



Speak and Belong CIC

Salford CVS worked with Monika Sulowska during the 2025 school summer holidays. Monika has a background in Education and was working in a local high school.

Monika identified a need in the local community of Walkden and Little Hulton, in particular, for an organisation that assists people whose first language is not English. During the summer of 2025, we held a couple of meetings with Monika and the other directors discussing what the business wanted to achieve and to establish if a CIC was the right legal structure to deliver this. Monika wanted to set up a CIC, as at some stage in the future, she would like to earn some income from the business. I therefore worked with the group to prepare the documents for company registration

The company was registered on 5th August 2025, Company Registration Number 16630577.

The challenge was to help Monika set up the CIC, raise awareness of the organisation and start to generate income to make the business become sustainable over a period.

Monika makes good use of social media and is well connected with in the local community. They network with other.

To help achieve this, Salford CVS explored a number of different funding strategies for the Speak and Belong CIC to take forward, these included:

1. Networking with strategic partners such as:
 - Salford health improvement team
 - The Well-being Matters team
 - Local Housing Associations such as ForHousing (as their tenants would benefit)
 - Other VCSE groups in Salford.
2. Develop a funding strategy and timetable and support them with applying for several funding applications, these included:
 - Salford City Council
 - ForHousing
 - Wellbeing Matters Community Asset Fund
 - Women and Girls Empowerment Fund
 - Hate Crime Fund
 - Awards for All

Outcomes:

Since setting up Speak and Belong CIC, the company have been successful with the following funding application in Q3 of the 2025 / 26 year.

- £500 from Salford City Council, supporting English assessments and start-up costs
- £500 from ForHousing, supporting English assessments and start-up costs
- £5,920 from the Wellbeing Matters Community Asset Fund 2025–26: Speak and Belong CIC has started a new 15-week “English for Everyday Life” programme in Salford. This free course is designed for refugees, asylum seekers, and other residents who speak English as an additional language (EAL). The programme offers 6 hours of learning per week, combining structured ESOL lessons with informal conversation practice. Lessons focus on practical English for daily life, including GP appointments, school meetings, shopping, housing, and using public transport. Alongside this, we are running the Speak and Belong Conversation Club (15 weeks), a welcoming weekly group that focuses on real-life speaking practice in a safe and supportive environment. Sessions cover everyday topics such as shopping, health, travel, education, and local services, using guided conversations, games, role-plays, and group discussions to build confidence.

This has enabled the company to start delivering some of the courses it has planned.

In terms of funding applications, the group have applied to:

- Salford CVS funding streams, including Hate Crime, Women and Girls Empowerment, and Health and Wellbeing (outstanding)
- The National Lottery Fund – Community Fund (outstanding)
- BBC Children in Need (outstanding)



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- Learning Cafe Programme 2026 (outstanding)
- Paul Hamlyn Foundation / PHF - Migration Fund (outstanding)
- UnLtd - this application was unsuccessful, largely due to sustainability requirements
- Salford RWP - unsuccessful due to a significant number of applications
- The Fore - unsuccessful due to a significant number of applications

The CIC will also be applying for the following Salford CVS funds; which are currently open.

- Early Years Investment Fund
- Whose Art / Whose Culture
- Family Hubs Fund
- Community Resilience Fund

Reflections:

"Speak and Belong have been a model client. and working with them is a pleasure.

I have had frequent meetings with Monika and the other directors over the past 6 months. They have also engaged with other CVS staff members working on other CVS projects.

They have attended a number of Salford CVS training courses, networking events, and built relationships with other CIC's and community groups in the area, which has raised their profile.

They have developed relationships with other CIC's and are planning collaborative programmes with these groups.

They have made good use of social media to increase the presence and awareness within in the local community

Within a relatively short timeframe, they have become a partner in the Wellbeing Matters – social prescribing programme in Salford"

Link: [Speak and Belong CIC](#) | [Salford](#) | [Facebook](#)

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