

Family Focus

*Supporting the families of
Wounded, Injured or Sick
serving personnel and Veterans*



**Programme Guidance
2025/26**

The Armed Forces Covenant Fund

Family Focus programme:

*Supporting the families of wounded, injured and sick
serving personnel and veterans*

PROGRAMME GUIDANCE

Programme overview

Grants available: between £50,000 and £100,000

Funding on behalf of: The Armed Forces Covenant Fund

Project length: 12 to 18 months

Programme aim(s): To fund projects that explore and pilot solutions for family members - collectively and as individuals - of Wounded, Injured and Sick serving personnel or veterans.

Application closing date(s): Midday on Wednesday 24 September 2025

Awarded projects to start by: 1 January 2026 – 1 April 2026

Application form link: [Apply to the Family Focus 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?

The Trust released its three-year Covenant Funding Framework in April 2024. Our Framework, and the subsequent programmes, were developed based on insights from our public consultation; stakeholder meetings, which included representatives from the single Services; intelligence from sector research, policy papers and the Trust's own programme evaluations and grant monitoring.

The Trust's Funding Framework is centred on enhancing quality of life, ensuring that Armed Forces communities are not disadvantaged, providing support to those requiring special consideration, and addressing complex needs by identifying effective solutions. [Explore our 24-27 Funding Framework here](#). This programme fits under the theme of ***'supporting those in need of special consideration.'***

The Family Focus programme launched in 2024, and in its first year we made 16 grants to organisations across the country, supporting the valuable contribution of family members who care for serving personnel and veterans who are wounded, injured or sick. You can read more about the difference these interventions are making and find a full list of those grants [here](#).

This year, we will again be seeking to support projects which recognise family members' needs beyond their role as carers and the needs of the whole family unit. Projects funded through this programme will offer activities and interventions which support families to live with significant changes to their lives; reducing the barriers to positive family relationships; increasing resilience and providing effective pathways for them to access the support they need.

We will accept applications for new pilots, or projects that involve the implementation of learning from or make refinements to recent pilots, embedding good practice. We will also accept applications for projects which will build upon or expand services which have been developed and tested within the previous five years, but which are not part of an organisation's regular or core work.

What do we mean by the term 'wounded, injured and sick'?

The focus of this funding programme is towards supporting families with the transition into a new and different life from the one they have previously known and enabling them to adjust to that change.

We acknowledge and accept that between organisations and service providers definitions of the term wounded, injured and sick may differ and that each will work within its own established framework.

However, we would expect support to focus on addressing the needs of the families which are most severely and recently impacted or which prepares for families affected in the future.

Does the Trust have a definition of 'family'?

For the Trust, family is considered anyone who plays a significant role in a person's life. This includes but is not limited to spouses, civil partners, cohabiting partners in committed relationships, children under 18, and relatives such as parents, siblings, and grandparents who live with, are financially dependent on, or are cared for by the veteran/serving person or partner. The Trust also recognises that family can take forms based on deep seated emotional ties outside of traditional legal and familial definitions. Trustees will fund projects that strongly evidence need and may prioritise projects where support is limited to family members who are most directly impacted by the veteran/serving person's situation.

How much funding can you apply for?

You can apply for a grant of between £50,000 and £100,000 in total towards a project being delivered over a period of 12 to 18 months.

Enhanced grants

In exceptional cases, the Trust will consider awarding an enhanced grant to deliver an additional element. **You can request up to a maximum of 50% of your main grant request to enhance your project.** The enhancement may, for instance, involve extending the scope of your project to address the needs of additional beneficiaries, to meet an additional outcome or to expand your project's geographical reach.

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 stand-alone** and delivered for between £50,000 and £100,000. If you apply for an enhanced grant, you must tell us what extra work your project would be able to deliver. Our Board of Trustees may decide they wish to see further detail on your enhanced proposal before making a decision.

Timetable

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

If you apply by **midday** on Wednesday 24 September 2025, you will receive a decision before the end of December 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
- Community Interest Companies (CICs)
- Local authorities
- NHS organisations

Charities and CICs which do not have substantial recent experience of working with the armed forces community can apply. However, your project must be delivered in partnership with another organisation (or organisations) which have substantial recent experience of working with armed forces communities or which are armed-forces-specific.

Local authorities and NHS organisations would be expected to work in partnership with other relevant organisations. It is essential that you show that all proposed activities are additional to your statutory responsibilities. This includes a requirement that work must be over and above any statutory care provision and your existing work to meet the Armed Forces Covenant Duty. We will ask about this in the application form.

If you are considering forming a partnership, please see the 'Working with other organisations' section below.

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.

Local authorities

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

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.

NHS 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.

The following restrictions may apply:

- Organisations cannot apply more than once to this programme in 2025-26.
- We generally receive more good applications for funding than we can support. We may prioritise applications which reflect the spread of need across the UK. We may also prioritise applications that recognise that the circumstances and needs of the families of those who are wounded, injured or sick may differ and may also change over time.
- We may decline applications from current Trust grant holders if the reporting requirements for existing grants from the Trust are not up to date.

Who cannot apply for this programme?

- Statutory organisations which are not NHS organisations.
- Armed forces units/bases, (although defence recovery units can apply).
- Childcare providers (including early years).
- Commercial organisations that would seek for their solution to be provided for profit.
For example, an organisation could not be awarded a grant to develop a training course which it then charges schools to attend.
- Schools, both LA maintained and independent (fee-paying), including boarding schools, regardless of their charitable status.
- An individual.
- Universities and other further or higher education institutions.
- A charity or CIC which is newly registered.
- 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.
- Exempt charities, which are not otherwise constituted as one of the eligible organisations listed above.
- 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?

The aim of this programme is to improve the quality of life of **family members** - collectively and as individuals - of wounded, injured and sick serving personnel and veterans, including those with hidden wounds.

All projects must meet this overarching aim and your primary, direct beneficiaries must be the family members.

All projects will be expected to address the needs of **family members** who are currently experiencing significant impact to their lives and require support to adjust and plan for the future.

In addition to meeting the programme aim, your project must also address one or more of the following programme outcomes:

- Family members of those who are wounded, injured or sick feel better informed and more able to access relevant information, advice and guidance, applicable to their situation.
- Family members of those who are wounded, injured or sick feel less lonely/isolated, more resilient and better equipped to deal with their circumstances.
- Family members of those who are wounded, injured and sick have developed their skills for work, or have greater confidence to pursue volunteering or employment when it's right for them.

The focus of this programme in 2025-26 is on interventions which:

- a) **explore and pilot solutions and projects** which trial refinements to, implement learning from or embed good practice of successful recent pilots
or
- b) **build upon or expand services** which have been developed and tested within the previous five years, but which are not part of an organisation's regular or core work.

It is essential that your project is informed by your target beneficiaries.

This could be through structured consultation, service user involvement in the development and design of your project, or as members of a steering group or the organisation's governing body. We will ask you about this in the application form.

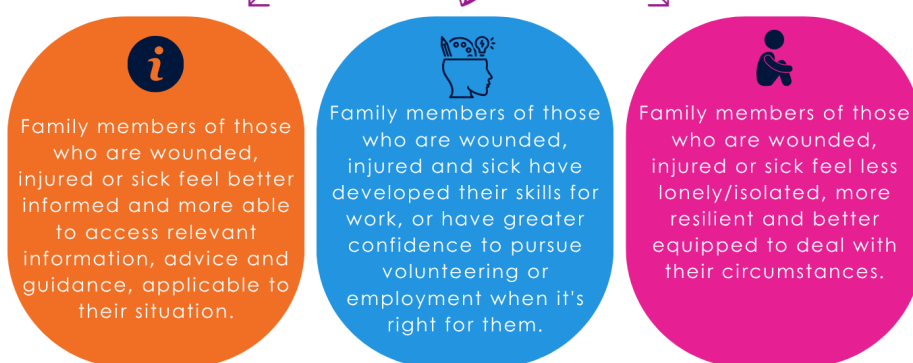
Family Focus

Supporting the families of
Wounded, Injured or Sick
serving personnel and Veterans



Improve the quality of life of **family members** of wounded, injured and sick serving personnel and veterans.

Your project must meet at least one of the following outcomes...



It is essential that your project is informed by your target beneficiaries

Strong projects will recognise that **each family and each family member has a unique set of circumstances** and may have complex needs. Support may be aimed at families whose circumstances will change over time, due to improving or worsening health conditions, or to those whose situation is more stable.

Projects may offer a **programme of support for a defined period, with a solutions-based, person-centred approach**. These time-limited interventions could address their immediate needs or form a plan to help with long-term support needs.

Provision may include **tailored information, advice and guidance**, including parenting support. Projects may also involve **wellbeing activities designed to address loneliness**, increase resilience or improve welfare. Delivery may be focused towards **strengthening relationships within the family unit** or boosting the confidence of family members through skills development or employability activities.

If your project involves service development, improvement or adaptation, you will also be required to include delivery of **tangible outcomes** for beneficiaries within the project period.

Projects could include a focus on **reaching out to and addressing the needs of hidden carers**. They may be hard to reach, perhaps because they feel it is not fair to have needs, or have difficulty accepting that their circumstances have changed, or may feel unable to accept support or have a fear of being stigmatised. Others may simply not identify with the status or wish to define themselves as carers.

Some applicants may already have project plans in place to address the needs of this target group, whereas others may require a longer development phase. We'll expect your project plan to include a clear, early focus on evaluation and future planning beyond the funded project period.

The scope of your work may be national, regional or local. However, applications for localised projects will only be considered where the applicant can demonstrate that there is a significant population of the target cohort in the area of delivery.

What we won't fund

- **Projects where the primary, direct beneficiaries are serving personnel and/or veterans.**
- Organisations' core work or existing services (outside of delivery of projects which have been developed and tested within the previous five years).
- Projects intending to provide holidays, short breaks or respite care.
- Projects which are solely focused on research, awareness raising or improvements to service provision, which do not have tangible outcomes for beneficiaries within the project period.
- Projects which duplicate existing MOD provision during the transitional period to civilian life.
- Work which duplicates the existing provision of the Naval Service Recovery Centre (NSRC), Personnel Recovery Units (PRU), Personnel Recovery Centres (PRCs)
- Clinical interventions.
- Work undertaken by local authorities and other statutory bodies which is not additional to existing responsibilities, including under the Armed Forces Covenant Duty.
- Other statutory obligations.

Examples for illustrative purposes only



A partnership project, developed after consultation with families of wounded, injured and sick personnel is focused on addressing the acute needs of parents and children, with the goal of reducing isolation and loneliness and promoting wellbeing and family cohesion.

The project will provide parents with easy access to support and resources tailored to their specific needs, including hidden or less well-known issues. It will also include a peer-to-peer support network for children and young people to access mentoring.



The project will continuously improve based on family feedback, aiming to develop a comprehensive set of educational resources for the wider community, ensuring long-term impact.



Following a structured consultation exercise, a carer support group identifies that participants wish to rebuild and update their IT skills, to prepare them for when they can re-enter the workforce.

The group brings in the expertise of an employability organisation, working in partnership to co-design a suite of workshops, online flexible learning modules that can be completed around caring responsibilities and drop-in sessions for additional in-person support.

The project will improve confidence and skills, bringing the participants closer to future career opportunities, whilst also enabling peer support and respite from the caregiving role.

What should your application show us?

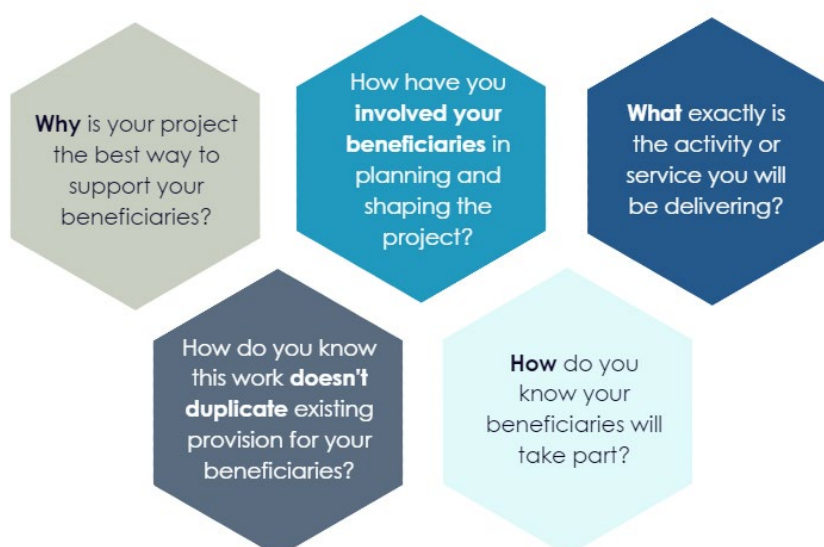
You'll need to clearly show us that you have the **skills and experience** necessary to carry out your project. This can include working with other organisations - there is more information on working with others later in this document.

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:

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:



Who should benefit from your project?

The direct and primary beneficiaries must be **the families** of wounded, injured or sick serving personnel/veterans.

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 family carers of wounded, injured or sick veterans. They are the people who will access the services or participate in activities paid for by the Trust's grant.

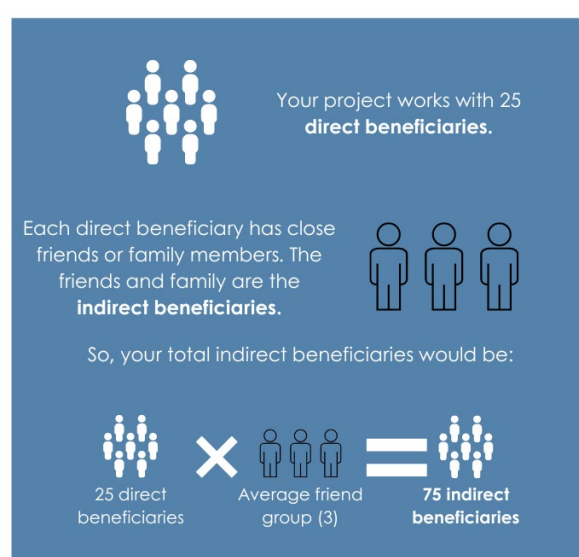
Example



A support session is designed to help **the family members of wounded, injured or sick serving personnel**. They are the **direct beneficiaries**. The **indirect beneficiaries** might be the **serving person**, or the wider family.

However, others outside of your target group(s) may also benefit from your project. These are called **indirect beneficiaries**. For example, the veteran who is cared for or the wider family unit.

The following illustrations 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 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.

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](https://www.covenantfund.org.uk/impact-hub)

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 of the family members of wounded, injured or sick serving personnel or veterans and that it will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What your project would do • How this would help specific armed forces communities • How people from armed forces communities have shaped this project or service; and how you know that they will use it • How many people this is likely to help, and what difference this will make • What the long-term benefits will be?

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?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That your organisation is well run and well managed • That you'll be able to start your grant activity quickly • That you can 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

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:

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?

 <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.

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.

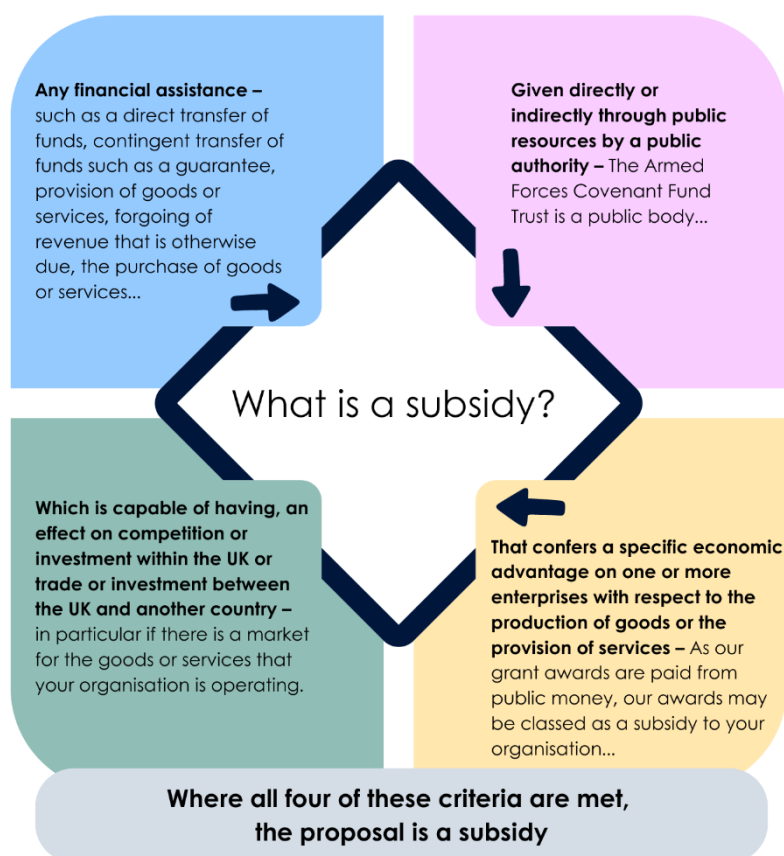
Subsidy Control Act 2022

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.

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.




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

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 noreply@yourcause.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

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, to make sure the information is correct and that 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, 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.

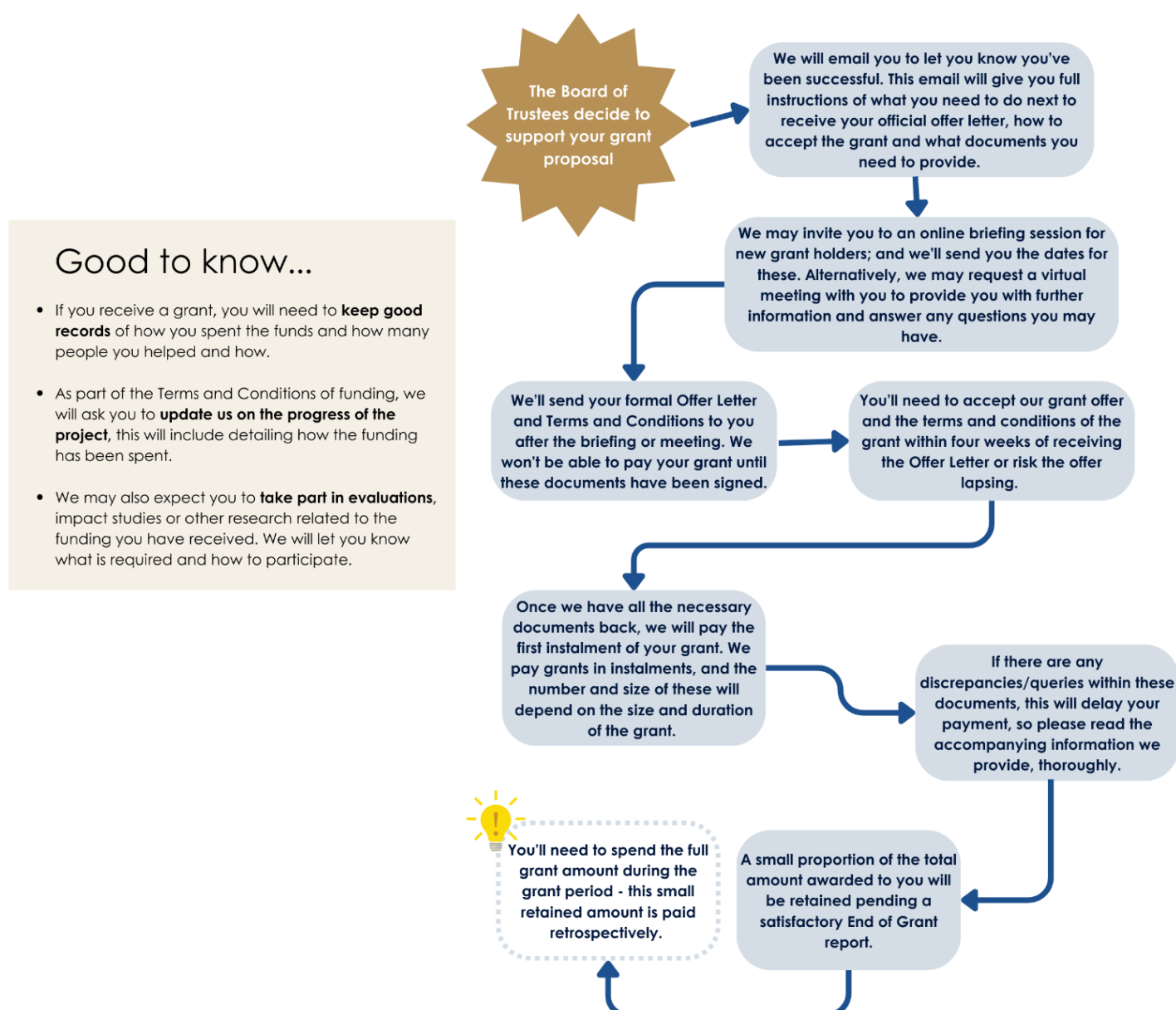
If your organisation has previously had a grant from us, we expect all reporting to be up-to-date and may consider this when considering new applications.

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

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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