

**The Armed Forces Covenant Fund:
Sustaining Support: Supporting veterans and families
impacted by the Afghanistan conflict programme**

PROGRAMME GUIDANCE

Under this programme, the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust (the Trust) will award fixed grants of £10,000 or £35,000 to enable some existing projects to expand their work in order to offer better support to veterans and Armed Forces families that have been impacted by the Afghanistan conflict.

Some projects that have been supported by the Trust have needed to change their ways of working to meet a rise in demand to support veterans and Armed Forces families, relating to the Afghanistan conflict, and its aftermath.

We know that there are projects that are actively providing support to veterans and families that have been impacted by the Afghanistan conflict; and are adapting what they do to offer greater support.

This programme will provide emergency funding for projects that need to quickly scale up their activities to meet this need.

Projects funded through this programme will need to show:

- That you have a pressing need for support from veterans or Armed Forces families that have been impacted by the Afghanistan conflict
- That your organisation could use a grant to expand quickly to provide additional support for over a 12 month period

You can use a grant to enable expansion of your existing work to

- Increase your capacity to help more people
- Provide more help to existing project users whose needs have changed

If we award you a grant, it should be used to help veterans or Armed Forces families that have been impacted by the Afghanistan conflict. This can include families of

serving personnel, and of veterans. It includes families that have been bereaved. It also includes family members that care for veterans, and may need additional support at this time.

Funding under this programme will be awarded in November 2021

Sustaining Support: Supporting veterans and families impacted by the Afghanistan conflict

For existing projects that are seeing increased demand



Increase your capacity to help more people



Provide more intensive support for the people you work with; based on their needs

Apply for

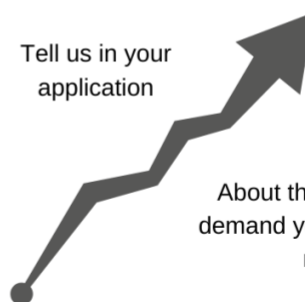
£10,000

or

£35,000

Apply for the upper amount if this is what you would need to work with veterans and families effectively

Tell us in your application



About the increased demand you are seeing now

We've included some examples of what expanding your project might mean

A project has been funded to run outdoor activities that improve mental wellbeing in veterans. Some of these veterans served in Afghanistan. Recently, the project has been approached by family members and also carers of those veterans. It has been a painful time; and the families would like some support so that they are better resourced to help their loved ones through a difficult period; and to help the families better manage their own mental wellbeing needs.

The project applies for £35,000 to help them to expand their project so that they can increase their capacity and provide support directly to families and to carers. This is not something that they have done previously.

A project works with veterans. They have received calls from more veterans wanting to attend their project, but don't have any places they can offer.

They apply for funding to employ an additional project worker to help expand their project to help more veterans

A project works with Armed Forces families. The Afghanistan situation has led to a reduction in mental wellbeing among the families that they support. They generally offer sessions once a fortnight; but apply for funding to be able to offer more frequent sessions to better meet the families' needs.

They would use the funding to expand their project to provide more intensive support.

Which organisations are eligible to apply?

To be eligible to apply for this funding, you must be:

- A grantholder under the Positive Pathways programme
- A grantholder under the Removing Barriers to Family Life programme

If your organisation has had more than one grant from any or several of these programmes you are eligible to apply for funding for expansion of any or all of the relevant projects – as long as they are serving completely different and separate groups of beneficiaries.

What funding can you apply for under this programme?

This programme seeks to provide support for veterans, their carers and Armed Forces families who are facing additional challenges as a result of the Afghanistan conflict. Some existing projects could expand to meet this need.

Additional funding is only available to expand current work that you are doing, to better meet these needs.

You can expand your work to include groups of people that you have not worked with before. This might include working with Armed Forces families if you have previously only worked with veterans. If you are planning to do this; you will need to think about how you can ensure that you have appropriate safeguarding and referral mechanisms for families, as these may differ to the needs of veterans.

You can work with a broad range of Armed Forces families using funding from this programme

This includes

- Families of veterans
- Families of serving personnel
- Families that have been bereaved
- Families that are providing care to veterans

We have separated out families of veterans and families that are providing care to veterans as these are distinct groups; but they do overlap.

You can use project funding to expand a project to help Armed Forces families with their own mental wellbeing for issues relating to the Afghanistan conflict. You can also help families whose needs are primarily around providing care or support to a veteran who has been impacted by the Afghanistan conflict. Some families may fall into both of these groups.

You cannot apply for work relating to providing clinical mental health support, and your project must show that it will not duplicate work delivered by the NHS or other charities in the area for the identified beneficiaries.

A strong application would be able to show:

- That there is demand from Veterans or Armed Forces families that have been impacted by the Afghanistan conflict; and are in need of support
- How you would expand your project to provide this support
- how many veterans or Armed Forces families your project is likely to help

You will need to ensure that you manage relevant risks, such as relevant safeguarding to ensure keep people safe.

As part of your application to expand your project; you should include three short case studies that can help us to understand the increased need that you are seeing with the people you work with.

We've included some examples below of how you can set these out. Please do not use actual names or other information that could identify people.

Mary (name changed) is married to a veteran who served two tours in Afghanistan that attends our project. Her husband has not been sleeping; and is in a difficult place. Mary's sleep has also been affected and her mental wellbeing is poor. She has asked us for help

Our organisation works with Armed Forces families- of serving and retired RAF personnel who were in Afghanistan in the last twenty years, including families that have been bereaved. We've been reaching out to families we know to make sure that they are ok; and to offer support. 2 families have told us that they would like to be able to access more support.

Dave, a veteran (name changed) has been coming to our project for 6 months. His mental wellbeing which was poor as a result of physical and mental illness after serving in the Afghanistan conflict for a number of years, had been improving until recently. Dave is quite low and we've been working to ensure that he can access other services. Dave has said that he'd rather be able to come to our project more than once a week, which is all we can offer at the moment.

Measuring the impact of your grant

We will expect you to measure the impact of your work if we award you a grant. We will expect you to use the Trust's impact measurement tool "The Impact Hub", unless you can demonstrate that your organisation has its own robust impact measurement tools that it is already using. If your project expansion would involve you working with groups of beneficiaries that you have not previously supported then we will discuss your impact measurement options with you if we award you a grant."

What can funds be spent on?

Under this programme, we will make six awards of £10,000 or £35,000.

You should apply for the amount that will enable you to expand your project for 12 months. The minimum period of work we will support will be for 10 months of delivery..

We can pay for most of the things you will need for your project, whether it is people's time, costs of delivering work online or buying/hiring equipment.

It is highly unlikely that we will fund projects with budgets that are dominated by capital costs.

We will not fund the costs of purchasing a vehicle, but we would pay for mileage costs on vehicles used by your staff and volunteers.

Your project expansion might include the following costs.

- Additional staff time for this year long expansion to your project, including time-managing volunteers that may be involved in your project.
- The costs of sessional workers
- The costs of renting facilities for sessions

- Fees for specialists or experts to work with your organisation
- Purchasing items that provide practical support, or that can enable support to take place.
- Purchasing items that you may need to provide support, such as additional telephones or laptops.
- Reasonable costs for storing and transporting items, including wear and tear on private vehicles.
- Reasonable overheads or administrative costs that reflect the cost to your organisation of delivering this additional support.

What can funds not be spent on?

There are several things **we cannot pay for**, either because they are not in the spirit of the Covenant Fund, or because of relevant legislation or tax rules.

- Where funding is not benefiting veterans or other people from the Armed Forces community.
- Making grants or donations of money to individuals or families.
- Topping up existing grants and aid from a government department.
- Where money only benefits one person. By this we mean where your whole project would only benefit one person.
- Repeat or regular projects that require a source of uncommitted funding.
- Investments.
- Paying for ongoing costs of existing partnership activity.
- Organisational fundraising activities.
- Endowments (to provide a source of income).
- Projects, activities or services that the state has a legal obligation to provide.
- Retrospective funding for projects or activity that have already started or taken place (before the end of November 2021).
- Excessive management or professional fees or contingency costs.

This is not an exhaustive list as we feel it is more useful to focus on what you are trying to achieve and how you are going about this, than to issue long lists of eligible and ineligible costs.

How to apply - the application form

You need to apply through the link that we will provide to our online application form.

On our system, you can save a draft application form to complete later or send a draft copy to colleagues. You can also access copies of the application that you have submitted at any time.

When you submit your application, you will receive an email confirmation. **If you do not receive this, then your application has not been submitted**

You will need to submit your application by **9am on Monday 18 October 2021**. No late applications will be accepted.

We highly recommend you plan to submit your application before the deadline to avoid the risk of missing the cut-off because of technological or other unexpected problems.

You will receive a decision **by the end of November 2021**

It is important that we can contact your organisation, particularly, of course, if you receive a grant. The contacts for this application should be the same as those for the grant/project which you are seeking to expand.

If either contact changes, do let us know as soon as you can.

We strongly recommend that you save an offline version of your application form.

You may also find it helpful to complete your application in a Word document and then cut and paste the answers into the online form. Please do not use any formatting, such as tables or numbered lists, in your Word document, as the online form may not accept this formatting and you might have trouble submitting the form.

We suggest you save your form every 10-15 minutes whilst you are completing it, to avoid the risk of it 'timing out'.

Do check that you have fully answered all the questions because, if not, we might not be able to consider your application.

You do not need to send any additional information. Any additional information received will not be considered.

Do not send your application by email or post to the Covenant Fund Trust – only applications submitted via the online form can be considered.

Our assessment criteria

Our criteria are set out below. We will consider each application to see how well it meets these criteria and fund those that we believe will best achieve the programme aims.

The difference that your expanded project will make	
What are we looking for?	That your project can expand to provide effective support for veterans and families that have been impacted by the Afghanistan conflict
What do you need to show us?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The needs that the people that your project expansion would support have

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How you will expand your existing project to help Armed Forces communities impacted by the Afghanistan conflict • How many people this is likely to help.
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Delivery of your project	
What are we looking for?	That your project is well planned, and achievable and that you understand
What do you need to show us?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That you have, or will work with those who have, knowledge and experience appropriate to the beneficiaries you are expecting to work with • That you can identify and manage risks; particularly regarding safeguarding, and referring people who might be unwell to appropriate care • Why your project is complementary, and does not duplicate other services, particularly statutory or NHS services.

Checks we may carry out on your organisation and accounts

We may carry out several checks on the information you provide us. This is to make sure that the information is correct and there are no significant risks we can identify when awarding grants.

These may include checks:

- On whether financial information on the application form matches that held by the relevant regulatory body (Companies House, Charity Commission etc.)
- That the organisation's governing documents (such as constitutions and memorandum and articles of association) are up to date, correct and properly signed
- The organisation's accounts that are accessible through regulatory bodies
- On any identified concerns about a person named as a contact or who has a position within your organisation
- The organisation's name and address on the submitted banking evidence is consistent with the details you've provided in any completed form or the information that is held elsewhere in the public domain
- The organisation's bank statement shows that your account is being managed in line with the organisation's own financial procedures and our programme requirements, and
- That the signatories are valid and well informed about the project
- The organisation's published accounts and on your website/social media activity that your organisation is undertaking the activities as described in your application. We do however understand that some projects working with especially vulnerable groups, or groups that have security concerns may need to limit the amount of information that they have in the public domain

We may ask you to send us additional information or answer specific questions about your organisation. If we ask you to do this, you will need to send us this information

within five working days.

We may also consider information that we hold regarding your grant with us as part of our assessment of your application to extend that grant.

After you submit your application

You will get an automated email to confirm that your application has been submitted.

If you have not received this email, then your application was not submitted successfully, and you will need to log back into the portal to submit it.

We will check your application to ensure that you've provided all the information we have requested. We may contact you during our assessment if there is anything we are unclear about – but do not assume any contact or lack of contact as an indication of your likelihood of being successful or declined.

We will review the information you provide in your application and, where relevant, data and information from the Charity Commission, Companies House or other regulators' websites relating to your constitution and recent audited accounts. We will look at your organisation's website and social media activity.

We will assess your application against the key criteria of the programme.

Final decisions will be made by the Trustees of the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust, who will review the applications using balancing criteria in addition to the key criteria. The balancing criteria include the relative strength and value for money of the project when viewed as part of a national portfolio of projects.

Funds are limited. Therefore, the Trustees will use their discretion to choose which projects to fund to produce a balanced portfolio of funded projects for this programme.

After the Trustees have met, we will send an email to you using the primary contact email address you provided in your application. This will tell you whether you have been awarded a grant.

If your application is successful you will be offered a continuation grant, to which the Terms and Conditions of your existing and related grant will apply. You should make sure that the Trustees and senior staff within your organisation know that you are submitting this grant application.

If we plan to fund your project, you will need to accept our grant offer and the terms and conditions of the grant **within two weeks of receiving the Offer Letter** or risk the offer lapsing.

We will email you in the first instance to advise you that you have been successful. This email will give you full instructions of what you need to do next in order to receive your formal Offer Letter, how to accept the grant and what documents you need to provide.

Once we have all the necessary documents back, we will pay you an instalment of your grant. If there are any discrepancies/queries within these documents, this will delay your payment, so please read the accompanying information we provide, thoroughly.

If you receive a grant, you will need to keep full records of how the funds were spent and how many people you helped and how. We will ask you to report on this later.

If we are not able to fund your project, we will write to you to tell you this.

If you have any questions relating to this programme, please look at the programme information that we have on our website.

Following this, if you still have queries and cannot find the answer in these guidance notes, please email info@covenantfund.org.uk