

GMCVO Strategy 2024-2027

Our view of the current operating environment

There are key aspects to the life in Greater Manchester that we focus on:

- Greater Manchester has significant inequalities across its towns and cities
- This varies from place to place but discrimination and imbalances in power shape life chances and that drives inequality
- The impacts of climate change will increasingly be present in Greater Manchester, particularly in relation to extreme weather events
- The impacts of crises we have seen in Greater Manchester are unevenly distributed and the greatest impact is felt by low income and marginalised communities

We recognise that these aren't the only challenges that need addressing in the wider city, but we believe that we have a track record and expertise developed from a range of activities that we can apply specifically to these challenges.

What we believe is needed

From our experience there are principles we believe are needed to address the challenges above:

- To truly reduce inequality, evidence from the communities most affected is needed to shape decisions and shift power.
- Leadership is needed from multiple organisations for major social or economic change. GMCVO can't act alone.
- Communities gain power over their local environment when they own parts of the local economy.
- Work that builds up from a community level can make meaningful change as it grows.
- Bigger problems don't need bigger solutions – they need more solutions shaped and owned by those who are most affected.
- Ownership and control are important in helping those with less power build a fairer future.

These principles have been proven through our practice and are critical to GMCVO being able to bring the best of our track record to bear on the challenges we will face.



What we do

Our strategy will show how GMCVO will change and adapt over time, but the starting point is our current work:

GMCVO seeks to create a fairer and more inclusive economy in Greater Manchester by:

- Generating and sharing research and insight to shape decision making and service design
- Using grants and investments to support organisations to increase their impact

This can be seen in our social investment funds in groundbreaking partnership with credit unions. Our policy portfolios demonstrate the role of the VCFSE in building an inclusive economy. The high-quality research we have conducted provides a compelling evidence base related to the issues we explore, and our

work supporting the Greater Manchester Equality Alliance (GM=EqAl) brings a diverse range of organisations together to shape decisions in Greater Manchester.

Whilst all areas of work are important to us, our role as a place based social investor is critical to both our progress and our sustainability. The ability to channel investment into the social economy gives us a way of directly supporting local communities and making practical changes to the lives of people in Greater Manchester. This helps provide us with credibility as an organisation and enhances our ability to influence decisions.

As much as this work makes a difference to the communities, the experience and skills our team members develop in the delivery of projects shapes how we view the world and change it. Our strategy builds on this foundation.

How we work

- We are open minded and use evidence to shape our projects and activities.
- We embrace team working and foster collaboration between those who want change.
- We support and celebrate the success of others within the VCFSE sector.
- We are open, honest and respectful in our communications.
- We will understand and be responsive to the positions of others.
- We take tangible steps to challenge systems and structures that uphold oppression and inequality.

This creates a set of values and behaviours we want to be able to display in the way we work together and work with our members and stakeholders. These will shape the projects and roles we create and influence how we support staff to thrive in the organisation.

Our Mission

GMCVO will drive economic and social inclusion in Greater Manchester through effective collaborations and supporting other organisations to achieve their goals.

GMCVO will support better decision making in public policy by increasing the accessibility and diversity of learning and insight to relevant decision makers and influencers.

Our Vision

In the long term:

- Greater Manchester communities will have more power to shape the places they live in.
- There will be more opportunities to enable communities and their organisations to work together.
- Low income and marginalised communities will play a bigger role in addressing the impacts of climate change.
- Greater Manchester community activity will be adequately financed and supports those in need.
- There will be an increased diversity of decision makers who will better understand inequalities and the operating environment in Greater Manchester.
- We will embed new approaches through sharing innovation.

Our Goals

In three years we will:

1. Be seen as an authoritative source of information and evidence on how VCSFE organisations can build an **inclusive economy** in Greater Manchester.
2. Have increased the diversity of leaders and community voices engaged in **addressing the climate crisis**.
3. Be viewed as central to the growth of **community ownership** in Greater Manchester by communities, policy makers and influencers.
4. Be recognised as a leader in developing **innovation in funding**, focusing on supporting marginalised communities.
5. Clearly demonstrate applied principles of **equality, equity, diversity & inclusion** to help successfully deliver our plans and how we are managed.