

Grant-making overview

The Esmée Fairbairn Foundation aims to improve the quality of life throughout the UK. We do this by funding the charitable activities of organisations that have the ideas and ability to achieve change for the better. We take pride in supporting work that might otherwise be considered difficult to fund. Last year we committed approximately £25 million towards a wide range of work.

We now channel our funding through two routes:

Main Fund

Our Main Fund distributes about two-thirds of our funding. Responsive to shifts in demand, it supports work that focuses on the UK's cultural life, education, the natural environment and enabling people who are disadvantaged to participate more fully in society. We are particularly interested in supporting work through the Main Fund that:

- > Addresses a significant gap in provision
- > Develops or strengthens good practice
- > Challenges convention or takes a risk in order to address a difficult issue
- > Tests out new ideas or practices
- > Takes an enterprising approach to achieving its aims
- > Sets out to influence policy or change behaviour more widely

Strands

We also allocate funds to specific strands of work. These will change over time, but overall they express our desire to make a contribution in particular areas of interest. In January 2008 we launched three initial funding strands:

Biodiversity: supporting practical conservation action and the science which underpins it. The strand will focus on species and habitats that are uncharismatic or hard to fund and aims to support the development of effective conservation approaches.

Museum & Heritage Collections: focusing on time-limited collections work including research, documentation and conservation that is outside the scope of an organisation's core resources.

New approaches to learning: devising, testing and disseminating new approaches to teaching and learning that address current and future challenges in state schools and pre-schools.

We additionally have a small Development Fund that we use to test out new ideas and approaches, for example piloting ideas for possible future funding strands, and a TASK (Trustees' Areas of Special Knowledge) fund to support organisations whose work is known to individual Trustees.

In March 2008 we launched an additional strand:

Food: aims to promote an understanding of the role of food in enhancing quality of life. We anticipate supporting a mix of practical projects that have wide significance, and some research and policy based work.

In addition we have allocated £15million to invest in projects and organisations where we expect to see our funds recycled. This fund is not open to general applications.

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2007	Value (£)	No of projects	Eligible applications received	1,405 ^{†††}
Grants				
Arts & Heritage	5,495,842	125	Successful applications	617
Education	5,168,780	124	Detailed listing of grants are set out on pages 21-32	
Environment	6,583,754	131		
Social Change	5,665,086	126		
Cross-programme	621,775	4	Grant-making by country	
Development Fund	671,432	9	£ per head of population	
Sub total	24,206,669	519	Wales	£0.33
			Northern Ireland	£0.32
TASK grants	813,450	98	Scotland	£0.30
Grants Plus additional administration			England	£0.24
support [†]	187,858	n/a	UK-wide	£0.14 ^{††††}
Total	25,207,977			
Average grant size^{††}	46,148			

[†] Refers to additional administration support (e.g. consultancy and business planning support) given to grant-holders.

^{††} Excludes Development Fund, TASK grants and Grants Plus administration

^{†††} Note: the Foundation stopped receiving applications on 31 October 2007 in preparation for the launch of its new funding approach in January 2008.

^{††††} Grants covering two or more countries.