21st October 2026

— OUR STATEMENT RE REDISTRIBUTION OF LAST THURSDAY'S PRIZE POT —

Liverpool SOUP has five eligibility criteria for projects that pitch at our events. The reason we have these criteria is to ensure we're providing a platform for our local community to fund new, grassroots projects which have the potential to create positive impact and are likely to struggle to get funding elsewhere. No strings attached funding can really help projects like this test out ideas, build confidence and capture evidence of their impact which can support future funding bids.

These criteria were co-designed with the people who attend our events and have been in place since the beginning of 2025. Projects must:

- Have been active for less than two years
- Not be part of an established organisation
- Be largely powered by volunteers
- Have received less than £12k in grants / donations in the previous 12 months
- Be inspired by / impact people local to those who run it

You can learn more about these criteria here.

As we're a volunteer run organisation and some of these criteria are difficult to research, we do not have the capacity or resources to review all applications against these criteria. Instead, we ask all applicants to tick a box on our application form against each of these criteria to confirm that all apply to the project they're representing.

Unfortunately, this does leave us vulnerable to misunderstandings where applicants interpret our criteria differently to how they're intended.

Last Thursday, we had a wonderful Liverpool SOUP event - such a good turnout, four incredible pitchers and so many generous donations made on the door. We left on Thursday buzzing and we hope that you did too!

During this event, Action for Homeless shared the impactful work they're doing, earned the most votes and were announced the winner, being awarded £1,241 at the end of the evening. However, as a result of a number of conversations it's become clear that this project has been active for longer than 2 years, which

does mean that they're in a stronger position to demonstrate the impact of their work, including establishing partnerships.

Since learning this we've chatted to Martin (Action for Homeless) to better grasp where our wires might be crossed and how we could improve our application process to remove any confusion in future. During this conversation Martin suggested that, due to our misunderstanding, the prize pot be shared equally amongst all of Thursday's pitchers. We've accepted this suggestion and thank Martin for being responsive, open and honest with us.

The prize pot (£1,241) awarded on the night was made up of £250 awarded to all projects for sharing their projects with us and £991 of audience donations. This means that all four projects will now be awarded £497.75 (£250 + £247.75).

We feel conflicted because:

1. We champion community-led decision making, Action for Homeless did receive the most votes on the night and we're not questioning the impactful work they do across the city; but
2. We also feel that it's important that our criteria are applied consistently so that newer, less established projects aren't disadvantaged when they pitch and our process remains trusted and fair.

We will be reviewing our approach to shortlisting, to more actively scrutinise the application of our criteria in future.

We appreciate that this may not be a solution that everyone who attended last Thursday, 15th October, agrees with. While, in this instance, this solution is not up for debate as the prize pot has already been redistributed, we do welcome any feedback you've got - we will take this on board to inform how we make these types of decisions in future: HQ@LiverpoolSOUP.co.uk