



Applying for funding: Building Alternative Economic Models in Birmingham

The Economic Justice Programme began because the economy in Birmingham doesn't work for everyone. The gap between 'haves' and 'have nots' is growing and is often patterned along lines of gender, race, age, disability or geography. Barrow Cadbury Trust believes that we don't have to accept things as they are in the city just because they seem entrenched.

As part of its work, the programme seeks to challenge injustice where it sees it through campaigning and movement-building. It also seeks to show that alternative ways of arranging our economy in parts of the city are viable – and that in some cases, they already exist or are in development.

Could you be one of our partners?

We are interested in hearing from organisations working in Birmingham that are testing or building alternative economic models that others might learn from or adopt. This strand of the Economic Justice Programme will support a small number of experiments to develop and demonstrate alternatives to the mainstream economy. These activities will have potential for deep, long-term and sustainable change beyond of your own organisation.

What do we mean by 'alternative economic models'?

Under the logic of our current economic system, practices like individual ownership, disposable objects (that are thrown away rather than mended or re-used) and inequality are often taken for granted and seen as inevitable. Yet this often comes at a cost to our collective wellbeing and long-term sustainability of our physical environment. Some parts of the city are in a poorer state and some communities remain underserved – despite examples of growing wealth and investment elsewhere. We are keen to support initiatives in Birmingham that seek to challenge that logic. Activities that:

- focus on giving local people, particularly those further from power, more access to and control over assets
- value and reward often un-recognised forms of labour and social activity in ways other than money
- help wealth, resources and wellbeing to be distributed more fairly between people
- help resources to be re-used and regenerated

There are a growing number of examples of alternative economic systems in the UK across a range of fields such as housing, food and money/ currency (see www.farnearer.org for some practical examples).