



Office for
Veterans' Affairs

Afghanistan Veterans Fund

OVERVIEW GUIDANCE

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You will need to read this guidance in conjunction with the specific guidance for the Strand that is the best fit for your organisation. There are four Strands. You can only apply for one Strand.

Under this programme, the Office for Veterans Affairs has asked the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust (the Trust) to run programmes that will award grants to improve wellbeing, resilience and promote good mental health, responding to increased needs in veterans who have served in Afghanistan and other recent conflicts and the wider veterans community.

Why are we running this programme?

On 6 September 2021, the Prime Minister in response to the situation in Afghanistan announced in the House of Commons that:

“Just as they kept us safe, so we shall do right by our veterans. we are providing another £5 million to assist the military charities that do such magnificent work, with the aim of ensuring that no veteran’s request for help will go unanswered.”

This Fund, known as the Afghanistan Veterans’ Fund, was awarded to the Office for Veterans Affairs. It aims to increase capacity in services and initiatives that offer supportive comradeship, engagement, and wellbeing efforts for those in the Armed Forces community impacted by events in Afghanistan, and the wider veterans community.

The Office for Veterans Affairs has asked the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust to administer this Fund and grant decisions will be made by the Afghanistan Veterans Programme Board.

Armed Forces charities, and charities that have an existing track record of providing significant support for Armed Forces communities, (and for some programme strands, CICs), may be eligible to apply for a grant.

We expect demand for this funding to be high. Please read and consider this guidance carefully.

This Fund has four Strands. There is more detailed information on these Strands later in the document.

STRAND 1

Supporting veterans
community mental health

STRAND 2

Increasing supportive
comradeship,
connectedness and
engagement to improve
wellbeing, resilience and
good mental health.

STRAND 3

Enabling veterans/veteran
support organisations to
support Afghanistan
refugees in the
United Kingdom.

STRAND 4

Regional & more localised
projects that increase
capacity in services and
initiatives that offer support
& comradeship, engagement
& wellbeing efforts

The Afghanistan Veterans Fund has already provided £600,000 which was distributed to applications received for projects through the Trust's Sustaining Support: Supporting veterans and families impacted by the Afghanistan conflict.

These grants supported projects reaching younger veterans and their families who served since 2000; and so are more likely to have served as part of recent conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Together, these programmes made grants to enable funding to get swiftly to projects to expand their activities that provide support to veterans and families whose mental health and well-being has been impacted by the Afghanistan conflict. These grants were awarded in November 2021.

Please Note: If you have already received one of these grants in November 2021 you will not be eligible for further grants to be awarded under Strand 4.

Which organisations are eligible to apply?

To be eligible for this funding under Strands 1-3, you must be:

- a registered charity that specifically supports Armed Forces communities, that has been registered for at least three years at the time of your application.

In addition, under Strand 4 only, the following types of organisations can also apply:

- a registered charity that specifically supports Armed Forces communities, that has been registered for at least two years at the time of your application.
- a registered charity with substantial recent experience of supporting Armed Forces communities that has been registered for at least two years at the time of your application; or
- A Community Interest Company (CIC) that specifically supports Armed Forces communities, that has been registered for at least two years at the time of your application.

Please read the guidance for the individual Strand that you are applying under for more detail on eligibility, as well as the size and duration of grants.

Definitions:

Specifically supporting Armed Forces communities means that your charitable objectives clearly state that you support people from Armed Forces communities. We refer to these types of organisations as “Armed Forces charities” within this guidance.

Substantial recent experience of supporting Armed Forces communities means that either the governing documents of your organisation state that you specifically work with people from Armed Forces communities, or that you can show that working with veterans, Armed Forces families or serving personnel is and has been a significant and regular part of your existing work.

Community Interest Companies (CICs) need to have 3 or more unrelated Directors and will need submit additional documents as part of the application. Please read the Strand 4 guidance carefully.

You can only receive funding from one strand or element of the Afghanistan Veterans Fund, so if you are eligible, you should look at the guidance very carefully. You cannot apply for funding if you have received a grant through the Sustaining Support: Supporting veterans and families impacted by the Afghanistan conflict programme.

You **cannot** apply if you are any of the following:

- A charity that does not specifically support Armed Forces communities (for Strands 1-3).
- A Community Interest Company (CIC) for Strands 1-3.
- A charity or CIC that received funding in November 2021 from the OVA or the Trust through the Sustaining Support: Supporting veterans and families impacted by the Afghanistan conflict programme.
- An Armed Forces base or unit.
- A school.
- A local authority.
- An individual.
- An organisation which does not have substantial, recent experience of supporting Armed Forces communities.
- An organisation which is newly registered (as a charity or CIC).
- Other public sector organisations.
- A voluntary or community group which is not registered in the UK.

What types of funding can you apply for under this Fund?

We will fund projects under this Fund that show that they can improve wellbeing, resilience and promote good mental health, responding to increased needs in veterans who have served in Afghanistan and other recent conflicts and the wider veterans community.

There are four different Funding Strands to this programme.

You can only apply for one Strand.



Afghanistan Veteran Fund

Grants to improve wellbeing, resilience and promote good mental health, responding to increased needs in veterans who have served in Afghanistan and other recent conflicts and the wider veterans community

UK WIDE COMPONENTS

REGIONAL/ LOCAL COMPONENTS

STRAND 1

Supporting veterans community mental health

For Armed Forces Charities that already provide mental health clinical support and treatment.

Eligible organisations can apply for a grant to invest in an increase in their capacity to meet additional needs in terms of both increased ask for help, and the increased complexity of those already receiving support.

This could include meeting the needs of a wider group within the Armed Forces community than already provided for, (eg a wider geographic region, different age group or veteran partners and families.)

Applicants should be undergoing accreditation from the Contact Group's pilot scheme for mental health charities; and must be able to show how their application could support veterans across the UK

Grants of up to £100K are available

STRAND 2

Increasing supportive comradeship, connectedness and engagement to improve wellbeing, resilience and good mental health.

For Armed Forces Charities that can show that they can deliver a grant programmes that can make small grants to Regimental Associations, to enable them to develop supportive comradeship, connectiveness and engagement in veterans

Applicants must have experience in managing grant making programmes, and must have detailed knowledge of, and links to either the Army, RAF or Navy.

Applicants should show how they could work with Regimental Associations to measure impact, share best practices and support evaluation. Grant making programmes must be delivered on a UK wide basis.

Grants of up to £300K are available. Exceptionally, larger grants may also be available.

STRAND 3

Enabling veterans/veteran support organisations to support Afghanistan refugees in the United Kingdom.

For Armed Forces Charities with experience of providing complex and engaging volunteering opportunities for veterans.

Grants are available to develop and deliver UK wide volunteering programmes for veterans to enable veterans to give support to organisations who are aiming to welcome Afghan people.

Activities could include access to training and support packages, potentially focussing on safeguarding or cultural awareness.

This must be a clear benefit to veterans, enabling them to support Afghans as effectively as possible. Applications must be clearly able to show how veterans will benefit, and how they will be supported in their volunteering.

Grants of up to £100K are available. Exceptionally, larger grants may also be available.

STRAND 4

Regional & more localised projects that increase capacity in services and initiatives that offer support & comradeship, engagement & wellbeing efforts

For Armed Forces Charities and CICs seeking grants for regional and more localised projects that increase capacity in services and initiatives that offer support and comradeship, engagement and wellbeing efforts for those in the Armed Forces community impacted by events in Afghanistan.

Support must be particularly focused on veterans since 2000 or those who served in recent conflicts such as Iraq and Afghanistan and aimed at reaching veterans who may not already be engaged. This can include families of serving personnel, and of veterans. It can include families that have been bereaved. It can also include family members that care for veterans.

Projects can be more regionally or locally focused

Applicant organisations can receive a grant under one strand only per organisation. Applicants should consider the programme guidance carefully. Detailed programme guidance will be published for each strand

Strand One

This Strand will award grants to organisations that can show that they already provide mental health clinical support and treatment.

Eligible organisations can apply for a grant to invest in an increase in their capacity to meet additional needs in terms of both increased ask for help, and the increased complexity of those already receiving support.

Applicants should be undergoing accreditation from the Contact Group's pilot scheme for mental health charities; and must be able to show how their application could support veterans across the UK

Strand Two

This Strand will make a small number of grants to Armed Forces charities that can show that they can run a small grant programme which will make small grants to Service Associations, to enable them to develop supportive comradeship, connectiveness and engagement for their members.

Applicants must have substantial experience in managing UK-wide grant making programmes, and must have detailed knowledge of, and links to, either the Army, RAF or Navy with a UK spread of beneficiaries. They will also need to be able to show how they will measure the impact of grants that they make.

Strand Three

This Strand will make a small number of grants to Armed Forces charities who can show that they can develop and deliver UK-wide volunteering programmes for veterans, to enable veterans to give support to organisations who are aiming to welcome Afghan people.

Activities could include access to training and support packages, potentially focusing on safeguarding or cultural awareness.

Projects must deliver clear benefits directly to veterans, enabling them to support Afghan people as effectively as possible. Applications must be clearly able to show how veterans will benefit, and how they will be supported in their volunteering.

Strand Four

This Strand is also open to charities that can show that they have an existing track record of working with Armed Forces communities, and CICs. It will provide funding for regional and more localised projects that increase capacity in services and initiatives that offer support and comradeship, engagement, and wellbeing efforts for those in the Armed Forces community impacted by events in Afghanistan.

Support must be particularly focused on veterans since 2000 or those who served in recent conflicts such as Iraq and Afghanistan and aimed at reaching veterans who

may not already be engaged. This can include families of serving personnel, and of veterans. It can include families that have been bereaved. It can also include family members that care for veterans.

We expect demand for this Strand to be high. Please do read the specific Strand 4 guidance carefully.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

You can only apply under one Strand

You will need to choose the Funding Strand that is the best fit for your organisation and the type of project that you can deliver to best support veterans from Afghanistan, and other recent conflicts.

We would expect you to discuss this application at a senior level in your organisation and involve your Trustees where appropriate. Please note that there are different application forms for each Strand.

**If you apply for more than one Strand,
all your applications under this programme will be
deemed ineligible.**

You can only apply once.

You cannot resubmit your application if you are unsuccessful.

How much funding can you apply for?

Please read the specific guidance for the Strand that you are interested in for more details about the funding you can apply for

Awards are at the discretion of the Afghanistan Veterans Fund Programme Board. We expect the Strands to be significantly oversubscribed.

Making your application

Please read the specific guidance for your chosen Strand carefully before you submit your application.

You must ensure that you are using the correct application form. You will be asked different questions depending on which Strand you are applying under. You can access copies of the application form on our website for reference. You must make your application through our online grant portal.

If we award you a grant, we may list your project on our app, which makes it easier for people to find projects we've funded in their local area.