



Rosa's Rise Fund

Interim Impact Report

Published: August 2024



Foreword

by Rebecca Gill, CEO of Rosa

The Rise fund was developed in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic and was designed to give flexible support and an element of breathing space to Black and minoritised-led women's and girls' organisations.

Many of these organisations were experiencing acute challenges including catastrophic reductions in funding and significant issues with staff recruitment and retention. Since then, the cost-of-living crisis has compounded these issues.

Often arising out of the communities they serve, Black and minoritised-led women's and girls' organisations are critical to providing tailored and culturally sensitive support to women and girls in times of crisis as well as driving forward gender equality and anti-racism in the UK. The Rise fund offers organisational development funding to enable Black and minoritised-led women's and girls' organisations to survive, thrive and grow.

Thanks to the generosity of numerous funders, Rosa has been able to offer two years of funding, as well as grant uplifts of almost 50%, to help organisations with the strain of the cost-of-living crisis. As Rise grantees deliver in their second year of activity, this report gives us insight into what has been achieved so far. It shows that, by focusing on strengthening governance, strategies, systems and processes, organisations are in a stronger position for the future, and are more able to attract funding to meet increased demand.

We are thrilled to see that the 35 organisations funded through Rise have brought in more than £1million of additional funding since receiving Rosa grants.

The existence of thriving Black and minoritised-led women's and girls' organisations is critical to a thriving women's sector. The work these organisations do is invaluable to the women and girls they exist to serve, to communities, and to society. But the challenges facing Black and minoritised-led organisations continue to deepen and significant and systemic barriers to funding persist.

Background

Evidence has shown that Black, Asian and minority ethnic women were disproportionately affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, both in terms of health and economic impacts.^{1,2} This was on top of pre-existing inequalities across a range of areas, including employment, accessing benefits, housing, and the 'no recourse to public funds' policy under which a person who is subject to immigration control cannot claim public funds.

Since the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, the cost of living has increased sharply across the UK and hit low-income households hardest.³ Of these, the most disproportionately affected are single female and Black, Asian, or other ethnic minority households, facing costs that were 50% higher than their male and white counterparts (respectively) as a portion of their income.⁴

The disproportionate impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and cost of living crisis on Black and minoritised women has put enormous strain on small organisations which provide support to them, most of which were already struggling to survive on extremely limited income even before the Covid-19 pandemic. In 2021, just 3.9 per cent of all charitable grants awarded to women's and girls' charities went to micro and small organisations, despite accounting for 86.5 per cent of the sector by number.⁵

“The cost-of-living crisis has led to increased demand for our services, as disadvantaged families struggle more with their emotional wellbeing.”

Highlights

¹ Women and Equalities Committee, (2020). Unequal impact? Coronavirus and BAME people. Available at: <https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/3965/documents/39887/default/>

² FORWARD, (2020). Covid-19 Survey: Coronavirus and BAME women. Available at: <https://www.forwarduk.org.uk/forward-publications/report-coronavirus-and-bame-women/>

³ House of Commons Library, (2024). Rising cost of living in the UK. Available at: <https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-9428/CBP-9428.pdf>

⁴ Tims, S and Caddick, D. (2022). Losing the Inflation Race. Available at: <https://neweconomics.org/2022/05/losing-the-inflation-race>

⁵ Rosa Fund UK, (2023). Mapping the UK Women and Girls Sector and its Funding: Where Does the Money Go? Available at: <https://rosauk.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/Women-and-Girls-Sector-Research-Mapping-Report-Amended.pdf>

2020 also saw a huge awakening in countries around the world to the depth and prevalence of racism and racial inequality that Black and minoritised people faced every single day. Prompted by the horrific murder in America of George Floyd at the hands of a serving police officer, which was filmed and shared around the world, many companies, institutions, organisations and individuals promised to take urgent action to address race inequality.

Funders and philanthropists recognised the limited funding they had been providing to Black and minoritised led organisations and hastily increased their investment. In late 2020, Rosa conducted a consultation with Black and minoritised women's and girls' organisations and found that many of these organisations benefited from this shift in funding in the first instance and adapted their work to accommodate this.

However, the funding soon dried up and many were facing a funding cliff edge, left in a worse position than they had been in before. In response to this, Rosa developed the Rise Fund.



The Rise Fund

The Rise Fund provided two-year grants of up to £40,000 to organisations led 'by and for' Black and minoritised women and girls which had been established for three years or more, and with an average income of less than £100,000 per year.

The funding supported organisational development work with the aim of enabling Black and minoritised-led women's and girls' organisations to be in a stronger position to survive, thrive and grow. The fund prioritised applications from organisations that had experience addressing racial inequality and injustice.

Prompted by concerns shared by grantees about their financial stability amid the cost-of-living crisis, Rosa provided Rise grantees with a grant uplift of just under 50% of their original grant to support them with core costs. This resulted in organisations receiving grants of up to a total £58,500 through the fund.

“The grant has been instrumental in developing our organisation and strengthening our capacity especially within the post-pandemic context of funding challenges, high costs of living and increases in community needs.”

The Hawa Trust

£58,500

Organisations received up to £58,500 over 2 years

Planned outcomes

Key outcomes for organisations that received funding included one or more of the following:

1. A clearer strategy
2. More effective governance
3. More effective leadership
4. Stronger alliances with other women's and girls' organisations
5. More financial sustainability
6. Being more able to attract funding from other sources
7. Being more able to demonstrate the impact of your work
8. More effective systems and processes

Funders partnering with Rosa on the Rise Fund include Clothworkers Foundation, Tudor Trust, Indigo Trust, Emmanuel Kaye Foundation, City Bridge Foundation, formerly City Bridge Trust, and Esmée Fairbairn Foundation. The project timeframe is from 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2024.

Purpose of the evaluation

The purpose of the mid-term evaluation is to provide Rosa and funders with an assessment of the impact of the Rise Fund to date, and to identify themes and specific challenges faced by Black and minoritised-led women's and girls' organisations.

What was funded?

In July 2022, Rosa awarded 35 grants of up to £40,000 over a two-year period. In addition, Rosa has provided Rise grantees with a grant uplift to support them with the rising cost of living.

The funded organisations directly provide a diverse range of services to some of the most marginalised women and girls in the UK. Often led by women with shared experiences, these organisations have a deep understanding of the inequalities these women and girls face throughout their lives.

“The difference it has brought is huge. We now have an accredited centre for NOCN for ESOL, functional skills and life skills courses. We have developed our business plan and have developed our social impact report available on our social media. The organisation has created a big impact in the community, and we have been nominated as a finalist for BBC Humberside Radio’s Make a Difference award.”

Hull Sisters





Below is a snapshot of some of the work supported through the fund

- 1.** Business planning and specialist consultancy
 - 2.** Development of fundraising strategy
 - 3.** Review and evaluation of monitoring and evaluation activity
 - 4.** Audit of organisational skills and systems
 - 5.** Development of collaborative networks
 - 6.** Staff training and coaching
-

Highlights

35

Black and minoritised women's and girls' organisations funded

10k+

over 10,000 Black and minoritised women and girls supported

100%

of grants awarded to organisations led by Black and minoritised women

£1,354,146

awarded to organisations led by and for Black and minoritised women and girls

£1,126,846

additional funding leveraged for Black and minoritised women's and girls' organisations

“The grant has strengthened our organisation as we are seeing more donations and funding come in, meaning that we are able to free up resources to organising events and activities for our group members which are of better quality.

We have also been able to make new local connections to other community organisations and local councillors which has allowed us to reach more people who are in need of our services. Overall, having the resources available to spend on fundraising has seen a big uplift in member satisfaction and event attendance.”

Syrian Sisters



How Rosa's approach to funding helped Rise grantees

At Rosa, we know that women's and girls' organisations are the experts in their fields and know best what they need to thrive. When awarding grants to organisations, we aim to be flexible in our approach and support organisations when they need to make changes to their grants.

Wherever possible, we endeavour to alleviate stress and pressure on grantee organisations. Several organisations have acknowledged and appreciated this approach in their feedback to us.

FUNDING IMPACT



of grantees said the fund has helped to strengthen their organisation



of grantees reported that the fund has enabled them to secure additional funding



of grantees said that support from Rosa helped their organisation to be more financially sustainable

Case study: Goldstar Creative Marketing

Goldstar Creative Marketing used the funding to develop its monitoring, evaluation and governance, as well as planning for sustainable growth.

Based in London, Goldstar was founded to identify and enhance employability potential by providing essential employment training options for women in the Jewish community. Goldstar's work, through consulting and training courses, is helping to reduce the growing poverty rate of socially and economically disadvantaged young women, on a communal level.

"The Rise grant funding has enabled us to undertake work to enhance two key areas of our organisation. Firstly, we used consultancy services to review, evaluate, and improve our organisational strategies for monitoring, evaluation and governance. Since undertaking this work, we have seen a significant movement in channeling services via a systematic and directed approach. We have also spent the last year planning and developing our strategic and sustainable growth and increasing our public awareness to ensure that we remain part of the conversation.

The Rise grant has given us a huge boost so that we could focus on sharing our work with others, as well as take part in networks and opportunities which allowed us to increase the voice of the young women we support. This grant has helped to develop new networks and partnerships at both local and municipal level, and by expanding our existing services, we have reached a near 25% increase in user numbers, as our outreach work is now more targeted and gives users the tools and opportunities to survive, thrive and grow towards a brighter future."

Owner at Goldstar Creative Marketing



Case study: Angels of Hope for Women

The Rise Fund has enabled Angels of Hope for Women to strengthen its strategic plan, and nurture links with like-minded community organisations.

This collaborative working led to securing a three-year National Lottery grant, making it possible to employ two additional staff members to strengthen and develop the organisation.

Based in Manchester, Angels of Hope for Women is an outreach service working with women and girls who have experienced domestic abuse and harmful practices, most of whom are asylum seekers and refugees living in temporary accommodation.

Angels of Hope for Women supports these women to become independent and self-reliant. The organisation also enables women to support others by volunteering and by providing space for them to share ideas. Angels of Hope for Women used its funding to enhance its administration and volunteer support, recruiting local women in its community. It also sought accountancy support to boost existing fundraising and build sustainability.

The CEO of Angels of Hope for Women described the Rise funding as 'invaluable', giving the organisation time and space to grow by focusing on service and strategic development. Angels of Hope for Women now has the capacity to do deliver more and better services for Black and minoritised women and girls. The organisation has supported 420 women and girls since receiving their Rosa grant.

"The impact of the funding is such that, within a short period of time, our organisation has built its capacity so, with more staff, we are delivering more services. We are having weekly events instead of monthly meetings, where women are coming to talk about issues they are facing, such as mental health. We meet in a community centre with a foodbank and while a lot of Black women wanted to use this service, they found it difficult to speak to people who weren't Black about the issues they are going through. Having Black women at the centre has made a difference as they see someone who looks like them and is more likely to understand what they are going through."

CEO of Angels of Hope for Women

Case study: Sandwell African Women Association (SAWA)

The Rise Fund has allowed SAWA to conduct two types of diagnostic checks to enhance its organisational development, which will lead to more robust systems and help the team be more responsive to change.

Based in the West Midlands, Sandwell African Women Association (SAWA) was formed in 2014 out of a desire to support, restore, empower, and bring hope to African refugee women and children affected by war, sexual violence, sexual exploitation and abuse, as well as survivors of torture and women deprived of human rights in their homelands.

SAWA used Rise funding to conduct two types of diagnostic checks for organisational development. First, an internal voluntary, community and social enterprise check to identify internal strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. This identified areas of growth for SAWA's activities and services, communications, leadership/governance, and structure/systems.

This was followed by an external Development Need Assessment (DNA) diagnostic check, alongside an 'Organisational Resilience Work' assessment. Ahead of SAWA's 10-year anniversary, the work supported by the Rise funding has breathed new life into the organisation. One year into the project, they have reviewed their Board, trained Trustees and committee members, improved governance and put in place robust leadership.

By strengthening their infrastructure in this way, Rise funding has enabled SAWA to anticipate, prepare for, respond to, and adapt to change and sudden disruptions so they can thrive as a team.

Challenges

Grantees face pressing challenges over the next 12-18 months including increased operating costs, soaring demand for services, and ongoing cuts in funding.

Grantee interim reports and case studies demonstrate that the Rise Fund has made a significant impact in supporting their organisational development goals, including strategic advancements, improved governance structures, enhanced leadership capabilities, additional funding opportunities, and optimised systems and processes.

However, the majority of grantees also reported that inflation, and the associated cost of living crisis, has thrown up new sets of challenges, including:

- 1.** **Rising costs:** Several grantees reported that they are using the small reserves they have, to meet everyday costs.
- 2.** **Increased demand for services:** As more households are pushed into vulnerable positions, demand for mental health support has risen.
- 3.** **Drop in income:** As government departments and local authorities reduce spending in the short term, to make up for higher costs elsewhere, several grantees expressed concerns about funding and their long-term financial sustainability.

SOME OF THE CHALLENGES INCLUDED:

97% increased costs

46% lack of funding

74% increased demand for services

Conclusion

Rosa's flexible approach enables organisations to make decisions about the direction they take, and considers the challenging circumstances they are working in.

It is clear at this stage of the Rise Fund that funding organisational development has given women's and girls' organisations the breathing space they needed in the context of the demands put on them by the Covid-19 pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis.

In the midst of the pandemic, a global recognition of racism and racial inequality emerged, sparked by the filmed murder of George Floyd by a police officer in the U.S and the subsequent activism of the Black Lives Matter movement. This led many companies, institutions, and individuals to commit to addressing racial inequality urgently. Many funders and philanthropists also acknowledged their insufficient support for Black and minoritised-led organisations and rapidly increased their investments. Rosa is concerned that this interest in funding for these organisations has diminished and many are left struggling to survive.

Taking all these pressures into account, it is clear there is a critical need for ring-fenced funding for Black and minoritised-led women's and girls' organisations. This need has not disappeared and is in fact growing. Rosa intends to keep fundraising for this work.





Organisation Name	Location	Grant	Cost of living uplift	Total Grant
1. African Women's Care	London	£34,154	£15,750	£49,904
2. Angels of Hope for Women	Manchester	£40,000	£18,400	£58,400
3. Ashdon Jazz Academy	London	£25,400	£11,700	£37,100
4. Asian Single Parents Network CIC	Gillingham	£15,000	£6,900	£21,900
5. Baobab Women's Project CIC	Birmingham	£40,000	£18,400	£58,400
6. Came Women and Girls	London	£30,000	£13,800	£43,800
7. Chinese Women in Peterborough	Peterborough	£30,000	£13,800	£43,800
8. Deaf Ethnic Women Association	London	£33,918	£15,650	£49,568
9. Diyya Project	Stourbridge	£40,000	£18,400	£58,400
10. Dynamic Support GM	Manchester	£26,000	£12,000	£38,000
11. ForwardCulture CIC	Leicester	£26,390	£12,150	£38,540
12. Gilded Lily Inspiring Enterprise CIC	Glasgow	£39,426	£18,150	£57,576
13. GIRLDREAMER LTD	Birmingham	£40,000	£18,400	£58,400
14. Globalmama Enterprises	Sheffield	£12,050	£5,550	£17,600
15. Goldstar Creative Marketing	London	£40,000	£18,400	£58,400
16. Highlights	London	£5,000	£2,350	£7,350
17. Hop On (Yorkshire) Ltd	Bradford	£20,000	£9,200	£29,200
18. Hull Sisters	Hull	£40,000	£18,400	£58,400
19. Inspiring Women Network CIC	Truro	£38,800	£6,350	£45,150
20. Lighthouse	London	£28,000	£12,900	£40,900
21. Ocean Women's Association	London	£9,635	£4,450	£14,085
22. Peninim	London	£25,520	£11,750	£37,270
23. Roj Women's Association	London	£40,000	£18,400	£58,400
24. Sandwell African Women Assoc.	Sandwell	£35,500	£16,350	£51,850
25. Southwark Every Woman's Centre	London	£14,666	£6,800	21,466
26. Step Up 2 Fitness	London	£20,000	£9,200	£29,200
27. Syrian Sisters	Oxford	£8,000	£3,757	£11,757
28. The Feel Good Women's Group	Glasgow	£19,310	£8,900	£28,210
29. The Glendale Women's Café	Glasgow	£18,795	£8,650	£27,445
30. The Hawa Trust	London	£19,590	£9,050	£28,640
31. thinkHER ambition	London	£32,900	£15,150	£48,050
32. Women of Worth	Bury	£13,000	£6,000	£19,000
33. Young Ladies Club	London	£40,000	£18,400	£58,400
34. Young Steps Ltd	London	£33,935	£15,650	£49,585

AUTHOR - DR ROXANNE KHAN, CONSULTANT
WWW.ONEVIDENCE.CO.UK

ROSA FUND
COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE - 6598018
REGISTERED CHARITY NO. - 1124856

ROSA

**THE UK FUND FOR
WOMEN AND GIRLS**



 Registered with
**FUNDRAISING
REGULATOR**