



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



Together

For Service Families

Place-based grants

Support through moves and times apart

Programme guidance 2026/27

Together for Service Families: Place-based grants

Support through moves and time apart

Programme guidance

Summary:

Grants available - up to £350,000

Project length - up to 3.5 years (6 months to be used as discovery/development phase).

Programme aim(s) - To mitigate the impact of service-related separation and relocation for families of serving personnel and reservists

Application closing date(s) – Expression of interest deadline 12 noon 19 August 2026.

Applicants can expect a decision on their expression of interest by end of November 2026

Stage 2 application deadline 12 noon 20 January 2027, applicants can expect a decision on their stage 2 application by the end of March 2027.

Application link: [Apply to the Together for Service Families: Place-based grants programme](#)

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

Checklist before you submit your application

- ✓ **We have read the supplementary information to support my application on the Trusts website:** [Click to view the Applicant Hub \(opens a web page\)](#)
- ✓ Our project will support families of either currently serving armed forces personnel, reservists or other personnel recognised under the Covenant.
- ✓ Our project meets **all of the** programme outcomes
- ✓ People with **lived experience** helped us plan our project.
- ✓ Our budget is **clear and realistic and includes time for data collection and evaluation.**



Common mistakes to avoid

- ! Your project doesn't **directly target** the intended beneficiaries for this programme
- ! Your project doesn't clearly meet the **programme aims** - it is more general
- ! You haven't told us how you have **consulted** with your beneficiaries and shaped the project around their needs
- ! You haven't shown us that your project will have a lasting impact on your beneficiaries
- ! Your budget is unclear or doesn't fully reflect your project idea

We highly recommend you submit your application before the deadline in case you have any unexpected problems with technology.

So that we're fair to all applicants, we can't advise you on whether your proposed project is a good idea, or whether it is likely to be funded. We can only offer technical advice. We strongly recommend reading this guidance in full.

We can't accept late applications. Please refer to [our late application policy](#).

Contents:

Section 1 – the programme

[Why are we running this programme?](#)

[What do we mean by a 'portfolio grant'?](#)

[What do we mean by place based?](#)

[Who can apply?](#)

[How much funding can you apply for?](#)

[What your project will need to achieve](#)

[What do we mean by 'service-related separation', 'newly arrived' and 'relocation'?](#)

[Who should benefit from your project?](#)

Section 2 – your application

[What we will look for from your project idea](#)

[Example of suitable project](#)

[What we fund \(and don't fund\)](#)

[Budget and costs](#)

[What makes a strong application?](#)

[Using Artificial Intelligence \(AI\) to help you apply](#)

[Working with others \(collaboration\)](#)

[Showing the change your grant will make](#)

[How to apply](#)

Section 3 – what happens after you apply?

[After you apply](#)

[How we will assess your application](#)

[How we make a decision on your application](#)

[What happens if your application is successful](#)

[Back to top](#)

Section 1 – the programme

Why are we running this programme?

This programme sits within our [grant strategy 2024-27](#) (opens a web page). It aligns with our Covenant Fund Funding Framework theme of ensuring armed forces communities are not disadvantaged.

Alongside the general 'Together for Service Families' programme, it aims to improve the quality of life for serving armed forces families, particularly the potential challenges associated with mobility, separation and isolation during service life. These challenges can have a significant impact across many aspects of family life, including emotional wellbeing, mental health, social connections and overall family dynamics.

What do we mean by a 'portfolio grant'?

Your project will be delivered as a portfolio grant. This is where we make a grant to a single lead organisation (the Portfolio Lead), **which manages and coordinates a portfolio of projects delivered by other** organisations – all in service of the programme's outcomes.

The portfolio may be made up of both **funded and unfunded** delivery partners. For example, unfunded partners may take the form of good working relationships that help to share knowledge or work to streamline local support services. We **would not expect the full grant value to be held within one organisation**. The Portfolio Lead should have the skills to unite all partners, funded or not, under a common goal without creating divides. You should consider the value each partner brings to the table, fostering a culture of equality, respect and mutual support.

Projects within a portfolio will deliver more collectively than the organisations working separately could ever achieve. By building strong connections between different organisations, the portfolio approach helps ensure effective, long-term support for the serving community. **You should plan to work with both statutory and non-statutory partners as well as the local base(s)**, reflecting the diverse needs of the service community.

As Portfolio Lead, you'll play a key role in co-ordinating efforts, sharing insights, and creating lasting partnerships. You'll need to use your understanding of existing services and gaps in support to develop innovative approaches that deliver lasting and sustainable impact.

More information on the role of the Portfolio Lead and delivery partners can be found below and in the 'Working With Others' section of this guidance. A successful Portfolio Lead will:

- be an established organisation with experience in delivering complex projects
- have sound mechanisms for governance of complex projects and experience of multi-agency working
- demonstrate strong knowledge of the serving armed forces community
- have clear governance and financial processes in place
- have the strong, publicly facing support of the armed forces community.

What do we mean by place-based?

We mean “targeted investment in defined geographic areas, that is, a package of support that may comprise: multiple grants; particularly large investments; grants and additional activity (capacity building, networking, influencing work) – within a defined place.” ~ Institute for Voluntary Action Research (IVAR), [Working in Place, Collaborative Funding in Practice](#) (Link opens a web page).

We expect projects to deliver targeted support for families facing challenges in a **specific geographical area/locality of the UK** under this programme.

This programme is specifically for portfolio-based, ambitious long-term place-focused projects. Organisations wishing to apply for funding towards projects that are not portfolio-based, which might not meet the criteria above, but still focus on improving quality of life for those affected by separation, mobility and isolation during service life, should instead refer to the separate, general *Together for Service Families* programme running in 2026/27.

Who can apply?

- UK-based registered charities with substantial recent experience supporting armed forces communities. Charities must have been registered with in the UK for at least three years at the time of application. *
- Local authorities*

***Full eligibility details for each type of organisation are available in the [Applicant Hub section on our website \(link opens a web page\)](#). Please read it before you start your application.**

You **must** plan to work in partnership to meet the outcomes of your project for your beneficiaries. There’s more on partnerships and collaboration later in this guidance.

Substantial recent experience of supporting armed forces communities means that either your governing documents state that you specifically work with this cohort, or that you can show that working with serving personnel and their families is a significant and regular part of your existing work. We will ask for evidence of recent work in collaboration with the armed forces.

Your organisation must be based in the UK. Under this programme, delivery must take place in the UK only.

Additional eligibility criteria

The following restrictions may apply:

- Organisations cannot apply more than once per funding round under 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 will not fund locations that have previously been awarded place-based grants under this programme: Helensburgh, Hereford/Brecon, Lossiemouth/Kinloss. Information about these grants can be found on our website.

How much funding can you apply for?

Grants of up to £350,000 are available towards a portfolio project being delivered for up to 3.5 years.

Successful applicants will be expected to undertake a discovery or development phase at the start of the project, lasting up to six months*

We anticipate that elements of the project will run at varied paces and timeframes during the duration of the grant.

This will be a **two-stage application process**. In Stage One, we will seek expressions of interest to act as the lead organisation for a portfolio grant. In Stage Two, the successful bidders will be invited to submit an application detailing the project work the portfolio will achieve.

We would not expect the full grant value to be held within one organisation.

* To apply, you will need to show us that you've already undertaken early development work, such as engaging with serving families, understanding local need, identifying existing provision, and shaping an initial project approach.

At Expression of Interest (EOI) stage, we will ask you to explain:

- how (and whether) serving families and the local community have been consulted to date and how this has shaped your proposal so far; and
- your initial plans for engaging with them at different stages of the project, if funding is awarded.

If invited to submit a full application, you will be expected to build on the information you've provided at EOI stage. This should include more detailed plans to engage with serving families and the wider community; and the local base(s), both during the **discovery/development phase** and throughout the **delivery phase** of the project.

If awarded funding, you'll then be required to strengthen that early development work with a structured discovery or development phase, lasting up to six months, at the start of the project.

Typically, this phase will involve:

- deepening engagement with families and local stakeholders to confirm needs and priorities
- formalising partnerships, particularly with local units or bases and existing services
- testing and refining activities to ensure they are relevant, accessible and complementary
- finalising delivery, referral and learning plans before moving into full delivery
- further refining your project plan and developing your Theory of Change model.

What your project will need to achieve

This programme aims to mitigate the impact of separation and relocation for families of serving personnel and reservists through a **place-based (location-focused) portfolio of projects**. Further details of what we mean by place-based are provided above.

We expect projects to contribute to **lasting and meaningful change within the chosen location**, with a clear intention to improve support for serving families over the longer term. This should go beyond the immediate beneficiaries and the organisation receiving the grant and instead create a wider community commitment. For example by strengthening partnerships, improving ways of working, or influencing how support is designed and delivered locally, for families experiencing the impacts of separation in that place. Applications must explain how the impact and benefits of the project will be **sustained beyond the period of grant funding**.

We welcome the continuation or extension of existing work, where this supports delivery of the programme outcomes. Funding may also support pilot projects or new approaches to providing support. Your project should address the **current and immediate needs of this cohort** and may include preventative, early-intervention or responsive activity.

Strong applications will demonstrate a clear commitment to working as part of the wider local community, including engagement with serving families, community organisations, the local base/(s) and relevant statutory and non-statutory services. Applicants should show an awareness of the support that already exists in their chosen place and explain how their proposed portfolio will **complement, connect with, or add value to that support**, rather than duplicate it. We can only fund projects that are in addition to statutory provision.

Strong applications will also demonstrate an understanding of variation in statutory support across the three services, where relevant (for example, in tri-service or multi-service communities). The programme cannot fund campaigning activity.

Projects will be expected to meet all of the following outcomes:

- Families feel better equipped to manage and reduce the impact of loneliness or isolation during periods of separation or relocation.
- Improved mental health and wellbeing for serving families through preventative, early help or targeted support.
- Organisations in the local community have a stronger, shared understanding of what types of support work well for serving families, including both preventative and responsive models.
- Families are better able to navigate separation, reintegration and relocation, experiencing fewer challenges as a result of strengthened relationships
- Enhanced collaboration and streamlined support pathways for the serving community through stronger partnerships and improved service integration.

Your project should focus on serving families (including reservists) affected by **service-related separation** (for example: deployment, exercises/training, unaccompanied postings, weekending and long-distance commuting, and repeated short-notice time away) **or relocation**. We will ask you to explain which types of separation and relocation are most common in your chosen place, how often they occur, what is anticipated in the future, and what this means for family wellbeing and access to support.

A strong application will be able to show an understanding of the challenges that serving families may face based on factors such as the socioeconomic status of an area (in which they are living).

Collaboration is crucial for effective delivery of this place-based programme. Achieving these outcomes requires collaboration and ongoing consultation with families and the wider community. We will ask you to explain in your application how serving families and local organisations, and the local base/(s), have helped to inform your project and how you know the project is needed.

We'll expect you to outline plans for continued community engagement (if the project is successful) and collaboration with the local base/(s). You may wish to use the latest community needs analysis to help inform need. **Addressing emerging needs will be a fundamental part of delivery.**

How to show evidence of need (simple checklist)

Your application will land better if you can show:

- What families in your chosen place say they need (short quotes/themes from listening sessions, surveys, forums, user groups).
- What local information shows (for example: numbers of serving families/reservists, rurality/transport barriers, cost-of-living pressures, isolation).
- How service-related separation shows up locally (which separation patterns are common and how they affect wellbeing, childcare, finances, routines, and relationships).
- How you will engage with 'newly arrived' families to ensure they can access support at an early stage.
- What support already exists (statutory and non-statutory) and the gap your portfolio will fill (avoid duplication).
- Why families do not use existing support (awareness, stigma, eligibility, timing, transport, digital access, confidence, childcare) and what you will change.

We expect the funding awarded under this programme to support a cohesive portfolio of work/activities that address the needs of serving families. This may include but is not limited to:

Reintegration support	• Initiatives that help personnel and families adjust post-deployment
Family resources	• Tools to guide families through the deployment cycle and improve awareness of what help is available to them.
Mental health support	• Improved access to mental health services tailored to the unique challenges of service life.
Virtual and flexible community activities	• Online or hybrid activities designed to meet the needs of modern service families, enabling access to support regardless of time or location.
Work to join up activities across organisations	• Reducing duplication and improving collaboration between those providing support and simplifying access to them for families.
Community integration	• Building partnerships between military and civilian organisations to strengthen community links.
Initiatives to increase awareness of local services	• Initiatives that raise awareness of existing services and activities, helping families navigate support easier while reducing duplication of provision.
Welcome and orientation support	• Activities that help newly arrived and relocated service families understand what statutory, welfare and community support exists in their new area and how to access it.
Parenting support under pressure	• Activity that builds parents' confidence and coping skills when family routines, support networks or caregiving responsibilities are disrupted.
Maintaining routines and consistency	• Helping families establish or maintain familiar routines and positive interactions for young children during periods of disruption.

Under this programme, we are looking for projects that contribute to **lasting and meaningful change**, supported by a clear vision for how support for beneficiaries can be strengthened both now and in the future.

Projects should focus on making improvements that go beyond short-term delivery, for example by improving practice, partnerships or approaches to support.

Portfolios may include **small elements of research or learning to inform need or shape delivery**, but this should be proportionate. **We would not expect research activities to form the majority of the project**

What do we mean by ‘service-related separation’, ‘newly arrived’ and ‘relocation’?

Service-related separation is any period where a serving person is away from their family (or emotionally/physically unavailable) because of military service, and where that creates extra strain, isolation or practical challenges for the family. For example:

- Deployment (including repeated deployments).
- Exercises and training (UK or overseas; short-notice tasking; extended courses).
- Weekending and long-distance commuting (serving person only returns at weekends or less).
- Unaccompanied postings (family stays in one location while the serving person is posted elsewhere).
- Detached duty and short-notice travel (including frequent time away).
- Shift patterns and on-call duties that reduce family time and increase pressure on the at-home partner.
- Reservist mobilisation and training commitments that can create sudden or repeated separation for families.

Newly arrived refers to serving families who have recently relocated because of a service member's new assignment, either within the UK or from overseas. This term focuses on the early stage of settling in where families are:

- adjusting to a new home, setting or community
- re-establishing routines (such as childcare, education and employment)
- rebuilding local support networks
- familiarising themselves with local services and support.

As families may relocate every two to three years, the period considered as ‘newly arrived’ can vary depending on the nature and circumstances of the move.

Please explain how you define ‘newly arrived’ families in this context, and how you will engage with them to ensure they are able to access support at an early stage.

Relocation refers to serving families moving to a new duty station as part of military service. This usually happens every two to three years and may include:

- preparation and planning in advance of a move
- emotional and practical stress linked to uncertainty and change
- the move itself
- the period of adjustment following arrival.

Relocation can place pressure on families both before and after a move, support may be needed at any stage of the process.

Families may be living in **their own homes** in the community, in **Service Family Accommodation** (often called a patch or married quarters), in **Single Living Accommodation**, or moving between these settings. We are particularly interested in support that reaches people who can be **harder to spot** in the local system, such as partners living off-base who may not be connected to military welfare routes day-to-day. Your application must show evidence of need from the serving community in your chosen place, and how your collaboration will respond to it.

Who should benefit from your project

The direct and primary beneficiaries must be the families of current serving armed forces personnel, reservists and other personnel recognised under the Covenant.

We'll ask in your application about your direct and indirect beneficiaries.

- **Direct beneficiaries:** people who take part in the activities or services we fund.
- **Indirect beneficiaries:** others who benefit, like family members of direct beneficiaries.

****The Trust defines '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.

The Trust's definition also covers people who are in a Full Time Reserve Service post.

The Trust's definition does not include recent service leavers, or veterans, who upon leaving regular service who may retain a liability for call out

[Back to top](#)

Section 2 – your application

What we will look for from your project idea

You'll need to clearly show us that you have the **relationships, 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.

At Expression of Interest Stage:

- Your vision for the portfolio and how this will set out to contribute to lasting and meaningful change for serving families experiencing challenges associated with separation and relocation.
- Your experience of working with the armed forces community.
- What you understand about the challenges serving families face regarding separation and relocation.
- How you plan to consult with the serving armed forces community, to ensure their varied needs are respected and met.
- What future service provision you are proposing.
- Who you will work with to achieve this**
- Your experience of working in collaboration with specialist/expert partner organisations.

You will only need to provide an overview of this information at expression of interest stage. If you are invited to full application stage, then you will need to give us more details. You can add additional partners to your project at full application stage.

***We recognise that partnerships might be at an early stage of discussion. At this stage we ask applicants to **demonstrate need and how that need may be addressed**. We ask that you give an indication where you may already have community commitment; further detail will be required at full stage.*

At full application stage...

	How you will meet the outcomes of this programme.
	How you are responding to need.
	The future service provision you are proposing.
	How people from the serving armed forces community will have shaped these services.
	Support from and consultation with the local base(s); you may wish to supply a letter, electronically signed from the Commanding Officer(s) or Executive Committee which endorses the project and verifies the need for armed forces families.
	How you will deliver these services safely and appropriately.
	How you will ensure that this project or approach will offer lasting and meaningful change beyond the life of the grant.
	How you will measure impact.
	Who you are working with to achieve this.

Please note that being invited to apply for the second stage does not guarantee that your application will be successful or that your application will be awarded the full amount requested.

You will need to include a High-level Delivery Plan with your application (there will be an attachment field within the application form to allow you to upload it). This should not exceed 15 pages in length. **Any letters of support (for example from the local base) form part of the page limit.**

Your high-level delivery plan must include:

- a detailed timetable for your project*
- key milestones
- a detailed budget
- your vision as to the lasting and meaningful change your project will deliver. (this can include graphical representation or diagrams)

- details, and the roles of, funded and unfunded delivery partners within the portfolio
- details of consultation that has taken place and plans for ongoing consultation.

**We recognise that your portfolio will be at different stages of development at the point of application.*

We won't fund projects which duplicate existing provision. So, you'll need to show us how your project complements or plans to collaborate with other work taking place. We will also expect the Portfolio Lead to actively engage with existing Trust-funded projects to support serving families, ensuring your work aligns with and complements this programme's work. We will provide more details about this in due course.

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.

Example of a suitable project

Example:

A well-established charity with deep local connections has designed a project **in response to feedback from serving families** posted to a rural and isolated location, gathered through a series of listening sessions and consultation workshops. These sessions highlighted the need for more integrated, holistic support that goes beyond traditional welfare services, particularly for families experiencing frequent relocations and long periods of separation.

The charity knows from its **strong relationships** with the local youth club that young people from service families want different sorts of help at times when they're experiencing the impacts of separation from family. The local primary school is keen to work with the charity to build its connections to further improve support to pupils and parents/carers when serving family members are away, as they can see the impacts for wellbeing, attainment and school attendance.

Social prescribers at the community primary care centre are keen to be involved, to **build pathways** for partners struggling with wellbeing during times of separation. The community centre is keen to act as a pilot hub for family engagement for those who are newly-arrived to the community, as its location offers strong opportunities for events which build deeper connections.

The applicant - or 'Portfolio Lead' – organisation has **extensive experience in delivering family support programmes**, working closely with military families, and is well positioned to lead a place-based portfolio of work, having built strong relationships with statutory and non-statutory partners including the local NHS Trust, military welfare teams, schools, colleges, charities and other providers of opportunities for family engagement in that community.

The portfolio, led by the charity, aims to create a **comprehensive, place-based support network for serving families** through peer support groups and access to tailored mental health and emotional support. The project will also pilot new approaches and local community events, with the aim of building an evidence-based model which can be used by other places to design their own approach to stronger and more collaborative pathways of help for families experiencing times of separation.

The primary school, primary care centre and community centre will each receive part of the funding as funded delivery partners to deliver their initiatives. Un-funded partners such as the local council and military welfare teams will also work within the portfolio to share knowledge, identify gaps and streamline support services in that area. The Portfolio Lead charity receives part of the budget to cover portfolio management costs and to continue running community consultation workshops throughout the project. A small budget is left unallocated to allow new funding partners to be brought into the portfolio later in delivery to respond to emerging needs in the location.

What we fund (and don't fund)

We fund:

- Staff time to deliver the project.
- Volunteer costs and reasonable expenses.
- Reasonable travel costs, including to enable beneficiaries to take part.
- Session costs, materials and items to support your project such as art materials, supplies for a breakfast club, laptops or IT equipment to help with project delivery.
- Accessibility costs (interpreters, translation, accessible formats).
- Reasonable overheads which reflect the cost to your organisation of delivering this project.
- Partner costs for collaboration and knowledge-sharing.
- Evaluation and learning activities - we'll check your budget to make sure you've allowed appropriate resource for data and reporting.

We don't normally fund:

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

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

Any grant that we award under this programme must be in line with our charitable objectives. As a Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) we cannot fund any lobbying or campaigning activity.

Budget and costs

Your project budget should be simple and realistic. Only include costs that help deliver your project and learning. Keep best-value in mind.

We can fund most things you need, like people's time, online delivery, or hiring/purchasing small items. We will fund reasonable contributions to running costs; put these in your budget breakdown.

Helpful tips:

- ✓ For training: say what the training is and for how many people.
- ✓ For staff costs: show hours, that they are new or additional, and the pay rate.
- ✓ For equipment (e.g., sports items): list what and how many.

If your application is for funding for a project running over a number of years you should consider whether to take account of projected inflation which might impact your costings.

Living Wage

Like lots of funders, we seek to support the Real Living Wage wherever possible. It's reflected in our own remuneration policy and benchmarking, and we encourage project applicants to pay their staff the Real Living Wage if they can. **This isn't a requirement or an assessment criteria for any funding programme that we run.** It's a commitment to support pay at Real Living Wage levels whenever possible, and to contribute to wider understanding of and learning about the challenges and opportunities in reaching Real Living Wage pay levels in the voluntary and community sector, where it is often particularly difficult to do so.

It is unlikely that we will fund projects with budgets that are made up of big capital costs. For example, 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.

If we award you a grant, you'll need to send us a full budget, and project milestones, before we can pay the first instalment of your grant.

Information about how we define capital costs is available in the [Applicant Hub section of our website \(link opens a web page\)](#)

What makes a strong application?

You'll need to 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 work. By this, we mean we won't fund projects which offer the same support to the same cohort at the same time. So, you'll need to show us how your project complements or builds on other work.

You'll also need to show us how the people you'll be supporting have helped to shape your project, and the way it will be delivered, is using their lived experience.

Explain the need for your project, and why you need the funding, in plain English. Use brief facts or quotes from people with lived experience.

Show who your partners are and what each will do.

Describe what you will do, how often, and where.

Show how you will check progress and share what you learn

Link your activities to the programme outcome(s).

Using Artificial Intelligence (AI) to help you apply

You can use AI to help **start** drafting your answers. Please check and improve anything AI writes and **never** use AI to invent stories or quotes. We may reject applications if we have concerns about accuracy. If you use AI, please tick the box to tell us - this helps us improve our support.

Check out our list of suggested prompts below which you can combine with your own project plans and information to **start** your application.

- I am applying for a grant to support [who you want to help]. Using the information I provide, help me clearly explain the need or problem this project is responding to, why it matters now, and how it affects the people we work with. Do not invent information or statistics.
- Based only on the details I share, help me describe what our project will do, who will benefit, and the positive changes we expect to see. Structure this in a way that would work well for a grant application, without adding new activities or claims.
- Please review the text below as a draft grant application response. Help me improve clarity, structure and readability while keeping the meaning the same. Highlight anything that sounds unclear, repetitive or weak, but do not add new content.

When using AI to support your application, you should remain mindful of your organisation's data protection responsibilities, including compliance with UK GDPR.

Working with others (collaboration)

Working with other organisations is essential for this programme. You will need to bring partners together (statutory, non-statutory and the local base/(s)) so that families experience a clearer, simpler support pathway in your chosen place.

- Families help shape the design (you can show what you already know, and what you will test/confirm during discovery).
- Partners agree who does what, how referrals work, and how information is shared safely.
- There is one clear way for families to find help locally (even if many organisations deliver it).
- The portfolio complements existing statutory provision (it does not duplicate it).
- You can show how the collaboration will last beyond the grant (relationships, agreements, practice change).

The Trust uses the term **delivery partner** to describe a particular kind of partner. You may have more than one for your project. A delivery partner is an organisation which is either:

- receiving part of the grant OR
- critical to the delivery of the project (through providing resources or some other means).

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 lead organisation (the applicant) has legal and financial responsibility for the grant and any funds given to 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. See our guidance on what a delivery partnership agreement should include on our website. We will want to see a draft of this agreement and may ask for changes before approval.

Showing the change your grant will make

The projects we fund form part of our rolling research into what helps to reduce disadvantage for the armed forces community. This is part of our job for the Ministry of Defence.

If we fund your project, you'll need to send us regular progress reports which tell us:

- **Information about the people you help** (in totals, not names).
- **Information on how your project is doing**, using simple measures we give you.
- **Example case studies**, so that we have some qualitative insight into the project benefits

We'll give you an Excel sheet and clear instructions. If you're using either the ONS4 or WEMWBS wellbeing measures as part of your project, this will provide you with an opportunity to share some aggregated data with us.

By accepting the grant offer, you agree to give us information to show the impact your grant has made. You may also be required to take part in evaluations, impact studies or other research related to the funding you receive. We'll let you know what's required and how to participate.

Metrics to help us evaluate this programme's impact

If you're offered a grant, we'll talk to you about some simple metrics that we'll be using to help evaluate this programme's impact against its planned outcomes. The more data you can give us to inform those metrics, the more learning our evaluation will be able to share - to help other future projects deliver for the armed forces community.

Your project may not deliver in the way you initially expect it to - that's ok! There's always useful learning which we want to capture.

Here are some examples of the sorts of metrics we might use on a programme. We'll advise you on the specific metrics we'll be using for this programme and how to share that data with our evaluation at offer stage.

Programme outcome

People who are under-represented or seldom heard can get mental health and wellbeing support that meets their specific needs.

Organisations learn more about these groups and share that learning so support improves across the community.

Metrics we may use

A small number of short survey questions about their experience of accessing your support. You might report the total (aggregated and anonymised) scores to our evaluation.

Organisations you work with might answer **two scored feedback questions** about what they learned, and you report the total scores to our evaluation.

Funding your project's data reporting

Collecting and using data is an important part of running any project. It helps you understand your work better, and it helps us make sure Ministry of Defence funds are used wisely.

To help, we will look in your budget to make sure you've allowed appropriate resource for collecting and analysing **data about your project, your beneficiaries and your impact, and using this for reporting on progress and achievements**. Tell us in your application how you will use the resource you have budgeted for to collect and report your data. We may also invite you to share your learning with our evaluators or through our annual surveys and events.

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. The 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 to this grant programme. We encourage you to understand the criteria to determine whether something could be considered a subsidy, which are outlined in the guidance on our website. You will also be asked specific subsidy control-related questions in the application form. This helps us ensure we're discharging our duties properly under the Act.

How to apply

1. Read this guidance, the FAQs and other resources on our website programme page.
2. Prepare your project plan, budget and partner details.
3. Apply through our online grants portal (link on the programme page and at the top of this document). **Do not send your application by email or post.**

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.

For some programmes, you may need to attach documents to the application form. Please check the programme guidance. Please don't send any additional information once you have submitted your application unless we ask for it.

Please make sure your trustees/directors/senior staff know you are applying; we recommend adding your CEO, another member of your senior management, a trustee or director as your second contact.



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's complete, cut and paste the answers into our online form.
- 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** regularly while completing it, to avoid the risk of it 'timing out'.
 If either contact changes, 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

[Back to top](#)

Section 3 – what happens after you apply?

After you apply

You will get an automated email from **noreply@yourcause.com** to confirm submission (it's a no-reply address; consider adding it to your safe senders). **If you do not get this email, your application was not submitted**—please log back in and submit. We will review your application against the criteria and may contact you to clarify details. You will receive a decision by the date on the programme page.

We'll also carry out several checks on the information you provide to us to make sure all information is correct and that there are no significant risks we can identify when awarding grants. Full details about the check we carry out are available on our website.

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

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

We'll 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'll 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.

If you've got any concerns, you can contact us at info@covenantfund.org.uk

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

How we will assess your application

We look at all applications fairly and consistently. Here's what we check for.

The difference that your project is making	
What are we looking for?	• That the project is addressing the aims of this programme • That the project is addressing a specific need for the serving armed forces community and that it will be able to make a significant difference to people's lives • Be able to show that the grant will have longer term sustainable benefits that will have an ongoing legacy after the end of the grant
What do you need to show us?	• What your project would do • How this would help serving armed forces families • How people from serving armed forces families 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 your organisation will be able to run your project; and that the approach to running your project would be likely to lead to the long-term legacy that you are seeking to bring about.
What do you need to show us?	• That your organisation has the structure, governance and resources to run your proposed project • That your organisation is well run and well managed • That you are planning to have people with the skills and experience to manage your proposed project • That you'll be able to start your grant activity within a time period realistic to the nature of your project • 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

How we make a decision on your application to this programme

Final decisions will be made by the Board of Trustees or our Grants Committee who will review your application against the criteria detailed in this document. Funds are limited and we generally receive more good applications than we can support. Our Trustees will apply necessary balancing criteria when deciding which applications to fund. For this programme, the balancing criteria will be: ensuring a good geographical spread of projects; ensuring a

broad range of beneficiaries/needs are supported; and focusing funding where need is evidenced as being greatest. There are occasions where we have to turn good projects down, you will always receive feedback to explain why.

If you've had a grant from us before, we expect your reporting to be up-to-date. We will take this into consideration and may make decisions based on previous reporting performance when looking at new applications.

What happens if your application is successful?



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

So that we're fair to all applicants, we can't advise you on whether your proposed project is a good idea, or whether it's likely to be funded. We can only offer technical advice.

[Back to top](#)