

The Armed Forces Families Fund  
Supporting Partners  
Programme

**Programme Guidance**  
**2025/26**



Ministry  
of Defence



**THE ARMED FORCES  
COVENANT FUND TRUST**  
*Funded by HM Government*

# **Armed Forces Families Fund (AF3)**

## **Supporting Partners programme**

### **PROGRAMME GUIDANCE**

#### **Programme overview**

**Grants available:** Between £10,000 - £70,000

**Funding on behalf of:** The MOD's Armed Forces Families Fund

**Project length:** Between one and two years

**Programme aim(s):** To provide solutions and support for partners of serving personnel, including reservists, to reduce the challenges that service life can sometimes present.

**Application closing date(s):** Midday on 23 July 2025

**Awarded projects to start by:** 5 January 2026

**Application form link:** [Apply to the Supporting Partners Programme](#)

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

**Will grant holders be required to use the Impact Hub?** Yes

#### **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.

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## **The programme**

### **Why are we running this programme?**

Families play a vital role in supporting serving personnel. However, the [Tri-Service Families Continuous Attitude Survey \(FAMCAS\) 2024](#) identifies 'the effect on my career' as one of the most negative aspects of military life for partners. The survey also notes increasing anxiety among service partners, alongside persistently high levels of loneliness. While employment rates among service partners remain strong, FAMCAS suggests that providing better access to information and support for those wishing to change careers or return to work after a break, could enhance the overall wellbeing of service partners.

Under the Supporting Partners programme, the Armed Forces Families Fund (AF3) responds to this by improving the provision of help to service partners. This includes promoting their skills and experiences in the workplace, enhancing wellbeing, improving access to services, and addressing challenges which they may face.

### **How much funding can you apply for?**

You can apply for a grant of between £10,000 and £70,000 in total towards a project being delivered over a period of 12 to 24 months.

### **Timetable**

There will be **one** deadline for applications this financial year:

- If you apply by **midday on 23 July 2025**, you'll receive a decision before the end of **September 2025**.

**We cannot accept any late applications.**

Please refer to [our late application policy](#).

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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## **Your organisation**

### **Who is eligible to apply?**

We welcome applications to this funding programme from the following types of organisations.

- Registered charities
- Armed forces units or bases
- Community Interest Companies (CICs)
- UK universities or colleges

Charities and CICs which do not have substantial recent experience of working with the armed forces community can apply. However, you must be planning to deliver the project in partnership with an organisation or organisations with substantial recent experience of working with armed forces communities or that are armed forces specific. Planned partnerships must be agreed in principle prior to submitting your application and the partner organisation named in the relevant section of the application form.

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 a significant and regular part of your existing work.

This could include work with military bases or units, where the work will create the development of tangible links between civilian communities and local command and offer routes for learning and referrals.

The following additional eligibility requirements also apply:

#### **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.
- You must ensure that your organisation's charitable objects are sufficiently broad enough to allow you to run all elements of your proposed project, regardless of whether you are engaging with a delivery partner or not.

#### **Statutory organisations**

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

### Armed Forces units/bases

- Your Unit must be based in the UK or at an overseas base or defence location.
- Your main Point of Contact will ideally be an individual who will remain within the post for the duration of the project.
- We would expect Units that apply to have engaged with, and looking to work in partnership with external organisations who can provide specific services to meet the needs of the targeted group. These do not need to be Armed Forces specific organisations.
- If your application is successful we will require the authorisation of your CO/OC or equivalent when you accept the grant offer. This is to ensure that we have buy in for the project and commitment to its delivery.

### CICs

- Your organisation must have been incorporated in the UK for at least three years and you must have submitted three years' of accounts to Companies House at the time of applying.
- Your organisation must have a minimum of three unrelated directors at the time of applying, and, if successful, throughout the life of your grant, and this must be verifiable at all times on the Companies House website. Please note that Company Secretaries cannot be considered as one of your three Directors, unless they have been registered separately as a Director as well.
- You will need to attach a copy of your governing document and most recent, full accounts (including an income and expenditure statement and balance sheet – not just abbreviated accounts as submitted to Companies House) with your application form. Your application will not be complete without these documents.
- We will carry out extra governance checks. You may not be considered for funding if your Articles of Association do not have nominated beneficiary organisation/s in the Asset Lock clause. If this section in your articles is blank or 'to be confirmed' your application may not be regarded as eligible.
- CIC Directors must confirm that none of the Disqualification rules (that prevent people from holding senior or trustee positions in a charity) apply to them. [The Disqualification Rules can be found here.](#)
- At our discretion, the Trust may look more favourably on applications from CICs that are governed in similar ways as charities i.e. with equal responsibility shared among the Directors, with no single director registered as a person with significant control.

**The following restrictions may apply:**

- Organisations cannot apply more than once per funding round under this programme.
- We generally receive more good applications for funding than we can support. We may prioritise organisations which have not yet received a grant under the Supporting Partners programme.
- If we receive more strong applications than we can support, we may give priority to projects that help ensure that armed forces families located in different parts of the UK/overseas, and in each of the services, can benefit from this programme.
- 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 may also consider funding trends in this programme over a period of time.
- Projects entirely focused on providing support through technological based solutions such as web-based apps may not be prioritised in this programme.

**Who cannot apply for this programme?**

- An individual.
- Schools.
- Childcare providers (including early years).
- Newly registered charities or CICs.
- Other public sector organisations - but you could work with one of the types of organisations listed above, as a delivery partner.
- 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.
- Not-for-profit organisations that are not registered as either a charity or CIC.
- A private or for-profit company.

This list is not exhaustive, only those organisations listed in the “Who is eligible to apply?” section above are eligible to apply under this grant programme.

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## **Your project**

### **What types of projects are we looking for?**

Your project should be focused on supporting the **partners of serving personnel (including reservists)** and should evidence a clear impact for beneficiaries through one or more of the following outcomes:

- Improved mental health and wellbeing of partners of serving personnel, with consideration to modern family dynamics.
- Service providers and employers have greater awareness and understanding of the unique challenges faced by partners of serving personnel.
- Partners of serving personnel, including non-UK nationals, can access the support they need more easily.
- Partners feel they have increased their skills and confidence through additional opportunities to explore new ways of working and/or to change careers.

Achieving these outcomes requires **collaboration and consultation** with the partners of currently serving personnel and reservists. We will ask you to explain in your application how potential beneficiaries have helped to inform your project and how you know the project is needed. Your project should look to address the immediate and emerging needs of partners of serving personnel and reservists.

If your application is successful, we will expect you to conduct ongoing **impact monitoring** to enable you to deliver informed reporting, against the programme outcomes, back to the Trust.

This programme welcomes applications for the continuation or extension of **proven**, existing work that demonstrates clear benefits, as well as funding for **pilot** projects or innovative approaches to providing support.

We also welcome innovation where **partnerships** may not have existed before, to both increase knowledge and understanding of armed forces communities and build future capacity in both armed forces organisations and specialist non-armed forces organisations. By collaborative working we mean organisations working together for the benefit of the armed forces communities ensuring long-term impact, value for money and sustainability.

Projects should seek to remove **barriers** to participation for beneficiaries, to encourage engagement with the activities provided. **The Trust can only fund projects that are in addition to existing statutory provision.**

**Inclusivity** should be promoted to ensure partners of all serving personnel and reservists are aware of the support available, to reach those who would benefit most. As part of your data collection on the cohort you are supporting, it would be helpful to capture a breakdown of the service ranks represented, such as whether individuals are from commissioned or non-commissioned ranks. This information will support a better understanding of the demographic being served.

**Projects can be delivered in the UK or overseas.** We welcome applications from projects being delivered at a local or regional level in addition to those that have a national focus.



Activities may include the following (please note that this is not an exhaustive list).



Improved mental health and wellbeing of partners of serving personnel, with consideration to modern family dynamics.



Projects could include virtual community activities that consider modern family dynamics, such as working with families without children.



Projects could seek to enhance the wellbeing and mental health support for partners through co-produced activities, or improved access to existing support, through collaboration between armed forces and other organisations.



Service providers and employers have greater awareness and understanding of the unique challenges faced by partners of serving personnel.



Projects could focus on the creation and distribution of co-produced resources that help to address known and emerging gaps in provision. This could include resources for partners who are non-UK nationals.



Projects could also look to improve integration of non-UK partners with relevant community activities and available services.



Partners of serving personnel, including non-UK nationals, can access the support they need more easily.



Projects could involve raising awareness of existing services, to reduce duplication and simplify access.



Projects may also involve the creation and promotion of training and resources that help further employers' knowledge and understanding of the unique challenges that partners



Partners feel they have increased their skills and confidence through additional opportunities to explore new ways of working and/or to change careers.



Projects could involve opportunities for partners to use their skills, education, or experience through training programmes, career counselling or networking opportunities. For example, a current project based in Cyprus provides training via a return to work programme, including CV writing and interview techniques, to increase skills and confidence to seek employment on return to the UK.



Projects may also involve digital literacy, peer to peer support or existing provision to enhance the opportunities available. For example, a project working with further and higher education organisations - to educate practitioners on the needs of armed forces partners as potential students and employees - aims to develop pathways to address the unique challenges partners face, raise their confidence, improve aspirations and increase wellbeing through opportunities to study and work in the sector.

## 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.

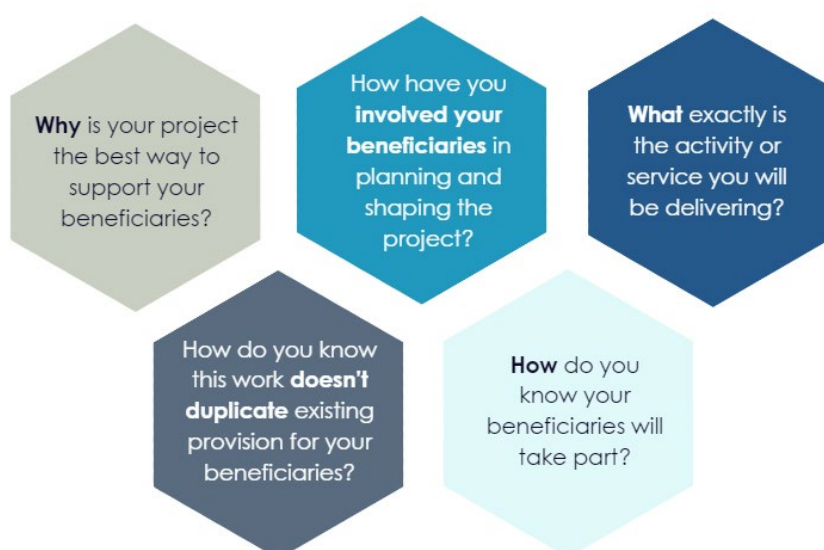
We won't fund projects which duplicate existing provision. So, you'll need to show us how your project complements other work taking place.

You'll also need to show us what evidence you have to support the approach you seek to take and, crucially, how people from Armed Forces communities have helped to shape this.

As part of your application, we'll ask you to show us that your project:

<b>is needed and targeted</b>	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.
<b>is user-led</b>	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.
<b>has lasting impact</b>	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:



## Who should benefit from your project?

**The direct and primary beneficiaries must be current non-serving partners of currently serving personnel or reservists only.**

We define reservists as those who are part of the Volunteer Reserve Forces. These people are volunteers who accept an annual training commitment and a liability for call out for permanent service. The Royal Naval Reserve (RNR), the Royal Marines Reserve (RMR), the Army Reserve and the Royal Air Force Reserves fall under the Volunteer Reserve Forces. Our definition also covers people who are in a full time Reserve Service post. Our definition does not include recent service leavers, or veterans, who upon leaving regular service may retain a liability for call out.

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, the partners of serving personnel.** They are the people who will access the services or participate in activities paid for by the Trust's grant.

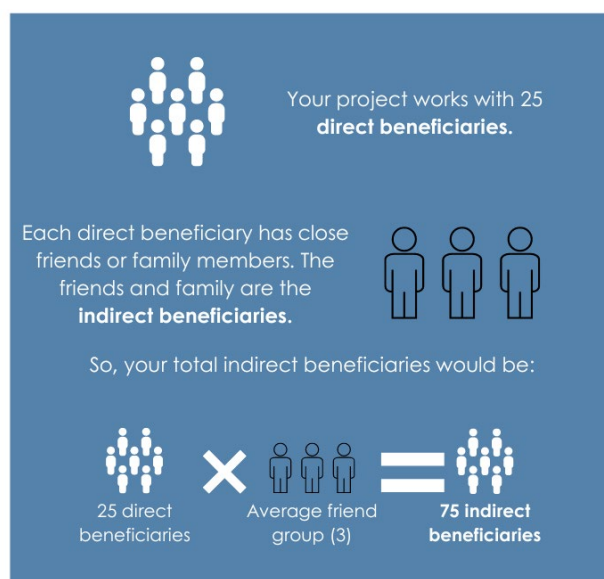
### Example



a peer-to-peer support group is established to help build friendships amongst partners of serving personnel. They are the direct beneficiaries. The indirect beneficiaries are the rest of the immediate family including any children, and the serving partner, who experience increased wellbeing as a result.

However, others outside of your target groups may also benefit from your project. These are called **indirect beneficiaries**. For example, the wider family or serving person who will benefit from their partner's improved wellbeing.

The following illustration can help with understanding 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 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.

If we fund your project, we'll ask you to submit **regular progress reports** to tell us how your work is going. That information will feed into our overall grant programme evaluation. This helps us to learn from every grant we make and to see where funds are most effective at reducing disadvantage for the armed forces community.

### Impact Hub

**The Impact Hub** is a tool we ask you to use as a Trust grant holder, where applicable, to help all of us further understand and share the impact of your project on the wellbeing of your beneficiaries. It uses nationally recognised demographic questions and surveys, including the ONS4 survey (one of the most simple and straightforward) to track your project's impact on those taking part and to help us report on the overall impact of this programme, as a funder distributing public monies.

When you accept your grant offer, we create a record on the Impact Hub for your project. You are then responsible for ensuring that consenting project participants are registered and that their wellbeing journey is monitored over time via completion of **ONS4** survey questions.

There are a small number of specific exemptions to use of this tool. But for most of our funding programmes, **it is a condition of your grant that you use the Impact Hub even if you have your own impact recording systems**. You should carefully consider this requirement when deciding whether to apply to us for funding.

Applicants may consider cost implications when planning their project budget. For the majority there will be no additional admin costs, but for some projects, we appreciate that information may need to be uploaded on behalf of beneficiaries and in these cases additional admin time may be factored in.

For full information, we recommend you look at the relevant section of our website, here:

[Impact Hub : Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust](#)

## 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.

The MOD's Families Policy Team may contact successful applicants, particularly if their project's impact has potential relevance for future policy development or shaping future iterations of the Supporting Partners programme.

## 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.

<b>The difference that your project is making</b>	
What are we looking for?	<p>That the project is addressing a specific need for partners of serving personnel and reservists and that it will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be able to make a significant difference to people's lives</li> <li>• 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</li> </ul>
What do you need to show us?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What your project would do</li> <li>• How this would help specific armed forces communities</li> <li>• How people from Armed Forces communities have shaped this project or service; and how you know that they will use it</li> <li>• How many people this is likely to help, and what difference this will make</li> <li>• What the long-term benefits will be?</li> </ul>

<b>Delivery of your project</b>	
What are we looking for?	<p>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.</p>
What do you need to show us?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That your organisation is well run and well managed</li> <li>• That you'll be able to start your grant activity quickly</li> <li>• That you can keep people on your project safe</li> <li>• That you will deliver your project in line with our ethical values</li> <li>• That your budget is accurate and well-costed</li> <li>• Why your project offers good value for money</li> <li>• Whether you will be working with others to achieve your aims, and how you will do this</li> <li>• How you will measure the impact of your project</li> <li>• Your plans to ensure a long-term legacy of your work that will continue after the end of the grant</li> </ul>



## 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.

The Trust has an Ethics Advisory Panel, which includes Trustees and independent experts, which provides guidance and leadership on ethical issues. This includes activities and interventions proposed in grant applications where necessary.

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 sports 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.








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 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.

<b>Staff time</b>	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.
<b>Travel costs</b>	Reasonable travel costs Fares or mileage for project staff, volunteers or beneficiaries to enable participation in the project.
<b>Items to support your project</b>	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.
<b>Reasonable overheads</b>	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?

 <p>Where money only benefits one person. By this we mean where your whole project would only benefit one person.</p>	 <p>Making grants or donations of money or items of value to individuals or families.</p>	 <p>Repeat or regular projects that require a source of uncommitted funding.</p>	 <p>Endowments (to provide a source of income).</p>
 <p>Topping up existing grants and aid from a government department.</p>	 <p>Investments</p>	 <p>Fundraising costs, including organising fundraising events and activities.</p>	 <p>Paying for ongoing costs of existing partnership activity.</p>
 <p>Projects, activities or services that the state has a legal obligation to provide.</p>	 <p>Retrospective funding for projects that have already started or taken place</p>	 <p>Excessive management or professional fees or contingency costs.</p>	 <p>Projects with budgets that are dominated by capital costs - unless this is a capital programme.</p>

**This is not an exhaustive list and there may be specific exclusions for some programmes.**

**Please note that grants cannot be used to fund individuals' fees, bursaries or grants.**

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.

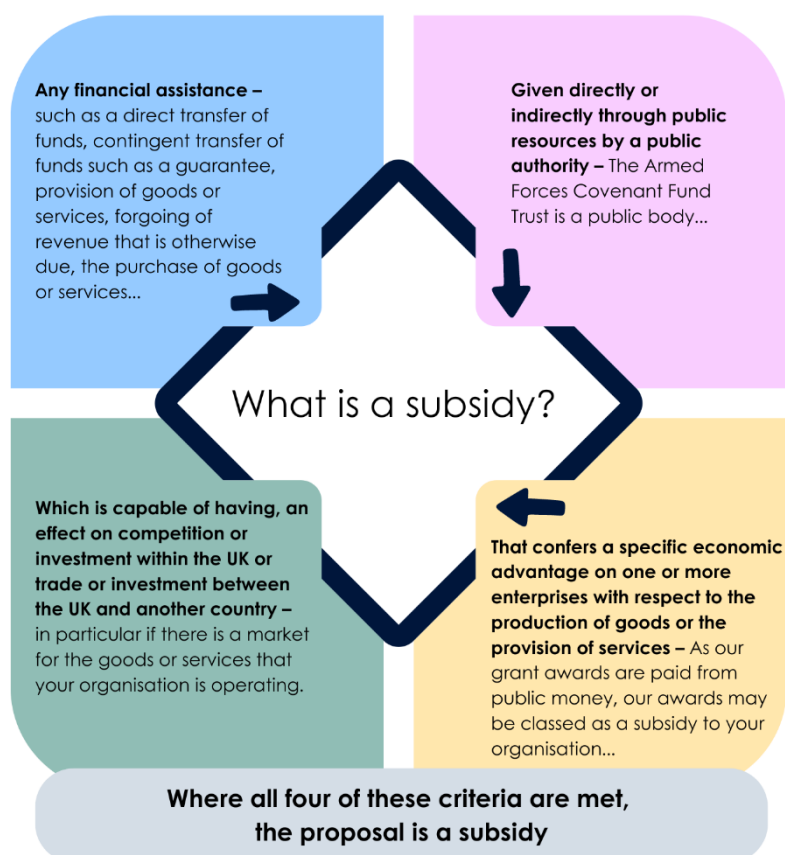
## Subsidy Control Act 2022

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.



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, you may need to attach documents to the application form. Please read the programme guidance carefully to check what these might be.

You don't need to send any additional information once you have submitted your application. We won't consider any additional information unless we've asked you for it specifically.




### 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 Armed Forces 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 to help generate your application form.

Whilst we will consider applications that have been partially generated using AI, we strongly recommend that you review the application ahead of submitting it to ensure it:

- reads properly and makes sense,
- is factually accurate,
- 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 need to be clear work you've undertaken to demonstrate why the project is needed.

We reserve the right to reject any AI-generated applications if we have concerns around their factual accuracy.

## 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](mailto: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.**

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

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

**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.

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.

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

We may also look at other publicly available sources such as your organisation's website and social media activity.

**Please note:** If your application is handled by one of our external grant assessors, they may contact you 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](mailto: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](mailto: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, to make sure the information is correct and that there are no significant risks we can identify when awarding grants.

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### This might include checks:

on whether financial information on your application form matches that held by your regulatory body (Companies House, Charity Commission etc.)

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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.

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that your governing documents (such as constitutions and memorandum and articles of association) are up to date, correct and properly signed

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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)

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on your accounts that are accessible through regulatory bodies

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on any identified concerns about a person named as a contact or who has a position within your organisation

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that the signatories are valid and well informed about the project

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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

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to ensure you are up to date on all reporting with any active grants you hold with the Trust

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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

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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

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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

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## 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, we 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.

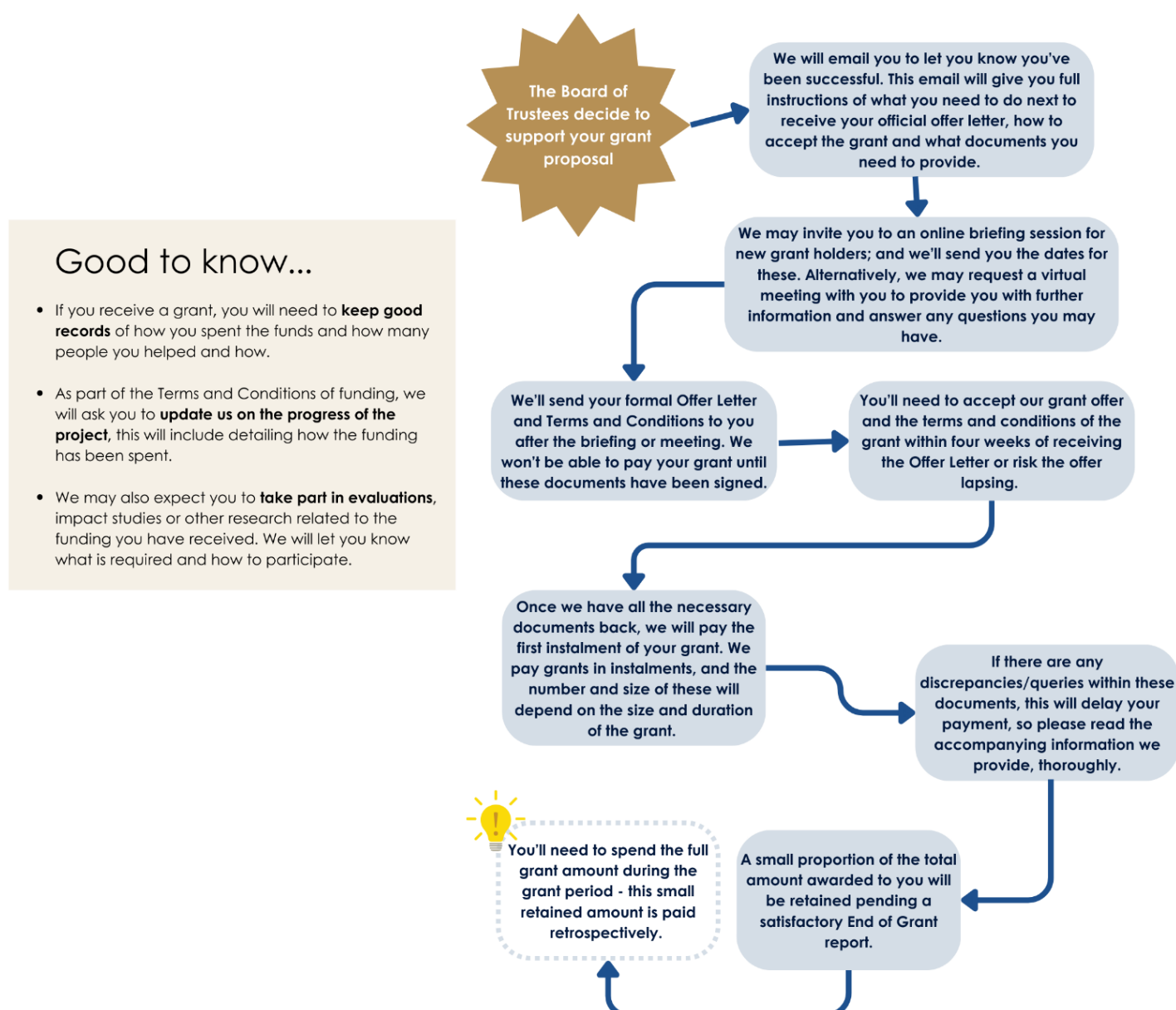
**If your organisation has previously had a grant from us, we expect all reporting to be up-to-date and may consider this when considering new applications.**

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



Our Privacy Policy explains what data we collect from our grant applicants, and how we use this. Please read this before you apply: <https://covenantfund.org.uk/privacy-policy/>

If you have further questions, you'll find lots more useful information on our website.

If you can't find the answer to your question in these guidance notes or on our website, please email [info@covenantfund.org.uk](mailto:info@covenantfund.org.uk)

**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.**

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