THE ARMED FORCES COVENANT FUND TRUST

Branding Style Guide for external contacts
2025

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Branding style guide

Purpose of this guide

This style guide will help you write clearly and concisely for the Trust's audiences. We recommend you use it for all Trust-related content, whether for printed material or online use.

For anything not covered in this document, please default to the Guardian Style Guide. If you need any help with your writing, or correctly using our house style, please contact the Communications Team who'll be happy to help.
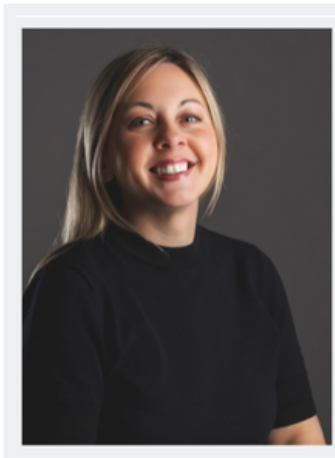
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Our story

The Covenant Fund was launched in 2015, taking direction from the cross-government Covenant Reference Group.

For the first three years, the Covenant Fund was based within the MOD. In April 2018, following a decision that it should become independent, it moved to the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust (the Trust).

As well as delivering high quality, transparent grant making, we undertake impact work, looking at the effectiveness of our funding programmes.
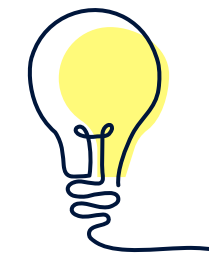
The Trust continues to grow, build and strengthen its identity, and adapt and improve its delivery to ensure we successfully reach those in the armed forces community who are most in need.

OUR MISSION

To fund projects that support the delivery of the Nation's Covenant promise to our armed forces, veterans and their families

OUR VISION

A thriving armed forces community that is valued and supported within our society

OUR VALUES

FAIR

We ensure our funding is transparent and evidenced based. Organisations who apply for a grant, or have a grant through us, are treated fairly.

COLLABORATIVE

We work with others to ensure our grants have the biggest possible impact; and we encourage organisations we fund to do this too. We use our resources to be an intelligent funder and are not afraid to try new approaches if it will make a positive difference.

INCLUSIVE

We want to make a difference to all armed forces communities that are experiencing needs; and we recognise that there can be barriers to accessing support.

Our audiences

We have three key audiences.

Primary audience	grant applicants and grant holders
Secondary audience	stakeholders: government, MOD, the Office for Veterans' Affairs, MPs, Veterans' Commissioners and others
Tertiary audience	Project beneficiaries and general forces community

Each of these audiences can have different needs and user experiences. Understanding the specific audience you are trying to reach will make your content more effective.

Our style

Above all, our style is professional, but human. We use plain English to ensure we remain easily accessible for our audiences. Where technical language is required, we make effort to ensure this content is easily readable.

We are:

- informative not patronising
- professional but inclusive
- factual not boring.

In addition, the Trust aims to use language, terminology and a tone that is recongisable to our audience, which is military focused.

http://www.plainenglish.co.uk/how-to-write-in-plain-english.html

How to speak about the Trust

Unless we're writing for our stakeholder audience in the third person ('It'), we say 'The Trust' the first time we reference the organisation, and thereafter use the first person pronoun 'we'; this helps convey warmth to all audiences, and is a more natural way of talking about the organisation and its people. Sometimes, we may use the abbreviation AFCFT where this helps with context.

In one sentence

The Trust awards grants that support the armed forces community.

In three memorable points

1. The Trust delivers high impact programmes that support the armed forces community. We are both a charity and a non-departmental public body.
2. The Trust administers the £10 million Covenant Fund each year, as well as other government funds that support the armed forces community.
3. The Trust awards grants through robust funding programmes that meet or exceed government grant making standards.

How to speak about the Trust

A brief history as an introduction

The Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust (the Trust) is a charity and non-departmental public body awarding grants across the UK in support of the Armed Forces community. We help to deliver the nation's promise under the <u>Armed Forces Covenant</u> via the £10m annual Covenant Fund. We also provide specialist grant-making services to HM Government for other programmes focused on the armed forces community. Since we started our work in 2018, we've committed more than £60m in Covenant Fund grants across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, as well as funds to projects on behalf of the NAAFI Fund, Armed Forces Families Fund (AF3) and others.

Our programming approach is founded on evidence, and our in-house research team works with our grant partners, experts from a range of universities and specialist research organisations to ensure our work draws from, is informed by and helps to build the national evidence base on the needs of those serving now, those who've served in the past and the people around them.

Our vision is of a thriving armed forces community that is valued and supported in our society. We know there's still much to do to meet the Covenant's promise in full: ensuring that nobody is disadvantaged because of their service, and that special consideration is given to those who've given the most.

Our style preferences

Key preferences of the Trust

More than one way of expressing a word or idea? Here's our preferred style...

veteran is our preferred term but ex-service, ex-serving, former serving are also acceptable

devolved administrations, not devolved regions or authorities

domestic abuse, not domestic violence

and/or, avoid using this if possible, choose one

wellbeing, one word

healthcare, one word

per cent, use % in both headlines and copy

UK-based, UK-wide, hyphenated

LGBT+, not LGBTQ+, projects can use whichever term they prefer

use 'partners' rather than 'spouses and partners', for example, 'partners of serving personnel can access the support they need more easily'

childcare (one word)
childminder
early years foundation stage (EYFS)
headteacher (one word)
key stage 4
national curriculum

etc can usually be avoided.

i.e. - used to clarify a sentence - is not always well understood. Try (re)writing sentences to avoid the need to use it.

e.g. can sometimes be read aloud as 'egg' by screen reading software. Instead use 'for example' or 'such as' or 'like' or 'including' - whichever works best in the specific context.

Our style preferences

Key preferences of the Trust

We don't use an **oxford comma**, that is a comma after the penultimate item in a list, unless the sentence reads better to include one

Writing about a funding programme? To aid meaning within a document we can place the name of the programme in **italics**.

We use **UK English spelling and grammar**, not American English. For example, use 'organise' not 'organize', 'modelling' not 'modeling'.

Geographical locations: north, south, east and west begin lower case. However, standard regions of Britain such as the North West or East Anglia, are capped.

In UK-wide publications, specify which country you are referring to where relevant. For example: If you mention the South West, you may need to clarify whether you are referring to England or Wales.

We avoid the use of **(brackets)** where possible, instead use dashes or re-arrange your sentence

We capitalise **proper nouns, the first word in a sentence, names** and **job titles.** Nothing else. Just because it's the title of a section in a document, doesn't mean all words are capitalised. So: 'Executive summary' (not: 'Executive Summary').

Capitals vs lower case

Avoid the use of large amounts of capped text, which can be difficult to read

Navy, Army, RAF

veteran

service, serviceperson, service child, serving soldier

Parliament begins upper case, unless you are talking about 'parliaments' in general

regular and reserve when referring to someone's service

government, as in government department, government standards, unless referring specifically to HM Government.

military

government departments, such as the Department for Work and Pensions, should be capped, so should ministers' and officials' full job titles, like the Secretary of State for Defence

armed forces and armed forces community

chain of command, not Chain of Command

defence

names of funding programmes: cap each word excluding the word 'programme' when talking about the overarching Fund (such as the Covenant Fund), capitalise the word 'Fund'

job titles: specified job roles begin upper case, like the Trust's Chief Executive, the Trust's Communications Officer
if generally referring to 'officers', 'corporals', 'trustees' and so on, use lower case

Typography

Primary Typeface

Aa

ARIAL

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk
Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu
Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 0

For use in standard written documents such as emails, guidance documents, letters and other publications.

Secondary Typeface

Aa

CENTURY GOTHIC

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk
Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu
Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 0

For use in 'design' documents, such as this one. Can also be used in graphics, videos and publications as needed.

Other fonts are ok to use in design elements where the overall style is in-keeping with our branding

Our colour palette

Primary colour palette

NAVY BLUE
#00163B
Pantone 289c
R0, G22, B59
C100, M75, Y0, K76

ARMY RED
#DA291c
Pantone 485c
R218, G41, B28
C0, M95, Y100, K0

AIR FORCE BLUE
#5483ab
Pantone 646c
R84, G130, B171
C74, M30, Y3, K12

COVENANT GREY
#575756
Pantone 425c
R87, G87, B88
C0, M0, Y0, K80

RGB = for web/online use

CMYK = for print

Secondary colour palette

NAVY SEAS
#0d082a
Pantone 5255c
R29, G26, B51
C96, M93, Y44, K60

BRITISH ARMY FIELDS
#154635
Pantone 3435c
R21, G70, B53
C89, M44, Y77, K52

AIR FORCE SKIES
#1d508e
Pantone 7686c
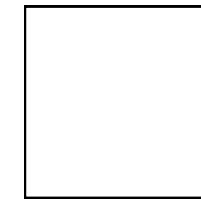R29, G80, B142
C96, M71, Y13, K2

GOLD TRUST
#b69055
Pantone 7562c
R182, G144, B85
C23, M35, Y66, K11

TRI-SERVICE PURPLE
#57263b
Pantone 7652c
R79, G33, B58
C75, M100, Y70, K20

SNOW WHITE
#ffffff
R255, G255, B255
C0, M0, Y0, K0

For design and publications, always try to use colours within the Trust's primary or secondary palettes.

In some instances, it may be justified to not use the Trust colour palette but only in exceptional circumstances and this should be agreed with the Head of Communications first.

Our logo

The Trust pays due regard to the government's identity guidelines, as per Government Standard 011: Communication. We have developed a logo, which acknowledges government-backed work.

Each of these logos is available to download from our website in both JPEG and PNG format at https://covenantfund.org.uk/logos-and-branding/#download an EPS version of our logo is available upon request.

Our logo

Using our logo correctly

The exclusion zone is the minimum area around the logo that must remain clear of typography or any other graphic device. The measurement for the exclusion zone is calculated by using the height and width of the 'O' from all variations of the logo

Don't change the colours of our logo from the set brand colours.

Don't use our logos on inappropriate backgrounds.

Don't change the typeface on our logo.

If there is anything you are unsure about, please get in touch with the team and we'll be happy to help.

Other logos

Sometimes it is necessary to include other logos alongside our own.

This might include the MOD logo, the Cabinet Office logo, the NHS logo, the Covenant logo or others.

We do not supply these logos.

Any government centred logos can be accessed via the Defence Brand Portal

https://www.defencebrandportal.mod.uk/Users/Login

The Trust's logo should always take precedence over any other logos included.