



## **The Midcounties Co-operative Campaigns Fund**

### **The Midcounties Co-operative**

The Midcounties Co-operative has 640,000 members and annual gross sales of over £900m. We operate a range of businesses in Food, Travel, Healthcare, Childcare, Energy, Post Offices and Flexible Benefits.

Our heartlands are in Oxfordshire, Gloucestershire, Buckinghamshire, Shropshire, Staffordshire, the West Midlands, Wiltshire and Worcestershire. However, we also trade in the surrounding counties and our Energy, Childcare, Travel and Flexible Benefits businesses trade across the UK.

We have four core values that guide the way we work - Democracy, Openness, Equality and Social Responsibility. These are derived from the values and principles of the co-operative movement. We believe they demonstrate the strength of co-operation and set us apart from our competitors.

#### **Democracy**

Ensuring the views of our members are reflected in the way the Society is run.

#### **Openness**

Being open, honest and fair in our dealings with everyone we come into contact with.

#### **Equality**

Recognising the contribution that everyone can make to develop the Society.

#### **Social responsibility**

Reflecting our responsibilities to the wider community in the way we conduct our business.



## **The Society and political engagement**

In October 2013 the Society's members adopted a Statement on Political Engagement. The Statement, which can be found on page 3, shows that the Society is willing to engage with any organisation that shares its objectives and beliefs.

## **Campaigns Fund**

To help bring the commitments in the Statement to life, the Society has a Campaigns Fund.

The Fund is intended to support campaigning activity that promotes the aims of co-operation in the public and political arena and supports the objectives and priorities of the Society.

The Fund is open to applications from any organisation, including the Co-operative Party, whose aims reflect those of the Society and the co-operative movement. A set of procedures and criteria for the Fund have been approved and can be found later in this document.

Please note the Fund will **not** support:

- charitable or welfare activities
- applications for funding on behalf of individual candidates in local, national or European elections.

## **How to apply**

Organisations interested in applying for funding should contact the Secretariat Group in the first instance – [anna.oleary@midcounties.coop](mailto:anna.oleary@midcounties.coop);  
[edward.parker@midcounties.coop](mailto:edward.parker@midcounties.coop).



## **The Midcounties Co-operative Limited Statement on political engagement**

### **Approved by members 24 October 2013**

The Midcounties Co-operative supports, in letter and spirit, the Principles set out in the Statement of Co-operative Identity of the International Co-operative Alliance and the Governance Code of Co-operatives UK, to embrace all who accept the responsibilities of membership without gender, social, racial, political or religious discrimination.

The Society recognises the important role that the Co-operative Party has played, and continues to play, in promoting the interests of co-operation in the political sphere and, with the endorsement of members as expressed at successive Annual Meetings, provides financial support for the work of the Party.

The Society also seeks to engage with other political organisations and campaigning organisations which are active in its core trading area and which share its objective of working towards a society based on democracy, equal opportunities and social justice; and an economy where co-operative ownership plays an important and growing role in generating prosperity, genuine consumer choice and sustainable community development.



## **Procedures and Eligibility Criteria**

All applications must be completed electronically. The application form is available from the Secretariat group – [anna.oleary@midcounties.coop](mailto:anna.oleary@midcounties.coop); [edward.parker@midcounties.coop](mailto:edward.parker@midcounties.coop).

The Society's Board determines which applications will be supported and the scale of any grants made. To help with its decision making, the Board has established a Grants Panel. The Panel can make recommendations to the Board but is not empowered to make decisions.

Successful applicants will be required to complete an End of Grant Form to document how they have spent the grant and to allow for audit and evaluation against the original application:

- the End of Grant Form must be completed within a timeframe agreed with the Society at the outset.
- any further expenditure should be the subject of a fresh application.
- any underspend must be reimbursed to the Fund.

### **Who can apply?**

Campaigning organisations and democratic political parties whose aims and principles are compatible with the Principles of the International Co-operative Alliance are eligible to apply for funding.

### **Funding period**

Applicants are welcome to apply for funding for periods of up to two years.

### **Eligible activities**

The Fund is intended to support campaigning activity (primarily within the Society's



core trading area) that promotes co-operation in the political arena and supports the objectives and priorities of the Society.

The Fund does **not** support charitable or welfare activities.

Applications must demonstrate new activity.

However, the Co-operative Party, which was set up by the Co-operative movement and exists to promote co-operation, can apply for funding to cover expenditure on items which were previously supported through the Society's subscription to the Party; and applications from local branches of the Co-operative Party may include funding to cover costs of routine administration and publicity which have previously been supported through grants from the Society.

Applications for funding on behalf of individual candidates in local, national or European elections will not be approved.

### **Support for the Co-operative Party**

The Society endeavors to ensure that around one third of the Fund is disbursed to organisations other than the Co-operative Party.

### **Review**

These procedures and criteria are reviewed by the Board every three years.

**Edward Parker**

**Secretary & Head of Governance**