



Supporting Armed Forces in Acute Hospital Settings

Programme Guidance

The Armed Forces Covenant Fund: Supporting Armed Forces in Acute Hospital Settings PROGRAMME GUIDANCE

This programme will award grants of up to £120,000 for projects that pilot better ways of supporting veterans and their families when they are in a hospital setting.

Why are we running this programme?

This programme aims to fund pilot innovative projects within hospitals that could lead to significant change in how members of the Armed Forces community are documented, supported and have their care co-ordinated within acute hospital settings.

Veterans receiving inpatient physical care, both now and in future, will benefit, together with the increased staff awareness of veterans' needs when in acute care across the UK.

Participating organisations will be expected to collect agreed metrics and the programme will be evaluated externally and findings disseminated. These organisations will also need to work collaboratively with a wide range of statutory bodies and charities to prevent confusion and promote integration and collaboration.

This programme is jointly funded by the Covenant Fund (through the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust) and NHS England and NHS Improvement

Which organisations are eligible to apply?

To be eligible for this funding, you must be:

- a Veteran Aware NHS hospital in England that is a member or aspirant member of the Veterans' Covenant Healthcare Alliance (VCHA) at time of application or
- a hospital in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland that can show support of the aims of the [Veterans' Covenant Healthcare Alliance](#)

You should be able to show that you have committed a budget for a Veterans' Welfare Office/Peer support workers or other posts working within your hospital to explicitly support the Armed Forces.

Additionally, being a Veterans Trauma Network (VTN) acute hospital site member would be desirable.

By aspirant member of the VCHA we mean that you should be engaged with the VCHA and have evidence that you have begun the process of attaining membership prior to applying for a grant

What types of projects can you apply for under this programme?

Eligible hospitals can apply for a grant of up to £120K towards the costs of employing the FTE of an additional NHS member of staff to fulfil the role of Armed Forces Advocate for two years.

The programme is likely to receive more applications than it can support. Priority will be given to projects in hospitals that are likely to receive higher numbers of veterans (and other members of the Armed Forces community) for treatment or serve a particularly high number in terms of age range or service background. All successful projects will have to demonstrate clear and realistic sustainability plans.

Projects need to focus on improving support to veterans who are receiving treatment as an inpatient within the hospital.

The role will:

- complement the role of the Veterans' Trauma Network (VTN) centres and VCHA to ensure that veterans, particularly with Service-related conditions, can access services that they are entitled to
- support the role of the VTN by acting as Clinical Care Co-ordinator to ensure that for veterans with Service-related physical conditions, they can access bespoke care and advice that complements a holistic approach to care
- work with veterans that are accessing acute treatment within the hospital to form positive working relationships with local and national charities and welfare organisations, especially RBL, SSAFA, DWMS, Veterans UK and other veteran forums and agencies in their geographical areas
- provide clinical liaison between veterans with Service-related physical health needs, peer support workers and the VTN to facilitate a treatment pathway bespoke for veterans
- work with VTN Leads at neighbouring Trusts (where applicable) to support veterans with Service-related physical health needs
- work with Peer Support Workers in various military charities and Veterans' Mental Health services to support veterans with Service-related physical health needs
- link the veteran and their family (and other eligible members of the Armed forces community) with **existing** welfare support from a charity or credible funded partner whilst they are in hospital and if and when they are able to go back into the community - this is a different but complementary role
- link with the appropriate Integrated Care Systems who are responsible for the commissioning of health and social care services in England
- improve awareness of the Armed Forces Covenant and the needs of Armed Forces communities throughout the hospital setting

- provide training and increased awareness across all staff groups within the Trust
- advocate, encourage and support IT and system changes within a trust so that all staff know when they are caring for a member of the Armed Forces community.

It is mandatory to ensure that this role is, and is seen as, additional to existing provision.

These additional staff appointed would work closely with these appointed VCHA leads in England and with the equivalent leads for statutory and charitable veteran focused services in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

Project leads would also need to work with Op COURAGE or veteran health provision in the Devolved Administrations, Armed Forces Networks, GP practices (and Primary Care Networks in England) and local authorities. We would also expect projects to align to local social prescribing arrangements and Integrated Care Systems in England.

A good application would be able to show the following.

- An understanding of the health needs of the Armed Forces community population locally; and in particular, if there are significant proportions of veterans that are very elderly or who may be isolated and or need end of life care.
- Plans within the hospital to sustain the work of the grant beyond the funding period.
- Plans to work in partnership with other organisations to make the hospital environment more accessible and welcoming to Armed Forces communities; and to enable effective supported transfer to other organisations that could help those with wider needs that they may have.
- How the project will encourage more veterans and others to feel comfortable with self-identifying as being a member of the Armed Forces community and ensuring that their status can be recorded consistently. If you are applying from an area where veterans have security concerns, please develop your proposals to take account of security and veterans' views.

Applications must be submitted **by the hospital's senior management lead for the Armed Forces. The second contact on the application form should be an established Armed Forces Welfare Officer currently working in the hospital,** who is also acknowledging their support for this application.

The Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust will work with an externally appointed, overarching evaluation team for this programme, which will be delivered by an organisation with expertise in veterans' healthcare. If you are awarded a grant, you will be required to work with the hospital's designated lead for data collection and analysis and with the evaluation provider. You will also be required to supply relevant data so that the impact of the programme as a whole can be analysed. If you are

successful in your application, you will receive a briefing on data collection as part of your post grant activities.

It is a requirement of your application to consider how you would sustain this work after the funded period. We will ask you specifically about this in the application form.

If successful, we would expect you to start your work as soon as possible, with a postholder in place by no later than 1 December 2021.

What can funds be spent on?

Under this programme, we'll make grants of up to £120,000 for projects lasting up to two years. You can apply for less funding than this, but your project needs to collect the data for two years.

We would anticipate that your project might include the following costs.

- FTE or part time staff post to deliver the project.
- Line management costs to deliver the project.
- A modest communications budget for materials such as leaflets for veterans, or pop-up display banners.
- Training materials for staff training and awareness raising.

What can't funds be spent on?

There are several things **we can't pay for**, either because they're 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.
- Projects, activities or services that the state has a legal obligation to provide.
- Retrospective funding for projects that have already started or taken place
- 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're trying to achieve and how you're going about this, than to issue long lists of eligible and ineligible costs.

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 project will make	
What are we looking for?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> That veterans and their families and carers will have improvements in the experience of care received in an acute hospital setting
What do you need to show us?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What health needs exist within the local veteran population How you plan to improve the experiences of veterans within your hospital through your project; and enable veterans to access the support that they might need How your project will help to integrate care and support for the Armed Forces community

Delivery of your project	
What are we looking for?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> That you have the skills and experience to deliver the work that you have requested support with
What do you need to show us?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your previous work to make your hospital more welcoming and accessible to people from Armed Forces communities How you plan to work in partnership with others How you will plan, manage and oversee the project Your plans to sustain the work beyond the life of the grant

How to apply - the application form

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

If you don't have an account on our grant portal, then you will need to create one. 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've submitted at any time.

When you submit your application, you'll receive an email confirmation. **If you don't receive this, then you have not applied. You can check the status of your application 'In Progress' section in your account.**

You need to apply by **midday on 2 July 2021**. You will receive a decision in September 2021.

If we offer you a grant, we will invite you to come to a briefing session for new grant holders and we'll send you the dates for these. The briefing will be held online and

explains the next stages of your grant. Your formal Offer Letter and Terms and Conditions will be sent to you after the briefing has taken place. We won't be able to pay your grant until these documents have been signed and returned.

Covenant Funding is often oversubscribed, and unfortunately, we often have to turn good applications down due to lack of available funding. If you have been unsuccessful, then we will contact you by email to let you know.

We cannot accept any late applications.

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.

It is important that we can contact your organisation, particularly, of course, if you receive a grant. You'll need to provide two contacts from your organisation on the application. At least one of these should have an email address that belongs to your organisation. At least one contact must hold the relevant authority (CEO or equivalent) to authorise any grant contract and bank account to be used should you be successful. The main contact must have an email address that belongs to your organisation. If this is not provided, your application may be considered ineligible.

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 don't 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.

Checks we may carry out on your organisation and accounts

We may carry out 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.

We may ask you to send us additional information or answer specific questions about your organisation. If we ask you to do this, you'll need to send us this information within five working days.

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 are things 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, our Trustees use their discretion to choose which projects to fund, ensuring a good spread of funded projects and to differentiate between projects that are considered fundable.

Please note they may also take the decision to part-fund proposals (this may involve awarding less money than was applied for).

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've been awarded a grant.

Our [terms and conditions of grant](#) can be accessed on our website. If we offer you a grant, you will need to confirm that you will follow these terms and conditions of grant before we can release any of your grant to you. You must also 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'll need to accept our grant offer and the terms & conditions of the grant **within three 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 official 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 the majority 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 good 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're 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