of the Fellowship who contribute to the Anniversary Appeal at three levels:

- £60+ per year
- £600+ per year
- £6,000+ per year

Becoming a Churchill Fellow is often described as life-changing. If you'd like to help ensure others have that same opportunity, you might consider leaving a gift in your Will. Next summer, we'll be hosting a special Legacy Event at the House of Lords to thank those who have pledged this meaningful support during their lifetime. For more information, please contact chris.mann@churchillfellowship.org.

Together, we can ensure that