



Office for
Veterans' Affairs

 THE ARMED FORCES
COVENANT FUND TRUST

Veterans' Mobility Fund

Programme Guidance



Veterans Mobility Fund

PROGRAMME GUIDANCE

Under this programme, the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust will award a single grant of up to £2.52M towards a project that will deliver high quality support to veterans with physical disabilities through grants to enable them to access mobility equipment that meets their needs and improves their quality of life.

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Why are we running this programme?

This programme seeks to award a single grant that will run an appropriate scheme for five years. This should enhance veterans' mobility through the provision of specialist equipment to veterans with physical disabilities, such as mobility aids and orthotics such as splints and braces, that are not usually available through the NHS.

Through enabling access to specialist equipment, we are anticipating that veterans across the UK will have improvements to their overall quality of life.

What type of project are we looking for?

We are looking for projects that provide support for those with serious physical injury resulting from their Service, ordinarily in receipt of a War Pension or award from the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme, by providing in-kind grants for mobility equipment that will receive regular use by the veteran.

Your project may also be able to support veterans who are currently awaiting a decision regarding a War Pension or from the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme in certain circumstances. Veterans who are receiving treatment through the Veterans Trauma Network, for example, may also be eligible.

Your project needs to be available to veterans across the UK.

The overall aim of this programme is that: **Veterans should be able to access high quality support ensuring the proposed mobility equipment solution for the veteran meets their needs and enables them to be able to engage in activities that are important to them.**

What do we mean by an 'In-Kind' grant?

By in-kind we mean that the successful applicant to this fund will not be making direct financial payments to veterans under a delegated grant programme, but will, after a full assessment process, undertake the purchase and distribution, and related support to individuals who are deemed eligible.

A strong application would be able to show that it could integrate the veteran with wider forms of support which could address wider needs that the veteran may be experiencing such as housing, isolation and loneliness or mental wellbeing. It will also need to be able to integrate with other veterans' services such as the Veterans Trauma Network in England, and the Veterans' Prosthetics Panel.

Veterans accessing the project should find it to be welcoming and empowering and have a high degree of satisfaction. A strong project would include follow up at appropriate points such as six months and 18 months, to explore the impact that the equipment has had on the veteran's quality of life and independence.

We encourage applications to be collaborative and can accept proposals involving more than one organisation. A single organisation will need to apply for the grant and would be responsible for the overall delivery, accountability and reporting for the project if awarded; with project partners involved in aspects of the delivery of the work. There is more information in the 'working with others' section of this guidance.

Applications will need to clearly show the following.

- How you will design and run a mobility grant scheme that is co-designed with involvement from veterans with physical disabilities.
- How you will ensure that the scheme is accessible to veterans across the UK.
- How you will ensure that eligible veterans seeking a mobility grant or equipment through the scheme will be able to access high quality advice to ensure that the

proposed solution is the right fit for their needs and aspirations; with due regard given to their clinical needs.

- How you will demonstrate value for money, including how you will work with the NHS to ensure that you are not duplicating statutory provision.
- How you will ensure that the provision you will give is safe and based on established good practice.
- That you would follow good practice guidance in public procurement when purchasing mobility equipment for veterans and be able to demonstrate your understanding of this.
- How you will measure the impact and cost effectiveness of your work.
- That you will engage in the wider programme evaluation with external evaluators appointed by the Trust.

A strong application will be able to show:

- how you will ensure the grants you award will be good value for money
- that your organisation, or project partners within your application, have relevant experience of working with veterans with physical disabilities
- how you will put an effective communications plan in place to ensure that eligible veterans can find out about the scheme and access clear information on how they can apply
- how you will assess applications for equipment in a fair and equitable way
- how many grants you think you will award, what the financial range of the grants will be and what you will expect the grants to be spent on
- how you will monitor and manage the grants that you award
- how you will measure the overall impact of your grant funding programme
- how you will manage risks in the grants that you award, including safeguarding risks
- how you will work with organisations in the public and charitable sector to widely promote the availability of grants and ensure fair access
- how you will ensure that veterans are receiving all the statutory support they are entitled to so that grants from this Fund are clearly additional to those provided from the NHS and others
- what types of additional activities that you would deliver alongside the grants to enhance the overall impact of this programme.

We anticipate that most costs would be for equipment purchases, with provision for the grant holder for the costs of managing the overall delegated grant making scheme. For example, contracting staff that you need to run your project, or access to appropriate healthcare professionals such as occupational therapists to assist with specialist assessment and advice.

We also need to be able to see that you have the skills and experience necessary to be able to carry out your project. You can work together with other organisations as part of your project. There is more information on working with others later in this

guidance. We encourage collaborative approaches that can connect veterans with wider help or support that they may need.

We cannot support the following things.

- Activities that duplicate statutory NHS provision.
- Personal care for veterans.
- Capital projects including adaptations to veterans' homes.

This is a specialist grant making programme where we will award a single grant to a Lead Organisation under an externally delegated grant scheme.

The Lead Organisation(s) will then make onward grants to veterans with physical disabilities who need access to high quality mobility equipment to enhance their independence and quality of life.

These grants will be in the form of items of suitable equipment rather than cash grants.

The Lead Organisation will need to evidence their ability to run an efficient and effective grant programme. You will need to:

- describe your grant making operations and processes
- provide information about how you collect, manage and use grant data including how you will store and manage personal data
- provide detail of risk and fraud controls for grant making; including fraud controls within the purchasing supply chain
- tell us how veterans who may be eligible will be able to find out about your project
- provide detail of how you will assess eligibility for veterans to access support through this programme
- make available, if required, copies of grant documentation such as offer letters, terms and conditions, grant reports etc
- nominate a senior member of your executive to act as 'accountable officer' for the handling of the funds
- give information on how, if successful, you would raise awareness of the funding opportunity to eligible individuals
- give information on how you will manage equipment purchasing and ensure that you achieve good value for money.

As part of the grant agreement with the Trust, the Lead Organisation will be required to track agreed impact metrics, share best practices and support evaluation.

The Trust will appoint an external evaluator to evaluate this programme and the impact that it has for veterans with mobility needs. If we award you a grant, it will be a condition of funding that you will need to work with the external evaluators. This may include activities such as collection and sharing of timely data and case studies and attending

meetings. You may also be asked to provide additional information at ad hoc intervals to the Office for Veterans Affairs.

As part of the delivery of your grant programme, you should also consider how you can deliver additional activities that will enhance the grants that you will offer and support better outcomes, including quality of life outcomes for veterans with mobility disabilities.

Potential applicants should read the [Delegated Grant Scheme Agreement](#). You will have to confirm, as part of the application process, that your Trustees have reviewed the Delegated Grant Scheme Agreement and would adopt this agreement in full were a grant to be awarded.

In your application, you will need to show how you intend to make decisions regarding which veterans receive support through this scheme; and what support they will receive in the form of mobility equipment. You should tell us about your plans to form a decision making committee of no less than three Trustees from your organisation to govern the expenditure you will make through in-kind grants. You can also include people with relevant skills and expertise from outside your organisation. You should tell us about the planned governance arrangements for this committee.

If you are awarded a grant, you will be responsible for ensuring that Terms and Conditions of grant are in place for the awards to beneficiaries, and that the grants-in-kind can only be made after the individual recipient has accepted the terms and returned a signed copy. You will be responsible for monitoring and, if needed, enforcing the terms of grant.

You will be responsible for monitoring the grants that you make under this programme, and this will include the following.

- Following up with veterans who have received equipment to find out about the outcomes or improvements to quality of life.
- Ensuring that mobility equipment is used for the purpose for which it was intended and not disposed of outside of the specified time within the terms and conditions of grant.
- Ensuring that veterans understand how to use their mobility equipment safely.
- Taking appropriate action to investigate any matter giving rise to a reasonable possibility that a breach of the terms and conditions of grant has occurred or is likely to occur.

We also need to be able to see that you have the skills and experience necessary to be able to carry out your planned grant award activities.

To the best of your knowledge, the support that you plan to offer should not be currently offered to people from Armed Forces communities by other organisations. It must be additional to any support offered through the NHS. You can continue to work together with other organisations as part of your project. There is more information on working with others later in this guidance.

It is important that the projects we award funding to complement rather than duplicate other provision. You'll be asked in your application form how you will ensure this.

Who will benefit?

You need to show how your project will offer support to veterans with physical disabilities who have a need for suitable mobility equipment.

We are particularly keen that this project supports working age veterans.

The mobility problem that the veteran is experiencing should have a clear link to their military Service. Eligible veterans will ordinarily be in receipt of a War Pension or an award from the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme.

You should tell us how you will ensure that veterans with physical disabilities can find out about the support that you would be able to offer if you were awarded a grant.

A strong application would be able to show that veterans with physical disabilities will be consulted on the design of your support programme and can help to shape it.

How much funding can you apply for?

You can apply for a grant of up to £2,520,000 for five years. We would expect this to cover reasonable costs for managing the in-kind grants scheme.

Ethics

Our work supports the Armed Forces Covenant through funding projects that deliver real change to Armed Forces communities. The projects we support need to be carried out to the highest possible ethical standards.

Our ethical values are Respect, Competence and Integrity.

We have a Code of Conduct and free online training to explain our approach to ethics. We will ask you to confirm in your application form that you will adhere to relevant research ethics and ethical codes. If your organisation has its own Code of Ethical Conduct, then you will need to explore whether your Code is compatible with ours and tell us about this.

You should tell us about how you will ensure that your project is delivered in an ethical way and whether you plan to seek ethical approval for your work if we award you a grant.

You can access our ethics resources [here](#)

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 is making	
What are we looking for?	How you would award and manage grants-in-kind to veterans with physical disabilities where suitable mobility equipment would enhance their quality of life
What do you need to show us?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The types of grants you will make ● Why you are confident that your planned approach will be successful ● How your project will reach a wide audience of veterans who could be supported ● How you will measure the impact that your grants make ● How veterans with physical disabilities have shaped this project

Delivery of your project	
What are we looking for?	That you have the skills and experience to run your project.
What do you need to show us?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● That your organisation is well run and well managed ● That you'll be able to start your grant activity quickly ● That you can manage risks effectively ● That you can keep people on your project safe ● That your project will be delivered in line with our ethical values ● Why your project offers good value for money ● Whether you will be working with others to achieve your aims, and how you will do this ● That you will be able to monitor grants awarded, and be accountable for the public funds that you are distributing

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● That you have appropriate controls in place to manage fraud● How you will ensure that assessment and decision making is transparent and fair
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Which organisations are eligible to apply?

To be eligible for this funding, you must be a **registered charity**.

The following additional eligibility requirements also apply:

- Your organisation must have been registered in the UK (with one or more of the charity commissions for England and Wales, or Scotland or Northern Ireland) for at least two years at the time of your application and able to provide published accounts for all two years if requested.
- Your organisation must have a minimum of three unrelated Trustees at the time of applying, and, if successful, throughout the life of your grant, and this must be verifiable at all times on the relevant charity regulators or Companies House website.

Additionally, you need to have:

- experience in providing direct support to people with physical disabilities
- evidence of robust governance to manage risks effectively.

The following restrictions may apply

Applications may be declined from current Trust grant holders if the reporting requirements for existing grants from the Trust are not up to date.

Working with other organisations

You can work with other organisations as part of your project. If any of the organisations that you will be working with will receive part of your grant, then you need to read our guidance below on delivery partners.

A delivery partner is an organisation which is either:

- receiving part of the grant OR
- their involvement in the project, through providing resources or some other means, is critical to the delivery of the project.

Role of the lead organisation

The organisation that submits the application is the lead organisation. It will have legal responsibility for all funding we award and will be financially accountable for any funds that may be distributed by the lead organisation to delivery partners.

Delivery partnership agreements

If we award you funding and you plan to work with one or more delivery partners, it will be a term and condition of your grant offer that you have a formal signed partnership agreement with them. If you're successful, the draft delivery partnership agreement must be approved by us and finalised prior to any funding being released. We may request changes to the draft agreement before it's finalised. You can find guidance on what a delivery partnership agreement should include on our website.

Preparing your project budget

What can funds be spent on?

We can pay for most of the things you'll need for your project.

The Trust will consider applications that include a reasonable contribution to overhead/core costs. We would expect to see this reflected within your budget breakdown.

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 (for your organisation or a veteran), but we would pay for mileage costs on vehicles used by your staff and volunteers.

Your project might include the following costs.

- ✓ The costs of purchasing mobility equipment for individual veterans.
- ✓ Staff time for this fixed-term project.
- ✓ Additional consultancy or professional support where this delivers clear value to your project. This may include support from appropriately qualified health professionals such as Occupational Therapists.
- ✓ Reasonable travel costs including fares or mileage for project staff, volunteers or beneficiaries to enable participation in the research project.
- ✓ Purchasing items that will help you to deliver your project, such as additional telephones or laptops.
- ✓ Reasonable costs for storing and transporting items, including wear and tear on private vehicles.
- ✓ Reasonable overheads, which reflect the cost to your organisation of delivering this project, taking account of recent cost increases and inflation over the period of distribution of grants.

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 Fund, or because of relevant legislation or tax rules.

- ✗ Projects that do not clearly meet the aims of the programme.
- ✗ Activities that duplicate statutory NHS provision.
- ✗ Personal care for veterans.
- ✗ Grants, gifts or donations of money to individuals or organisations.
- ✗ Provision of mobility equipment to organisations, or groups of veterans.
- ✗ Capital projects including adaptations to veterans' homes.
- ✗ Repeat or regular projects that require a source of uncommitted funding.

- ✘ Endowments (to provide a source of income).
- ✘ Topping up existing grants and aid from a government department for delivery of the delegated grant scheme overall.
- ✘ Investments.
- ✘ Fundraising costs, including organising fundraising events and activities.
- ✘ Paying for ongoing costs of existing partnership activity.
- ✘ 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.
- ✘ Projects with budgets that are dominated by capital costs. We would not expect to fund the costs of purchasing a vehicle, for example.

This is not an exhaustive list as we feel it's 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.

Any grant that we award under this programme would be in line with our charitable objectives. As such, any grant that we award will be for non-economic activities only.

What financial information should you include in your application?

The application form will ask you to give details of your project budget, so that we can understand the costs for which you are asking for funding towards. Whilst you can show this in categories (rather than, for example, listing every item of the IT equipment you require) we will need to have sufficient information to assure us that you have fully considered how much the work will cost and told us how you know this.

If we award you a grant, you will need to send us a full budget and project milestones before we can pay the first instalment of your grant. This should show how much you have budgeted for support costs such as staff and access to relevant healthcare professionals; and how much you have budgeted for mobility equipment purchase. You should think carefully about how you would manage the grant over the five years of delivery if you were successful and take account of potential inflation over this period.

Timetable:

- The deadline for applications is **5pm on 14 August 2023**

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.

We expect to be able to let you know the outcome of this application before the end of September 2023.

How to apply - the application form

You need to apply using our online application form which you can access via our website and through this [link](#).

If you don't yet have an account for our online application portal, then you will need to create one. (You will need this anyway if you are successful in receiving a grant, so that you can submit reports and receive grant payments). 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.

We strongly recommend that you complete your application in a Word document, save it locally as you work on it and when it is complete you then cut and paste the answers into the online form. You will find a Word document with a list of the project related questions on our website. 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.

When you are entering data onto the online form we suggest you save your form every 10-15 minutes whilst you are completing it, to avoid the risk of it 'timing out'.

You will be emailed when you both save and when you submit the application, please be aware of this when completing the application. We can only consider applications that have been fully submitted. Please check the "Submitted Applications" tab on your grant portal, to ensure the application has been fully submitted.

It's important that we can contact your organisation, particularly, of course, if you receive a grant. You will 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/ CO 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.

Please think carefully about who these should be, as they will need to be able to sign acceptance of the grant and use of the bank account on the Offer Letter/ Terms and Conditions if your application is successful. If either contact changes, do let us know as soon as you can.

Do check that you have fully answered all the questions because, if not, we might not be able to consider your application. Do not submit any other documents with your form. Any other documents will not be considered.

You do not need to send any additional information once the application has been submitted. Any additional information received will not be considered unless specifically asked for by our assessors.

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

You must also make sure that the Trustees/ senior staff within your organisation know that you are submitting this grant application.

After you submit your application

You will get an automated email to confirm that your application has been submitted. This email will come from an address called mailuk@grantapplication.com. You may wish to add this email to a safe senders list on your email system to ensure that it can come through to you.

If you have not received this email, then your application was not submitted successfully. Please 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 any issues we are unclear about – please do not assume any contact or lack of contact is 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 may also look at other publicly available sources such as your organisation's website and social media activity.

After submitting your application, you must advise the Trust of any significant changes in your organisation, its governance or finances which might impact on our consideration of your application.

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

Checks we may carry out on your organisation

We may carry out several checks on the information you provide us with and about your organisation. 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 your application form matches that held by your regulatory body (Companies House, Charity Commission etc.)
- that we can see that you have a minimum of three unrelated Directors or Trustees listed on your regulator's website
- that your governing documents (such as constitutions and memorandum and articles of association) are up to date, correct and properly signed
- on your 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
- that the signatories are valid and well informed about the project
- on your annual report and on your website/social media activity that your organisation is undertaking the activities as described in your application
- to ensure you are up to date on all reporting with any active grants you hold with the Trust
- if your organisation is a branch of a larger organisation (such as charities with regional branches or offices), as part of our due diligence checks we may be sharing key details of the application with your head office to confirm eligibility to apply for this funding
- if you are awarded a grant, that your organisational name and address on your bank statement are consistent with the details you've provided in any completed form or the information that's held elsewhere in the public domain
- if you are awarded a grant, that your bank statement shows that your account is being managed in line with your own financial procedures and our programme requirements.

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.

Decisions and what happens next

Final decisions will be made by our Board of Trustees, 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 and the track record of the applicant and any partners they are working with.

Please note that in order to minimise the risk to public funds the Trust may prioritise funding those applicants which have good track records on reporting to regulators, demonstrate transparent and appropriate governance arrangements and have comprehensive published accounts. For organisations which previously had grants from us, we expect all reporting on these grants to be up-to-date and may consider this when considering new applications.

Trustees may also take the decision to part-fund proposals. This may mean you are awarded less money than was applied for. If this is the case, we will talk to you about what elements of the project were supported and why and discuss this with you.

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 or not you have been awarded a grant.

Our programmes are often oversubscribed and, unfortunately, we often have to turn good applications down due to lack of available funding. If you have been unsuccessful, we will email you to tell you.

What happens next if we award you a grant?

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.

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.

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.

If we offer you a grant, we will request a virtual meeting with you to provide you with further information and answer any questions you may have.

Your formal Offer Letter and Terms and Conditions will be sent to you after the briefing or meeting. We won't be able to pay your grant until these documents have been signed.

Once we have all the necessary documents back, we will pay the first 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. Grants will be paid in instalments, and the number and size of these will depend on the size and duration of the grant. A small proportion of the total amount awarded will be retained pending a satisfactory End of Grant report.

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. As part of the Terms and Conditions of funding we will ask you to update us on the progress of the project, this will include detailing how the funding has been spent.

We may also expect you to take part in evaluations, impact studies or other research related to the funding you have received. We will let you know what is required and how to participate.

The Trust has a Privacy Policy which explains what data we collect from our grant applicants, and how we use this. Please read this in advance of applying: <https://covenantfund.org.uk/privacy-policy/>

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