

# The Community Resilience Fund: Decision Making Process

## Contents

Introduction.....	2
Key Features.....	3
Success Criteria.....	4
Consensus Approach.....	6
Key Considerations.....	8
Inputs.....	16

## Introduction

The CRF decision-making methodology was co-designed with 25 VCSE organisations and 32 Ward Councillors over six months in 2022. The co-design process which consisted of two online workshops and 4 in person workshops was facilitated by [TPX Impact](#). Their team provided expertise about deliberative democracy - why do it, how to do it, important values and principles, options and things to consider. We worked closely in between co-design meetings with 8 VCSE partners who formed a 'Design Team'.

The aims of the workshops were to:

- Build a shared approach to decision-making
- Ensure more equity and transparency in decision-making
- Find shared solutions using all our knowledge and insights

After considering various options for participatory decision-making including voting, and a scoring matrix, it was agreed to take a consensus-based approach to decision making.

## Our key learnings

It's important to note that as this was an action learning process, there were aspects of the decision-making that were changed and adapted along the way. For example, some groups had a higher number of proposals to consider than others, so additional meetings were offered to some groups on top of the proposed 4 meetings. We also changed the structure of some meeting to allow more meaningful deliberations to take place.

This was a hugely collaborative piece of work – to both co-design and execute the decision-making meetings. We had a committed team of 29 facilitators from BCC and city-wide VCSE organisations. All facilitators attended training around the approach to decision-making and worked closely with us to deliver and adapt the decision-making meetings. Without them, we wouldn't have had the capacity to do a project at this scale.

# Key features



4 meetings  
face-to face



Meeting  
Jan to  
May '23



12 hours  
of deliberation



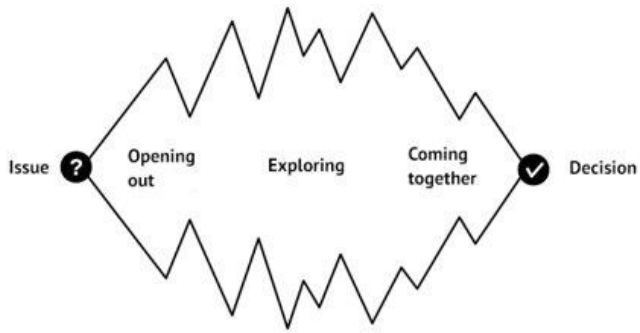
16 to 26  
participants

- Participants will attend at least 4 face-to-face meetings between January 2023 – May 2024
- Each meeting will be 3 hours duration with two breaks, but there is flexibility for areas that have a smaller number of proposals
- There is the option for one additional meeting if the group want more time to consider applications (decision by meeting 3)
- Participants can request further information to aid them with informed deliberation and requests will be managed between the meetings by Bristol City Council
- Meetings will be held in a neutral venue in the relevant area or at a central location for equalities groups
- Each group will have between 16 and 26 participants and numbers will vary depending on the size of the area. They will be made up of Bristol residents, VCSE representatives and councillors in accordance with the [recruitment approach](#)

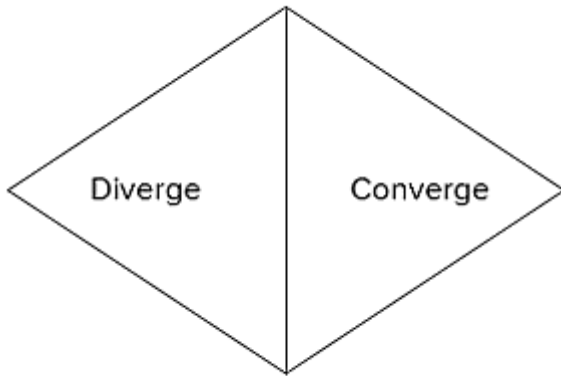
# Success criteria

This list was developed with facilitators:

1. Everyone is enjoying the conversation so much that they want to stay and chat afterwards!
2. People have built a network and connections in their communities
3. People feel they have developed skills and want to build on that
4. We've started building a group of champions who can keep doing this kind of work in the future
5. We have captured how confident and comfortable people feel at the beginning- and then asked people to reflect on how this has changed. What changed for them personally and what changed in the group?
6. How interested and confident people feel about their ability and interest in influencing decisions in the city
7. We have a good record of the reflections and decisions of the group so that we can show how decisions were reached
8. People feel listened to and have said what they wanted to say. They felt safe and that the process was accessible. They feel change has happened as a result. \*\*How do we check this? Need to give the space for people to reflect this.
9. We have met peoples accessibility needs and included everyone.
10. The money is allocated in a way that reflects the diversity of Bristol (not just the groups that are always successful)
11. The grantees all meet the criteria of the fund. None of the grantees radically break from the criteria of the fund. Everyone is happy that this is the case.
12. Facilitators have learnt and grown from being involved- they've overcome issues and developed their skills.



Source: Seeds for Change

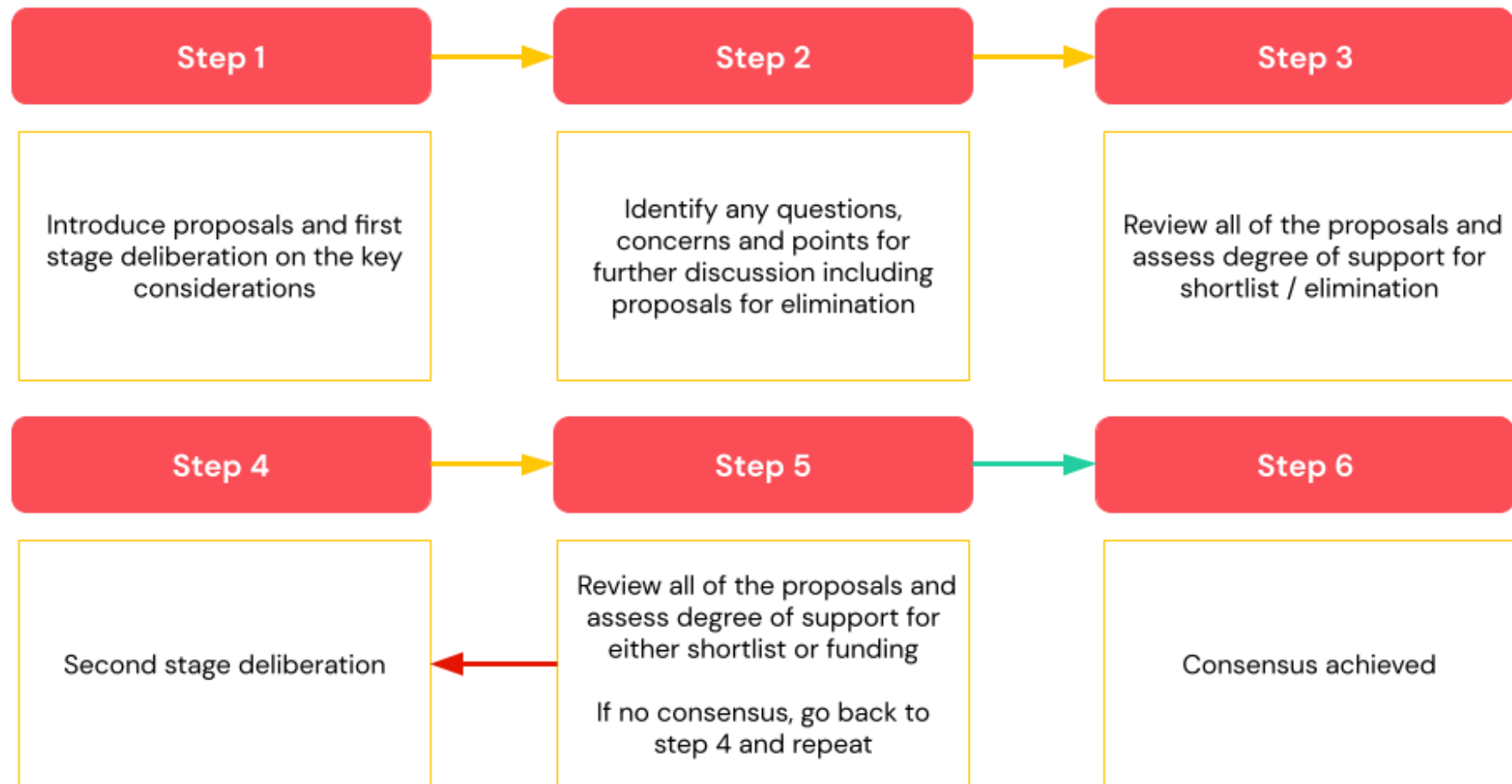


‘Diamond approach’

# Consensus approach

- Our approach to decision making will be based on **consensus**.
- The aim is for everyone in the group to be in **agreement** on which proposals proceed and are selected for award of funding - to reach consent of the group.
- We will use **minus one** in our model, so a decision can proceed if one person in the group is not in agreement with the others. However, every effort will be made to try and reach a unanimous decision.
- Participants will work in **facilitated small groups** with a maximum ratio of 1 facilitator to every 7 participants but come together for decision making points.
- Participants will be guided through the process by collectively exploring a series of **key considerations** and connected **prompt questions**. This will form the basis of the deliberations.
- Process facilitators will receive **training in facilitating consensus decision making** and participants will receive an **introduction** in their first meeting.

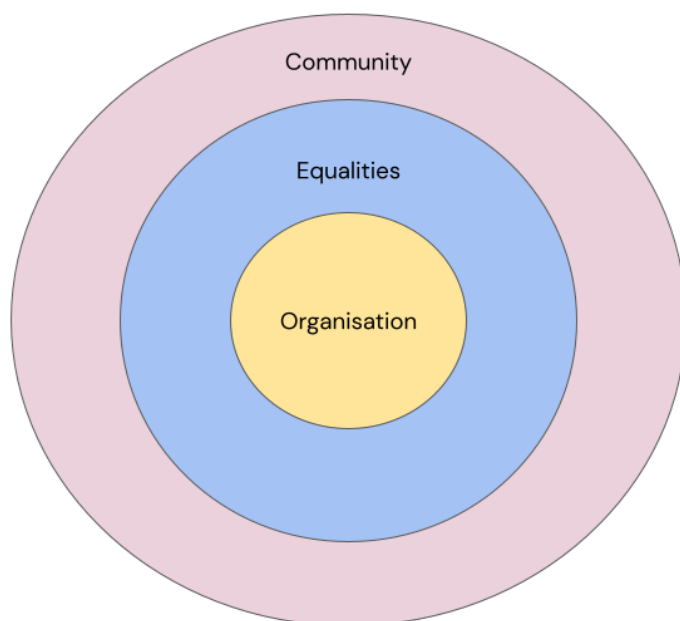
## Flow



Small groups engage in stages 1/2/4 before full room review in steps 3/5/6.

# Key considerations

Questioning statements on impact: If you think about an area and think about impact, you can have this by investing in a busy building that doesn't have a boiler. It's not about services, it's about the resilience of an organisation. There's an area over there that doesn't have anything.



## Stage 1 deliberation (meeting 2/3) - to aid shortlisting

### Organisational resilience

This is the fundamental bedrock- all proposals should show this.

*Presentation: what does it take to run a community building?*

1. To what extent will this funding support the continuation and success of the community organisation?

### Elevating communities experiencing inequalities

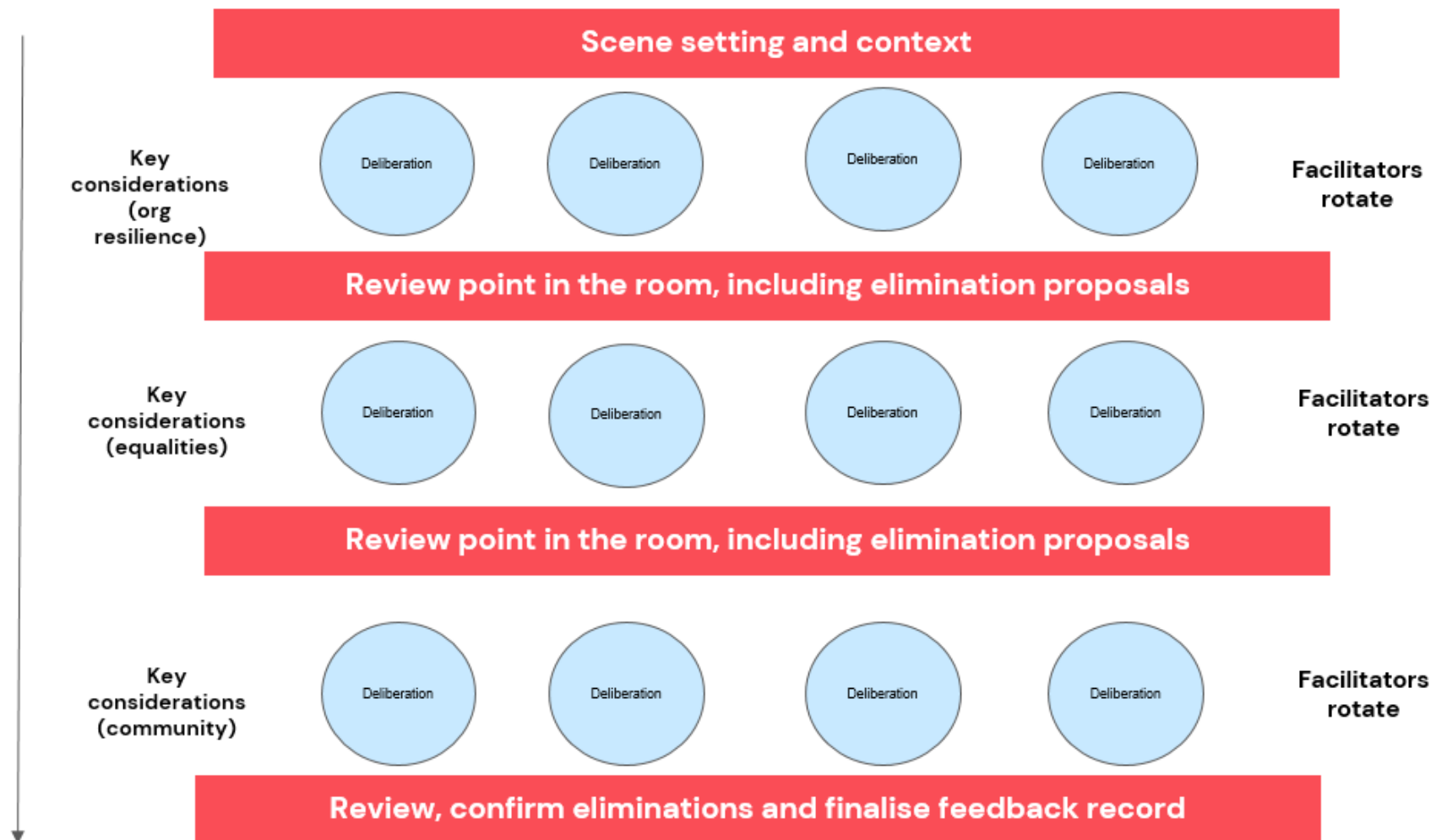
1. Is the proposal from an organisation led by an equalities

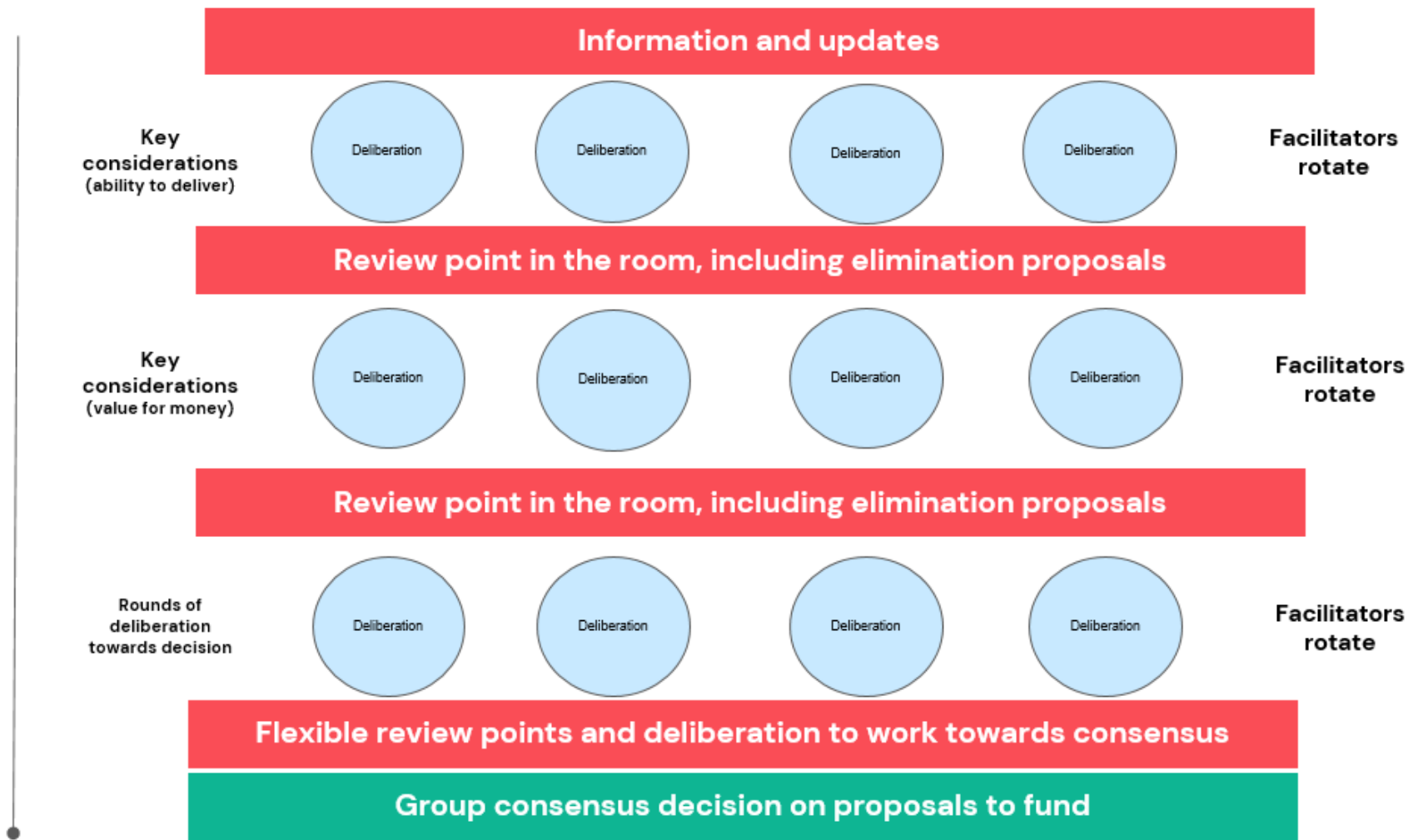


<p>This is about recognising that we need to take positive and proactive steps to include people, break down barriers and build communities.</p>	<p>community? E.g. an LGBT or disabled people led organisations</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Will this proposal support an organisation to include more people who have been traditionally excluded? Does it clearly make the organisation more accessible? Eg. adding womens changing rooms to a football club.</li> <li>3. Will this proposal invest in communities that have been overlooked and excluded?</li> <li>4. Will this proposal help a group to more effectively self-organise OR will this proposal help an organisation bring diverse groups together and increase community cohesion?</li> <li>5. Which proposals will have the biggest impact on strengthening equalities communities?</li> <li>6. What evidence is there?</li> </ol>
<p><b>Community context</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● This is the local context</li> <li>● These are the gaps in the area</li> <li>● This needs to inform how we review and discuss the applications</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What local knowledge do you have that's relevant to considering this proposal?</li> <li>2. How will this organisation thriving benefit the wider community?</li> <li>3. What happens if we don't fund this proposal?</li> </ol> <p>Reflective prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● What difference is this proposal making in the wider context?</li> <li>● What is the potential or likely impact on the community?</li> </ul>

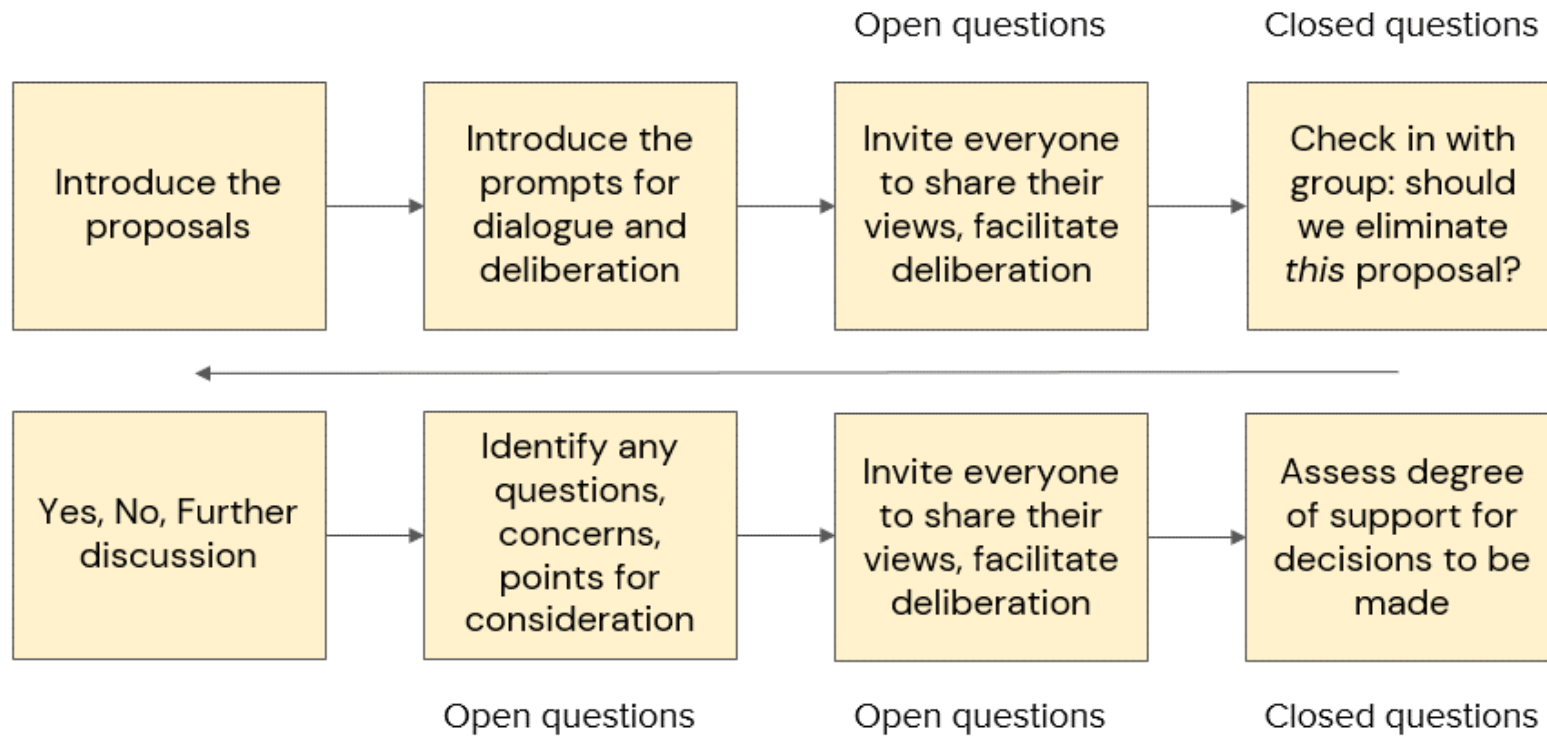
**Stage 2 deliberation (meeting 3/4) - to aid final decision**

<p><b>Ability to deliver this project</b></p> <p>Bristol City Council can support some organisations to prepare for delivery, so this is about the timeline and <u>not</u> a judgement on the organisation and how capable they are.</p> <p>We will put facts into context and draw on risks/barriers from the application form to inform this deliberation.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What support is needed to deliver this proposal?</li> <li>2. Can the organisation reasonably deliver this project within the timeframe?</li> </ol>
<p><b>Value for money</b></p> <p>Bristol City Council can offer technical assessment and give organisations some assistance to get quotes.</p> <p>We will also ask a technical expert to prepare an explainer on 'value for money' after quotes secured.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Are we confident that this is a fair and reasonable cost?</li> <li>2. Do we have any concerns?</li> <li>3. What further checks are needed to give us confidence in investing in this proposal?</li> </ol>





## EXAMPLE of facilitated steps at the tables



Meeting 1	Meeting 2
3 hours	3 hours
<p><b>Objective:</b> Learning session to develop understanding of the Community Resilience Fund, approach, ways of working and context.</p>	<p><b>Objective:</b> Collective review of the applications, first stage deliberation and identifying requests for further information.</p>
<p><b>Components:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Welcome and participant introductions</li> <li>● Introduction to the purpose of the fund, process and terminology</li> <li>● Presentation: Citywide context</li> <li>● How we'll work together</li> <li>● Presentation: Fairness, prejudice, confirmation bias</li> <li>● Intro to the application pack and questions. Use of evidence to form opinions.</li> </ul> <p>Participants will be given the applicant pack at this meeting.</p>	<p><b>Components:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Recap of the application pack</li> <li>● Presentation: Ward context</li> <li>● Review the applications in turn, world cafe</li> <li>● Identify what further information is required to help the group reach an informed decision.</li> </ul> <p>Note: for areas with a high number of proposals, we will start shortlisting at this meeting.</p>
<p><b>Output:</b> None - questions for BCC to respond to</p>	<p><b>Output:</b> Requests for further information</p>

Meeting 3	Meeting 4
3 hours	3 hours
<p><b>Objective:</b> Reach consensus on a shortlist of applications continuing first stage deliberation and identify what further information is needed to reach an informed decision.</p>	<p><b>Objective:</b> Second stage deliberation and reaching consensus on the applications to be awarded the community resilience funding.</p>
<p><b>Components:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Recap of the application pack</li> <li>● Sharing responses to requests for further information</li> <li>● Facilitated process to reach consensus on the shortlist of applications and which ones will be eliminated from the process at this stage</li> <li>● Are we on track to do what we aim to with the CRF?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Components:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Recap of the shortlisted applications</li> <li>● Review of further information</li> <li>● Facilitated process to reach consensus on the applications that will be awarded funding</li> <li>● Have we set out what we aimed to do with the CRF?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Output:</b> Shortlist of applications and request for further information to aid the final decision in the next meeting. BCC will contact applicants to inform them of decisions.</p>	<p><b>Output:</b> Applications to be awarded funding. BCC will contact applicants to inform them of decisions.</p>

**OPTIONAL** 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> meeting if the group feels they need more time to consider applications

# Inputs

The process will offer a range of information for participants to consider as they discuss the proposals. Requests for further information will be participant led.

Key inputs and information will be:



Participant Led



Process information



City context



Ward context



Proposal details



Technical view



Reflections on impact and equalities



Prompt questions

**Process information** will include background to the Community Resilience Fund, terminology, and how we will move through the decision making meetings.

**City context** will include an overview of community resilience and existing assets across the city, touching on fairness and parity between different localities.

**Ward context** will include area based information including existing assets, quality of life survey, and [interactive map](#) of the applications. Demographics, health, specific barriers to engagement, Quality of Life survey.

**Proposal details** will include applicant information (see Appendix A).

**Technical view** will include expertise on applications such as value for money on quotes, impact, accessibility, or environmental regulations, tech, and buildings.

**Reflections on impact and equalities** will include views on how different groups are impacted (e.g. most non-Disabled people wouldn't know the issues Disabled people face).



This information will be provided at different stages by:



Council staff



CRF applicants







Subject matter experts



Beneficiaries

Type of information we expect each input group to present includes:

 <p><b>Council staff</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Process information</li> <li>• City context</li> <li>• Ward context</li> <li>• Proposal details</li> </ul>
 <p><b>CRF applicants</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proposal details</li> <li>• Responsive to requests for further information from decision making participants</li> </ul>
 <p><b>Subject matter experts</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technical view on CRF proposals</li> <li>• Responsive to requests for further information from decision making participants</li> </ul>
 <p><b>Equalities insight</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflections on impact and equalities</li> </ul>

Input can be given by:

- **Written responses** to requests for further information from decision making participants
- **Live Q&A sessions** during meetings 3 and 4
- **Video and picture**