Office for Veterans' Affairs

THE ARMED FORCES COVENANT FUND TRUST

Reducing Veteran Homelessness Programme

Programme Guidance

2025

The Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust
Reducing Veteran Homelessness
PROGRAMME GUIDANCE

Programme overview

Grants available: £300,000 (+£200,000 enhanced grant)

Funding on behalf of: The Office for Veterans Affairs (OVA)

Project length: Up to 9 months* (All successful projects **must** conclude by **31/03/2026**)

Programme aim(s): To deliver sustainable supported housing options to meet the needs of veterans of the armed forces.

Application closing date(s): 12 noon on 31 March 2025

Awarded projects to start by: 1 June 2025 *(at the earliest)*

*(Successful applicants with existing RVH grants will be expected to clarify their current programme end date in the application form and plan to start at the end of their current grant**)**

 Application form link: [Apply to the Reducing Veteran Homelessness programme](#)

Terms and conditions to grant: [Standard terms and conditions to grant](#)

Grant holders will be required to work with Operation Fortitude and the appointed external evaluators throughout the grant award period

How to use this guidance

It's important that you **read all sections of this guidance document** when completing your application. This information covers everything you need to know about applying for funding from the Trust. We'll ask you to confirm you have read this document as part of your application.

Contents

The programme

Why are we running this programme?

This programme aims to support the government's ambition towards ending homelessness and contribute to their commitment to ensure veterans have access to the support they need, including housing.

Following the success of the current [Reducing Veteran Homelessness programme](#), new funding is available to further improve the capacity of services in supported housing to meet the needs of vulnerable veterans.

A consultation has been held amongst key stakeholders in the veteran housing sector including recipients of funding under the existing programme. It is expected that applicants to the programme consider these findings when applying - [A summary of the findings can be found here](#)

The current Reducing Veteran Homelessness programme has published an interim evaluation report, which can be found here: [Interim Report: Evaluation of the Reducing Veteran Homelessness Programme](#)

How much funding can you apply for?

You can apply for a grant of up to a **maximum of £300,000** in total towards a project being delivered over a period of up to 9 months.

If you are already in receipt of an RVH grant then you will be expected to confirm the end date for your current funding in the application form and plan to start your new project after this date. All projects **must** complete by **31 March 2026**.

You can apply for up to £300,000 per organisation. We would expect high-complex need projects to have a higher cost per head and low-to-medium complex need projects to have a lower cost per head. Where an organisation is bidding for multiple schemes (locations), each scheme should be separately costed but combined as a single application.

You can also apply for an **Enhanced Award of up to an additional £200,000**, if you can show us that extending your project during the timeframe, will fill a significant level of currently unmet need. See below for further details of Enhanced Awards.

For **all** successful applicants, a mandatory requirement is that organisations agree to work with and undertake, where possible and appropriate, to house veterans referred to them through Operation Fortitude. Successful applicants will be required to report on the number of veterans they have housed from Operation Fortitude at the end of each month.

Enhanced Award

In exceptional cases, the Trust will consider awarding an enhanced grant to deliver an additional element. You can request up to £200,000 to enhance your project. You will need to show us that extending your project during the programme timeframe will fill a significant level of currently unmet need as identified in the consultation or other evidence-based work.

If you choose to request an enhanced element, you should be able to clearly explain why this extra funding would have a greater impact on armed forces communities in a clear and tangible way. You will also need to show us how these benefits would be sustained beyond the life of the grant.

The enhanced element of your project can be delivered concurrently with your main project. However, your main project must be a stand-alone project that should be delivered for £300,000 or less. If you apply for an enhanced grant, you must tell us what extra work your project would be able to deliver. The board of trustees may decide they wish to see further detail on your enhanced proposal before making a decision.

Timetable

Please submit your application no later than **12 noon on Monday 31 March 2025**.

Your application will be considered by our board of trustees in May 2025 and you will be informed of the result of your application shortly after.

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.

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<u>Your organisation</u>

Who is eligible to apply?

You may apply to this fund if you are:

- A registered charity which can demonstrate relevant experience and engagement in the direct provision of housing for veterans
- A registered social housing provider or registered social landlord in Scotland
- A local authority

Charities

- 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 three years at the time of your application and able to provide published accounts for all three 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. This must be verifiable at all times on the relevant charity regulator's website.

Local authorities

- Organisations that fall within this category cannot apply to the Trust for statutory local government delivery work, or for work that has a core focus on the delivery of the Armed Forces Covenant/Duty.

The following restrictions may apply:

- We may decline applications from current Trust grant holders if the reporting requirements for existing grants from the Trust are not up to date.

- We are hoping to fund a range of providers, and it is an intent of this programme to enhance the support available to veterans where they may be situated. Therefore, trustees may prioritise geographical spread as well as a diversity of identified needs, and the effect on the extent of provision when making award decisions.

Who cannot apply for this programme?

- An individual.
- A charity or CIC which doesn't have substantial recent experience of supporting Armed Forces communities or is newly registered.
- A charity or CIC that is based overseas.
- Community organisations that do not fit any of our eligibility criteria, such as a sports organisation which is not a charity or CIC.
- An organisation that has charitable status but is an Exempt Charity.
- A private or for-profit company.

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Your project

What types of projects are we looking for?

This programme aims to support projects that improve the capacity of services in supported housing to be better able to help veterans with a range of needs.

Your application should clearly show us how you will meet the aims of the programme, and include detailed information on the following:

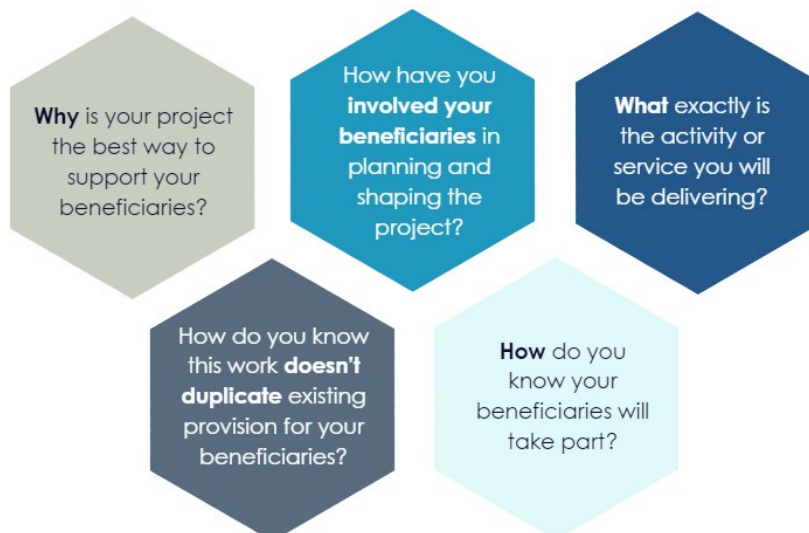| |
|---|
| ➤ **How your project will work with Operation Fortitude** and how you will look to engage with a central referral pathway, and in particular how you will accommodate referrals from the pathway. (You can find more information about Operation Fortitude on our website) |
| ➤ **How many supported housing beds** your project will look to provide the programme; and how you will do this. By this we mean the wraparound support or services that you will provide to a veteran who is staying in a bed or facility provided by your organisation. You should tell us what this support will look like, and tell us if this is different to support that you are currently offering to veterans |
| ➤ How your project will look to **meet some of the key findings and priorities** identified in the Mid-Term Consultation Review. |
| ➤ **How many existing and new veterans** will benefit from this support over the life of the grant e.g. bedspaces and expected throughput. |
| ➤ **Where** will the support be offered, and in what locations. |
| ➤ How do you know that your project is **needed**. |
| ➤ **Why** do you need more capacity to be able to better support veterans. |
| ➤ What assessment has been made of the **capacity need for the services being proposed** (e.g., location, level of need), including the extent or otherwise of such services in your relevant area. |
| ➤ How will you **ensure the safety of veterans** you support under this programme when the funding period ends. |
| ➤ Is the support you are looking to provide **high (complex needs) or medium-low support** (less complex needs). |
| ➤ What your **costs** are and how these have been calculated. |
| ➤ **Who you will work with** to deliver your project, particularly where other organisations may receive part of any grant that you may be awarded. |
| ➤ How you will ensure that the provision they will give is **safe and based on established good practice**. |
| ➤ Why you are confident that your application demonstrates **good value for money**. |
| ➤ How you will **work with local authorities** (including those responsible for delivery of the Covenant) **and local outreach services** to identify veterans who are homeless/have a history of and are at risk of homelessness. |
| ➤ How you will **work with the veterans you are supporting** to help them meet their personal goals, achieve a good quality of life, and move to independent or low-level support where possible. |
| ➤ How you will **support veterans from marginalised groups**, or those who have previously had less access to appropriate services e.g., women, ethnic minorities, LGBT+ etc. |
| ➤ That you can demonstrate an understanding of the specific challenges for **veterans with physical difficulties**. |
| ➤ That you have **current knowledge of local authorities' social housing allocations policy** and understand how you will move on veterans who aren't eligible for social housing. |

➢ The **outcomes** that your project will deliver; and how these will be measured.
➢ What your plans are for **future sustainability** and the legacy of this project.
➢ Why your proposed project **does not duplicate** but fills a gap or enhances existing provision.
➢ How your project will deliver **ongoing benefits** that will sustain beyond the life of the grant.
➢ If your project is in the **Devolved Nations**, your application should show how it will contribute to the aims of that Devolved Nation's homelessness policy.

What should your application show us?

You'll need to clearly show us that you have the **skills and experience** necessary to carry out your project. This can include working with other organisations - there is more information on working with others later in this document. As part of your application, we'll ask you to show us that your project:

is needed and targeted	You should be able to clearly explain how you've identified the need for this project and how you will target the people who have the greatest need for support, including needs related to cost-of-living challenges.
is user-led	This means your project may stem from the results of consultation. Your organisation may be led by people who are from your beneficiary group, and you should have recent relevant experience of working with the target group. You may have a service-user steering group. Show us how the idea for your project has been shaped by the people it will benefit.
has lasting impact	This means there should be a wider impact to your work, which will endure beyond the life of your grant. Your project should show that it offers a positive benefit to members of Armed Forces communities.

Useful questions to ask yourself when completing your application:

Why is your project the best way to support your beneficiaries?

How have you **involved your beneficiaries** in planning and shaping the project?

What exactly is the activity or service you will be delivering?

How do you know this work **doesn't duplicate** existing provision for your beneficiaries?

How do you know your beneficiaries will take part?

Who should benefit from your project?

Beneficiaries of your project can be direct or indirect. Your **direct beneficiaries** are usually the people you are **directly targeting with your work**. For example, Veterans aged 45-60 years. They are the people who will access the services or participate in activities paid for by the Trust's grant.

However, others outside of your target group(s) may also benefit from your project. These are called **indirect beneficiaries**. For example, the family members of the Veterans aged 45-60 years.

The following illustrations can help with undertsanding how to calculate your direct and indirect beneficiaries…

Showing the change your grant will make

We want to know what changes will take place because of your work. This means that we would like to know what will be different when your project ends and why you think your work will achieve these improvements.

At the end of your funded project, the people who have taken part should be in a far stronger position than they were at the beginning of the project and more able to live the life that they want.

Measuring impact

It's important to have clear plans for how you will measure the impact of the project. This might include looking at the evidence you have gathered during your project about the needs of your beneficiaries. The application form will ask questions about how you will measure and evidence the impact of your project.

Sustainability

We want to fund projects with sustainable benefits. This means that we are interested in what will happen in the long term, after your funded project has ended. The application form will ask questions about sustainability which are relevant to the individual grant programme.

Types of sustainability: how will your work sustain beyond the life of your grant?

Ongoing improvements for project beneficiaries

Your project might look to address complex issues or engage in effective preventive work targeted at those who might be at risk of crisis. At the end of the grant, people who have taken part in these projects would be in a far stronger position than they were at the beginning of the project; and more able to live the life that they want to have.

Accessing funding for ongoing delivery

Your project may be a pilot project, or you might be planning to keep running your project or service in future. In which case you may plan to raise funding from donations, grants or local commissioning.

Ongoing partnership and collaboration

You may seek to build a long-term legacy through better collaboration between organisations to improve how people from Armed Forces communities access support now and in the future. For projects like these, we would expect to see evidence of changes in practice and collaboration that extend beyond the life of the grant.

Improved knowledge and evidence

You might look at the evidence you have gathered through your project about the needs of a specific group of people within the wider Armed Forces community. This evidence base might help to ensure that Armed Forces communities in future could have access to better support that meets their needs.

Working with other organisations

We encourage you to work with other organisations as part of your project. Working with other organisations is a criterion of some of our programmes.

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.

If any of the organisations that you will be working with meet this definition, you need to read our guidance below on delivery partners.

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 deemed to be compliant (with our terms and conditions) by us and finalised prior to us releasing any funding. 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.

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Considerations when applying

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?	That the project is addressing a specific need for veterans that are homeless or at risk of homelessness and that it will • Be able to make a significant difference to people's lives • Be able to show that the grant will have longer term sustainable benefits that will have an ongoing legacy after the end of the grant
What do you need to show us?	• What your project would do and how many veterans it will help • What needs the veterans have, and how you will meet these needs • What difference your project will make [see the full list on page 6 of this guidance] • That you will actively work with Operation Fortitude including housing veterans referred to you by the service where possible. • If you are an existing Reducing Veteran Homelessness grant holder: Please ensure to outline how you have worked with Operation Fortitude to date. including how many referrals you have accepted from the service and what % of overall referrals taken this has accounted for. • That you will actively work with the identified external assessors as directed by the Trust.

Delivery of your project	
What are we looking for?	That you have the skills and experience to run your project; and that the approach to running your project would be likely to lead to the long-term legacy that you are seeking to bring about.
What do you need to show us?	• That your organisation is well run and well managed • That you can keep people on your project safe • That you will deliver your project in line with our ethical values • That your budget is accurate and well-costed • 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 • How you will measure the impact of your project • Your plans to ensure a long-term legacy of your work that will continue after the end of the grant • That you will work with Operation Fortitude and prioritise referrals from the pathway where appropriate, at times of high demand **[*Note: Supporting Operation Fortitude will be a formal requirement under the Terms and Conditions of the grant*]**. • That you have suitable reporting mechanisms in place to track referrals and decisions. **[*Note: Where referrals from Operation Fortitude are rejected by your service, you will be asked to provide an explanation of the reason in your monthly returns to the Trust*]**

	● That you will have a clear structure for project governance including how you will manage relationships with project partners ● That you'll be able to start your grant activity at pace after award is made or for existing grant holders, as soon as your current RVH funding ends. ● That your project does not duplicate statutory provision ● If your service has a focus or specific expertise in housing a particular cohort [E.g. Ex-Offenders, veterans with High Complex Needs, specific mobility issues etc]. ● If your service identifies a specific cohort, you are unable to provide support to; please outline your reasons.

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.

We therefore need to know that you have the skills and experience to work with the groups of people that your project focuses on; can ensure that they are kept safe; and that you take an ethical approach to your work.

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 run your project in line with our Code of Conduct. 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 can access our ethics resources here

What financial information should you include in your application?

The application form will ask you to give details of your project budget.

It is fine to show these in categories where relevant, for example 'IT Equipment', rather than listing every item of the IT equipment you require.

However, you will need to give us sufficient information to assure us that you have fully considered how much the work will cost and 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.

Some useful points to consider include:

- If you are applying for training costs, state what training this is and for how many people.
- If you are applying for staff costs, show us how many hours we'll be paying for, ensuring these are new or additional, and at what rate of pay.
- If you are requesting funding for equipment, tell us what equipment this is and how many items you intend to purchase.

Preparing your project budget

What can funds be spent on?

We can pay for most of the things you'll need for your project or activity. This includes people's time, costs of delivering work online or buying/hiring equipment that enables you to increase the quality of your support offer.

We understand that, currently, the real value of your income may have dropped due to inflationary pressures of running your organisation. You may have also found the rising cost of living has increased demand on your services. 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 would not expect, for example, to fund the costs of purchasing a vehicle, but we would pay for mileage costs on vehicles used by your staff and volunteers.

Your project might include the following costs.

Staff time
- Staff time for this fixed-term project.
- Direct project work or for admin or to manage volunteers that may be involved in your project.
- Sessional staff or freelancers that you may need to run your project.
- Appropriate clinical supervision for workers who are supporting vulnerable individuals.

Travel costs
- Reasonable travel costs
- Fares or mileage for project staff, volunteers or beneficiaries to enable participation in the project.

Items to support your project

- Purchasing items that enable activities to take place.
- Art materials; sports/games/outdoor equipment; supplies for breakfast or social hubs.
- Purchasing items that will help you to deliver your project, such as additional telephones or laptops or IT equipment.

Reasonable overheads

- 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.

What can't funds be spent on?

Under this programme, we will not fund:

- activities that duplicate statutory NHS or state provision (though short-term support can be given to veterans e.g., access to addiction treatment)
- capital projects for creating additional bed spaces
- refurbishment costs of existing facilities
- projects where funding is not benefiting veterans
- activities or services that can be funded through rent or housing benefits.

We also will not fund the following

Where money only benefits one person. By this we mean where your whole project would only benefit one person.

Making grants or donations of money or items of value to individuals or families.

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.

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 - unless this is a capital programme.

This is not an exhaustive list and there may be specific exclusions for some programmes. Any grant that we award under this programme must be in line with our charitable objectives. As a Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) we cannot fund any lobbying activity.

Defining capital costs

When formulating your budget, it is useful to understand where costs sit in relation to the maximum amount available for capital and non-capital funding, within a specific programme. **While the Trust's programmes may allow non-capital costs, some capital costs – or both – it's important to note that any costs we support must be related to a defined project. We cannot support ongoing revenue costs (sometimes described as 'core costs').**

Here is a guide to allocating your cost headings:

Capital costs: These are the costs of buying equipment, furnishings, premises or other items that cost a significant amount and will last beyond the project duration. They can cover one-time large purchase, refurbishment, extension, or build of a fixed asset that will be used for a long period of time. This includes buildings, and can also include fixtures and fittings, and equipment. **Note that many of these items are specifically excluded under many of our funding programmes. Do check the individual Programme Guidance for this information.**

Examples of Capital costs

- New buildings and repairs, refurbishment to existing buildings, extension of existing buildings.
- Purchasing computers or other IT infrastructure
- Alteration of Land, or purchase or alteration of outside space, playgrounds, sports grounds and equipment.
- Alteration or refurbishment of indoor space, village/community halls, offices, equipment.
- Professional fees for architects, quantity surveyors, feasibility studies etc.

Non-capital costs: The day-to-day costs of a project and the activities that take place during the project can be considered revenue costs. This includes salaries, utilities, and events. For consumables, such as small IT equipment, deciding to categorise the item as revenue or capital funding depends on the scale of the purchase and its purpose within the project. Consider if the item(s) will be used where there is no lasting asset. For example, will it appear on an asset register or on a balance sheet for depreciation? If it does, it is probably a capital cost.

Examples of non-capital funding

- Salaries and on costs, sessional staff.
- Training, project running costs such as travel.
- Project activities and events outlay
- Purchase of consumables, such as IT equipment for the project team.
- Management/overheads (This may include a contribution to management time and to overheads such as utilities, rent, stationery etc)

These are examples only and you should categorise each item as appropriate to your project and check the specific Programme Guidance for eligibility.
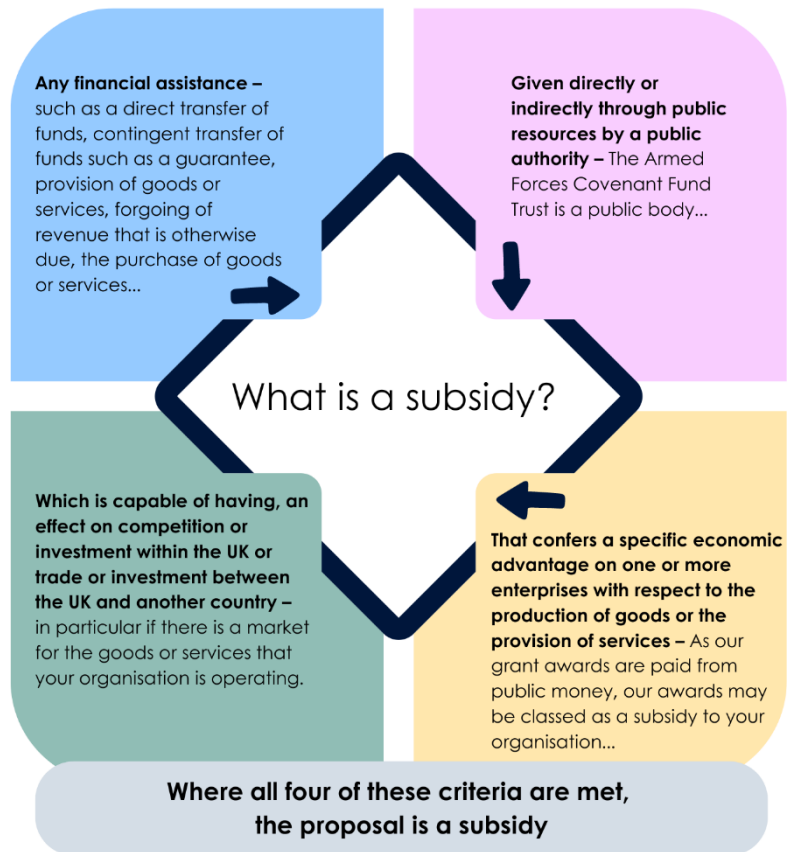
Subsidy Control Act 2022

The Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust is a public body. We are required to follow specific rules under the Subsidy Control Act 2022. This law requires us to be transparent about how we use public funds, which we provide as grants.

The Subsidy Control Act is important for anyone thinking about applying for our grants. We encourage you to understand its requirements, which are outlined in the guidance from the Department of Business and Trade. This guidance helps organisations like ours distribute funds responsibly, making sure they are used effectively and fairly, without negatively impacting competition or investment.

What does this mean for you?

- **Grants as public funding:** Our grants come from government money. This means they may be considered subsidies or financial support which is different from private funding. Other organisations might need to use their own funding for similar activities, so it's important to recognise this distinction.

- **Publishing Details of Large Grants:** If a grant exceeds £100,000, we must publish its details on our website and on a national database managed by the Department for Business and Trade. This helps to ensure the process is open and transparent.

- **Your Input:** When you apply for a grant, please complete your application form accurately. We have designed the questions to ensure compliance with subsidy control requirements, so your main task is to provide thorough and specific answers. We may also update the terms of the grant agreement based on these principles and could add further conditions. This will only be done for transparency and accountability purposes.

What is a subsidy?

Any financial assistance – such as a direct transfer of funds, contingent transfer of funds such as a guarantee, provision of goods or services, forgoing of revenue that is otherwise due, the purchase of goods or services...

Given directly or indirectly through public resources by a public authority – The Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust is a public body...

Which is capable of having, an effect on competition or investment within the UK or trade or investment between the UK and another country – in particular if there is a market for the goods or services that your organisation is operating.

That confers a specific economic advantage on one or more enterprises with respect to the production of goods or the provision of services – As our grant awards are paid from public money, our awards may be classed as a subsidy to your organisation...

Where all four of these criteria are met, the proposal is a subsidy

We are committed to ensuring that our funding process is as clear and straightforward as possible. While we need to follow these regulations to ensure fair and responsible use of public money, we also aim to support you through the application process with clear guidance and support.

How to apply - the application form

You need to apply using our online application form which you can access via our website, via each programme page and at the top of this document. The questions on the application form may be different for each of our programmes.

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.

To apply to some programmes, we may require you to attach documents to the application form. Please read the Programme Guidance carefully to check what these might be.

You do not need to send any additional information once you have submitted your application. We will not consider any additional information received unless specifically asked for by our assessors or Trust staff.

TOP TIPS
for completing your application form

1 Complete your application in a **Word document**, save it locally as you work on it. When it is complete, cut and paste the answers into our online form.

You will find a Word document with a list of the project related questions on our website

2 Don't use any formatting, such as tables or numbered lists, in your Word document. The online form may not accept this formatting and you might have trouble submitting the form.

3 **Save your online form** every 10-15 minutes while completing it, to avoid the risk of it 'timing out'.

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

4 You'll need to **provide two contacts from your organisation** on the application. At least one should have an organisation email address. At least one must hold the relevant authority (CEO/ CO or equivalent) to authorise any grant contract and bank account if successful.

5 You will be emailed when you both save and submit the application. **Check the 'Submitted Applications' tab** on your grant portal, to ensure your application has been fully submitted.

We can only consider applications that have been fully submitted

You must make sure that the trustees/directors/ senior staff within your organisation know that you are submitting this grant application. We recommend making a trustee or director your second contact on your application.

Do not send your application by email or post to the Covenant Fund Trust – we will only consider applications submitted via the online form.

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in completing application forms

We understand that AI is a powerful tool that can help organisations work in more efficient ways, one of those may be in supporting you in generating your application form.

Whilst we will consider applications that have been partially generated using AI, there are some important factors to be aware of. We would strongly recommend that you review the application ahead of submitting it to ensure it: reads properly and makes sense; is factually accurate; and is an accurate representation of the project you are intending to deliver.

If you use AI to generate any part of the application form, you will also be expected to review elements that refer to project delivery, in detail, to make sure your organisation has the skills and capabilities to run the project. We would not expect any AI generated answers relating to questions on project need; for these questions you will need to be clear on any consultation work, or otherwise, you have undertaken to demonstrate why the project is needed.
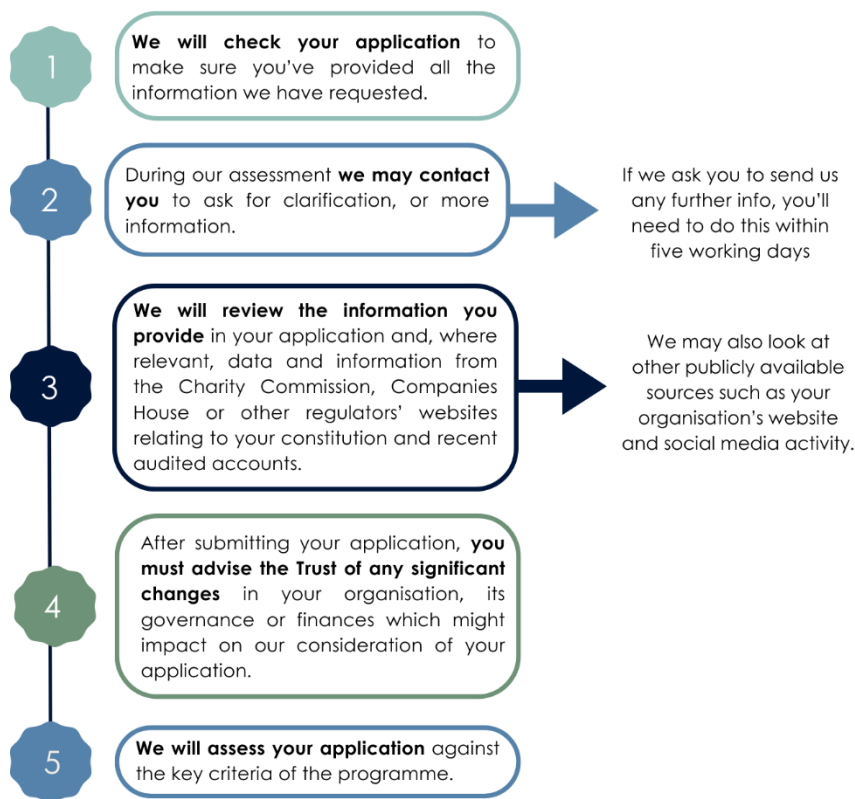
The Trust reserves the right to reject any AI generated applications if we have concerns around the factual accuracy of them.

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. Please note that this is a 'no reply' email address.

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

1. **We will check your application** to make sure you've provided all the information we have requested.

2. During our assessment **we may contact you** to ask for clarification, or more information.

   If we ask you to send us any further info, you'll need to do this within five working days

3. **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.

4. 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.

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

Please note: If your application is handled by one of our external grant assessors, you may be contacted by them from a non-Trust email address.

Be assured that our external assessors will always clearly identify their role and copy the Trust Grants Manager for the programme into their email.

However, if you have concerns after receiving an email from a non-Trust email address, you can contact us at info@covenantfund.org.uk

If you have any further queries about your application after you have submitted it, you can contact us at info@covenantfund.org.uk

Checks we may carry out on your organisation

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

This might 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. Please note, we **do not** class company secretaries as Directors of CICs, unless they are registered separately as a Director as well.
	that your governing documents (such as constitutions and memorandum and articles of association) are up to date, correct and properly signed
	that your governing documents allow you to undertake the activities for which you are applying (N.B. it is, however, your responsibility to ensure that your organisation would not be acting outside any constitutional restrictions if you are awarded a grant)
	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 and other publicly available information, to ensure 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. We may also require the second contact from your organisation to be from head office depending on your structure
	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 is held elsewhere in the public domain. We'll need you to explain any inconsistencies
	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

Decisions about your application

Final decisions will be made by the 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 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, ensuring a good spread of funded projects and to differentiate between projects that are considered fundable.

Please note that 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 have 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.

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.

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?

The Board of Trustees decide to support your grant proposal

We will email you to let you know you've been successful. This email will give you full instructions of what you need to do next to receive your official offer letter, how to accept the grant and what documents you need to provide.

We may invite you to an online briefing session for new grant holders; and we'll send you the dates for these. Alternatively, we may request a virtual meeting with you to provide you with further information and answer any questions you may have.

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

You'll need to accept our grant offer and the terms and conditions of the grant within four weeks of receiving the Offer Letter or risk the offer lapsing.

Once we have all the necessary documents back, we will pay the first instalment of your grant. We pay grants in instalments, and the number and size of these will depend on the size and duration of the grant.

If there are any discrepancies/queries within these documents, this will delay your payment, so please read the accompanying information we provide, thoroughly.

You'll need to spend the full grant amount during the grant period - this small retained amount is paid retrospectively.

A small proportion of the total amount awarded to you will be retained pending a satisfactory End of Grant report.

Good to know...

- If you receive a grant, you will need to **keep good records** of how you spent the funds 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 applying for grant funding, please refer to all the programme documentation for support. There is a wealth of useful information available 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

Please note: We are only able to offer technical advice to applicants. We cannot advise on whether your proposed project is a good idea, or whether it is likely to receive funding.