

Europaia COVID-19 Emergency Fund.

At Europaia we are fully aware of the negative impact of COVID-19 on EU citizens within Greater Manchester and beyond. The Department for Work and Pensions, (DWP) has reported a 40% increase in the number of people on Universal Credit as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic in the UK. By 9 April, after 4 weeks of lockdown the North West of England was the region with the largest proportion of people claiming the benefit. Europaia has observed that the increase in job losses and the subsequent surge in Universal Credit applications has resulted in a significant increase in the need for our welfare advice services. As always we are keen to help, therefore, on top of providing the welfare advice so desperately needed we have been working tirelessly to obtain grants from funders throughout Greater Manchester to allow us to roll out our COVID-19 Emergency Fund. Currently we have received approximately £3000 in funding from Action Together, Forever Manchester, Neighbourly Community Fund, Salford CVS and We Love Mcr to distribute to vulnerable EU citizens within Greater Manchester who are struggling financially as a result of the pandemic.

We initiated Europaia's COVID-19 Emergency Fund on 27th April. Within the charity we decided to distribute the fund in grants ranging from £30-£60 depending on the applicants situation. We have received applications from clients varying in age from 18 to 64 with the majority falling between 20 and 50 years of age. The ratio of male to female applicants is approximately 50:50. As part of the application process we ask applicants to share how the COVID-19 outbreak has affected their daily life. We see common threads amongst our applicants, many have lost their jobs, some applicants have had to seek temporary accommodation as a result of a loss in earnings. Additionally, some applicants are unable to work because they must care for their children given the school closures.

The fund has been in operation for over a month now, a number of applicants have received their grants. Once applicants receive their grant we ask them to provide proof of purchase/s once they have spent the money. We see that the vast majority have chosen to spend the money on the most basic requirement of all, food. A number of our grant recipients have gone on to provide us with feedback. All have said that they are "Very Satisfied" with our service and that they would recommend Europaia to a friend. Two grant recipients shared the following comments.

"Very nice staff, understanding companionate and prompt to react."

"Europaia is an organisation thinking about other citizens - very important."

We would like to take this opportunity to thank our generous funders without which we would not have been able to initiate the fund. However, without additional funding we will be forced to terminate the project soon after its initiation.

To help us to continue to support vulnerable EU citizens in Greater Manchester please donate to our COVID-19 Emergency Fund by clicking [here](#).



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