Guidance for Grant Applicants
May 2017

Contents

Please check you are reading the latest version of this guidance, by using the latest version on our website.

What we fund

We fund across five main sectors – Arts, Children and Young People, Environment, Food and Social Change. Across all our funding we aim to unlock and enable potential, back the unorthodox and unfashionable, build collective networks and catalyse system change.

We offer three types of support: grants, social investments and Grants Plus. This guidance is for grant applicants. There is separate guidance for social investments, our young people leaving care funding stream, and mergers on our website.

Our grants support organisations' core or project costs, including staff salaries and overheads. We do not fund building or equipment costs, or individuals. 2016 grants ranged from £5k to £3.9m (median average £96,000), with support lasting 1 - 5 years (47% were for 3 years).

Our priorities

Arts

- Art with a social impact
- Supporting emerging talent
- Organisations at a pivotal point

Children and Young People

- Improving support for disadvantaged children and young people
- The rights of vulnerable children and young people
- Addressing the root causes of low educational attainment and challenging behaviour
- Empowering young leaders
- Young people leaving care

Environment

- Connecting people with nature and environment issues
- Nature conservation on land and at sea
- Countering the effects of damaging activity
- Lesser known plants, animals and organisms

Social Change

- Participation – marginalised and excluded individuals and groups
- Place – revitalising community life
- Injustice – systemic change around injustice and inequality

Food

- Innovation in alternative approaches
- Food and wellbeing
- Working towards a more coherent food sector

Arts

We recognise the power of culture to bring communities together and give opportunity and visibility to people who may otherwise be marginalised. We want to support the artistic and financial sustainability of the sector and make sure that the widest range of people can participate.

Funding Priorities

Art with a social impact

We support work that:	• Uses a creative approach to address difficult social or environmental issues, **or** • Builds engagement with culture in areas where there is low provision.
Applicants must:	• Offer both artistic excellence and long-term social impact, **and** • Put people at the centre of the creative process, and have a defined pathway of support or progression for them after the work ends.
We want our funding to:	• Support learning between organisations and enable the broadest possible participation in the arts.

Supporting emerging talent

We support work that:	• Opens up access to a career in the arts, or supports development within a career in the arts, for those who are currently missing out, **or** • Equips the next generation of professional artists to manage sustainable careers.
Applicants must:	• Build their talent support programmes around an accessible recruitment process that works to tackle potential barriers for applicants, **and** • Offer strong signposting to further opportunities and progression routes for participants.
We want our funding to:	• Enable the arts sector to support a more diverse range of arts professionals towards sustainable careers.

Organisations at a pivotal point

We support:	• Strong organisations to make a transition to, or test out, a new business model or new artistic programme, with a clear and realistic plan to exit from our funding. • Collaborations and partnerships, or local and regional networks, which nurture emerging companies or new artistic practice, establish news of working, develop diverse audiences **or**
Applicants must:	• Show that their new models or collaborations will result in a better experience for artists, audiences and participants.
We want our funding to:	• Encourage the broader sector to adopt new models or improved ways of working which are informed by the learning from this work.

Museums

We also give grants to the museum sector through the Esmée Fairbairn Collections Fund, managed by the Museums Association.

We do not fund:

• Individual theatre/dance productions (or tours), concerts or exhibitions

• Festivals (we can support year-round work connected to a festival)

• Art therapy (clinical)

• Small local community art centres or dance/drama/choir groups

Arts Priorities
Continued

Children and Young People

We believe in the potential of every young person. We fund organisations that seek to challenge the inequalities faced by those young people (age 0-25) who are currently missing out. We want to see the views of children and young people at the heart of organisations, and young people empowered to take action.

Funding Priorities

Improving support for disadvantaged children and young people

We support work that:	• Identifies and supports previously overlooked needs of children and young people, **and** • Creates long-term change for young people who face challenges, **and** • Contributes to a shift in the way the public or voluntary sector supports young people.
Applicants must:	• Show that they are working to advance the sector's thinking and practice.
We want our funding to:	• Support learning and improve collective understanding across the sector.

The rights of vulnerable children and young people

We support work that:	• Challenges persistent inequalities, **and** • Aims to change policy, practice and legislation in order to include young people who have been missed out.
Applicants must:	• Show that their work is driven and shaped by young people themselves.
We want our funding to:	• Protect the rights of vulnerable children and young people, **and** • Provide investment for ambitious or difficult work that challenges the status quo.

Addressing the root causes of low educational attainment and challenging behaviour

We support work that:	• Identifies and addresses the underlying issues faced by children and young people, **and** • Uses a preventative approach to help stop cycles of disadvantage and work to equip young people for life.
Applicants must:	• Deliver initiatives on a large scale which are able to challenge inequality in education or social care.
We want our funding to:	• Support early action that enables young people achieve their full potential, particularly work which involves families and the wider community.

Empowering young leaders

We support work that:	• Gives a platform to a wider range of young people's voices so that more young people are able to influence the world around them, **and** • Empowers young people who are under-represented in decision-making to speak out.
Applicants must:	• Show how young leaders will have a real chance of influencing change and support young people to 'speak truth to power'.
We want our funding to:	• Enable a wider range of young people to shape local or national life.

Young People Leaving Care – a focused funding stream

We **only** support work towards two outcomes:	• Care leavers are more easily able to form healthy relationships that help them make a successful transition to adulthood, **or** • Young people receive a consistently high standard of statutory support that has been informed by their views.
Applicants must:	• Put care experienced young people at the centre of their work, **and** • Be willing to come together regularly to share learning with others in the funding stream.
We want our funding to:	• Create greater alignment and coherence in the work of the voluntary sector in ensuring a successful transition to adult life for care leavers.

We do not fund:

• Individual schools, youth clubs, after-school clubs, playgroups, early years settings, sports associations, playgroups and schemes, out of school clubs, supplementary schools

• Work with children in and leaving care that does not match our Young People Leaving Care funding stream priorities

• Delivery of curriculum and other statutory responsibilities in schools

• The independent education sector

• Recreational activities including outward bound courses and adventure experiences

• Short term approaches with no clear progression routes

• Commonly delivered work such as counselling, employability skills and volunteering

Children & Young People Priorities
Continued

Environment

We believe that people are the key to tackling the environmental challenges we face today. We fund organisations who can move, engage and inform people, and connect with the bigger picture of policy-making, social justice, or quality of life.

Funding Priorities

Connecting people with nature and environment issues

We support work that:	• Excites and inspires people to get involved in nature or environmental issues and take action to make a difference, **or** • Makes environmental issues relevant to people's everyday lives and what they care about, **or** • Enables groups that may be disconnected from nature, for example in urban areas, to become more engaged.
Applicants must:	• Show how people's connection to nature or environment issues will be sustained beyond the period of our grant.
We want our funding to:	• Support both grassroots work and high-level strategic approaches which are able to influence the wider sector.

Countering the effects of damaging activity

We support work that:	• Exposes and tackles harmful practice at all levels – from local communities to UK-wide, **and** • Uses a ground-breaking, creative approach to make an impact on environment issues such as: transport, chemicals, pollution, climate change, littering, plastics, freshwater, overfishing , soil health and energy.
Applicants must:	• Have an emphasis on positivity and practical solutions at the core of their work.
We want our funding to:	• Enable environment issues to appeal widely, and beyond traditional 'green' audiences, **and** • Support both grassroots and high-level strategic approaches to difficult issues.

Nature conservation on land and at sea

We support:	• Work that takes place at a "landscape scale" which recognises and supports the interdependence of the natural world, or • Bold and ambitious thinking which results in new collaborations between communities, landholders, voluntary sector organisations, and statutory bodies, **or** • Marine projects which work alongside coastal communities and restore people's connection to the sea.
Applicants must:	• Operate at a strategic level, and deliver innovative work which has the potential to have a wide influence across the statutory, business and voluntary sectors.
We want our funding to:	• Make a difference for people and communities as well as improving the environment.

Lesser known plants, animals and organisms

We support work that:	• Supports plants, animals and organisms that have a critical, but under-appreciated, role in the web of life, **or** • Enables a new generation of UK specialists to inspire future conservation.
Applicants must:	• Show how people or communities will be connected with nature or environment issues through their work.
We want our funding to:	• Transform public perception and understanding of the role of uncharismatic organisms or species in the web of life.

We do not fund:

• Academic research

• Work focused on a single species

• Work on most UK mammals, apex predators, or species that already have dedicated NGO representation, such as whales and dolphins.

• Small-scale or local conservation work unless the work meets one or more of our funding priorities in Social Change, Children and Young People or the Arts.

• Energy efficiency or waste reduction schemes such as recycling or renewable energy schemes unless they have exceptional social benefits (grants only, we may make social investments for these)

• Animal welfare, zoos, captive breeding and animal rescue centres

Environment Priorities
Continued

Social Change

A just and inclusive society benefits us all. We fund ambitious and challenging work that puts those who have been marginalised at the heart of creating change. We aim to give people the power to develop their own voices, shine new light on areas of need and challenge the cultures, systems and behaviours that stand in the way of change.

Funding Priorities

Participation – marginalised and excluded individuals and groups

We support work that:
- Enables people who are excluded – through prejudice, discrimination or isolation – to live more fulfilling lives, **or**
- Takes a new approach to tackling persistent causes of exclusion which is able to generate insights for the sector.

Applicants must:
- Show how change for people and the organisations that work with them will continue beyond the period of our grant, **and**
- Have a clear plan to make an impact beyond their immediate beneficiaries, with a realistic chance of influencing future practice.

We want our funding to:
- Support the sector to learn from organisations that work in an inclusive way, especially those which are beneficiary-led.

Place – revitalising community life

We support:
- Anchor' organisations which are a focal point for community-led action, **or**
- Work which helps people come together in economically disadvantaged or isolated areas to make real the aspirations they have for the place they live, **or**
- Work that motivates and enables communities to use their collective ideas, skills and assets to bring about change.

Applicants must:
- Have a track record of working inclusively in their community, and of developing partnerships with others, **and**
- Create strong networks that continue to benefit communities beyond the lifetime of our funding.

We want our funding to:
- Help build on or catalyse a wider movement for change within a community, **and**
- Ensure local policy across the UK is shaped by learning from community-led initiatives.

Injustice – systemic change around injustice and inequality

We support work that:
- Protects the rights of people who experience prejudice, or who are ignored or mistreated by public authorities, **or**
- Brings to light and challenges the reasons behind discrimination and stigma, **or**
- Engages decision makers to alter practice or policy, **or**
- Creates a shift in institutional culture, public attitudes or behaviour.

Applicants must:
- Have practical plans to achieve and sustain change over the long term, **and**
- Show that work will be delivered by people and organisations with genuine insights into the issues being addressed.

We want our funding to:
- Build momentum for change on difficult or hidden issues.

What we don't fund:

- Commonly delivered work such as:

  - Courses and activities to increase self confidence

  - General information and advice work

  - ESOL support

  - Employability skills training

  - Services that are provided in similar ways in many locations such as refuges, hostels, night shelters and standard services for homeless people, sports associations, playgroups, play schemes, out of school clubs, supplementary schools, playgroups, youth clubs and general capacity building/ professional development

- Mainstream or core activities of local organisations which are part of a wider network of others doing similar work (e.g. YMCA, MIND groups, Age UK), even if they are constituted as separate organisations

- Healthcare with a clinical basis and work which mainly deals with people's physical health, including medical research, complementary medicine, hospices, counselling and therapy, arts therapy, education about and treatment for drug and alcohol misuse

Social Change
Continued

Food

We believe there are ways to produce higher quality food that are better for people, the environment and livestock. We support community involvement in food production, the development of a more positive policy position for sustainable food and diets, and reduced use of harmful pesticides, herbicides, antibiotics and fossil fuels.

Funding Priorities

Innovation in alternative approaches

We support:	• Inventive projects that can test and demonstrate viable alternative approaches to mainstream corporate food production, retail, and consumption, **or** • The development of food production methods that do less harm to the natural environment, and improve the lives of people, local communities and livestock, **or** • Work that influences local food buying and selling and promotes the wider uptake of sustainably produced food.
Applicants must:	• Develop new methods which can be replicated, or influence policy and practice more widely.
We want our funding to:	• Increase supply and demand for food that is produced more sustainably.

Food and wellbeing

We support work that:	• Increases people's understanding of the role of food in their lives, and the impact it can have on personal and community wellbeing, **and** • Changes the preferences, attitudes and behaviour of the public towards food, **and** • Takes place on a scale that influences and drives how food is produced, transported, marketed and consumed, and can influence significant numbers of people.
Applicants must:	• Work in an engaging, persuasive and participatory way.
We want our funding to:	• Support the sharing of new ways of changing people's food habits – both radical and incremental.

Working towards a more coherent food sector

We support work that:	• Forges closer links between third sector organisations and food producers, distributors and consumers, **or** • Links advocates of change in the food system more closely with relevant academics and sources of evidence, **or** • Persuades mainstream food businesses, policy makers, and the public to engage with food sustainability and to seek sustainable sources of supply.
Applicants must:	• Have the capacity and skills to engage policy makers at national regional and local level, **and** • Have a track record of gathering and presenting persuasive, evidence-based arguments.
We want our funding to:	• Enable organisations from across the spectrum of food interests to work more closely together to address system-wide issues.

We do not fund:

- Work that takes place primarily in individual schools

- Routine local growing schemes

- Work that has primarily health-related outcomes

- Other work that is routine or well-proven elsewhere, for example:

- Core work of city and demonstration farms

- Healthy eating projects

- The routine work of farmers markets

- Mainstream work of individual allotment associations

- Therapeutic farming and horticulture projects

- Community Cafés

- Individual food banks

- Weight loss organisations and other specialist diet groups

- Work that provides a commercial advantage to individual suppliers

Food
Continued

General exclusions – what we don't fund

1. Organisations with a regular annual turnover of less than £50,000

2. Organisations without at least three non-executive trustees or directors

3. *Work that is **not legally charitable**

4. Work that **does not have a direct benefit in the UK**

5. **Grants to individuals**, including student grants or bursaries

6. ***Capital costs** including building work, renovations, and equipment (grants only, we may make social investments for these)

7. ***Work that is common to many parts of the UK** such as:

   • Services that are provided in similar ways in many locations such as refuges, hostels, night shelters and standard services for homeless people, sports associations, playgroups, play schemes, out of school clubs, supplementary schools, playgroups, youth clubs and general capacity building/ professional development

   • Standard work to improve employability skills such as training on CV writing, interview skills, literacy, numeracy, ESOL courses and activities to increase self confidence

   • Mainstream or core activities of local organisations which are part of a wider network of others doing similar work (e.g. YMCA, MIND groups, Age UK), even if they are constituted as separate organisations

   • General information and advice work

8. Work that does not set out to have a **wider impact beyond the lives of the direct beneficiaries.** It must have plans to change the way professionals like social workers or artists work in future; or changes attitudes to an issue, or affect policy.

9. **Research –** The Foundation does not fund academic research unless the applicant can demonstrate real potential for practical outcomes.

10. **Healthcare** with a clinical basis and work which mainly deals with people's physical health, including medical research, complementary medicine, hospices, counselling and therapy, arts therapy, education about and treatment for drug and alcohol misuse.

11. ***Work that is primarily the responsibility of statutory authorities.** This includes residential, respite and day care, housing provision, individual schools, nurseries and colleges or a consortium of any of these, and vocational training

12. *We will not normally **replace or subsidise statutory income** although we will make rare exceptions where the level of performance has been exceptional and where the potential impact of the work is substantial

13. The **promotion of religion**

14. Animal welfare, zoos, captive breeding and animal rescue centres

   *these exclusions do not apply for social investments. If you are considering investment instead of a grant please review the social investment information and contact us if you have a question.

How to apply

We have a two stage application process:

1st stage: apply online. We acknowledge by email within a week and decide whether to take it further within a month.

2nd stage: answer a set of questions from a Grants or Social Investment Manager. We make a decision in 2 - 4 months.

There are no deadlines or restrictions on re-applying – you can apply at any time.

Before applying:

• Check that your work fits one of our funding priorities in the arts, children and young people, environment , food or social change

• Take the Should I apply to Esmée Quiz

If you want to call us:

We're sorry, but Grants Managers are not able to meet or speak to applicants before they apply because we currently receive 3,000 applications a year. We are working to reduce this number, so that we can offer more help and advice to applicants in future.

To make your online application you will need to:

a) Decide whether you are applying for a grant or social investment and select the appropriate online application form

b) Give details of your organisation, and what you are applying for

c) Answer these three questions in no more 1,000 words (about two sides of A4 paper):

1. Give a brief description of your organisation and its relevant track record

In simple terms, describe what you do and demonstrate your track record (including impact and successful partnerships). We want to see the expertise and experience within the organisation and some information (but not a lot) on the need for the work. It's important that you tell us what makes you different. If you're a relatively young organisation, please provide a track record of the key people involved, what have they achieved, their impact and influence.

Please use no more than 500 words for this question.

2. What do you want to achieve with our funding?

If you are applying for project funding, explain what the project aims to achieve, how it addresses the need/issue/problem, what are its anticipated outcomes (e.g. reduce the overall number of domestic abuse cases). If you're applying for core or unrestricted funding, tell us what you aim to achieve in that period.

Please use no more than 400 words for this section.

3. How will the grant be spent?

Tell us what you need us to fund in order to successfully deliver the work described in the question above.

Please be specific and use no more than 100 words for this question.

d) Attach your most recent accounts (or budget if your organisation is new).

e) Attach your constitution if you are not a registered charity.

You might find it helpful to know:

Once you've started the application form, you can save and return to it at any time by clicking on 'Save my progress and resume later'. After providing an email address and password, you will receive a confirmation email which will contain the link to return to your in-progress application form.

After submitting your application, you will receive an email with a copy of your completed application for your own records.

If you have any questions on the application process, please check the FAQs or contact us at info@esmeefairbairn.org.uk or 020 7812 3700.

If your application is unsuccessful:

Unfortunately we receive far more applications than we are able to fund. Of the 3000 first-stage applications we receive each year, only 1 in 10 go on to receive funding from the Foundation. We have no restrictions on reapplying, but you should look at why we turn down applications before deciding to submit another application.

We appreciate how challenging fundraising can be and if your work doesn't fit with our priorities please see the help and support page on our website.

How to apply
Continued

If you are invited to make a second stage application

What information will you need at second stage?

This will depend on what you are applying for. We aim to be proportionate and not put anyone to wasted effort. Generally the larger the amount you request, the more information we will need. For some small grants we may want very little extra information. We will always ask for:

- Financial information for the last two years along with anticipated income and expenditure levels for the current year.

- A copy of your latest approved annual report and accounts.

- A set of management accounts covering the last financial year, if you do not yet have an audited version.

- A copy of your Constitution, Memorandum and Articles of Association or other rules (only if you are not a registered charity).

- A job description and person specification for any post/s that you want us to fund.

- A current business plan, if you have one.

We will usually also ask for:

- More information on your organisation, its work and impact to date.

- A demonstration of the need for your work.

- An explanation of what you want to achieve with our funding, including:

  - up to three key outcomes you aim to bring about by the end of the grant;

  - details of how you will monitor your progress towards these outcomes;

  - any risks that might prevent you from being successful.

- A clear plan of the activities you will carry out or the approach your work will use.

- Details of relevant staff, trustees or volunteers who will manage the work.

- Your plans to make the work last beyond the lifespan of the grant.

How we make decisions:

- A staff committee takes decisions on grants up to £60,000.

- Grants above £60,000, but less than £150,000, and social investments up to £400,000, are decided by an Applications Committee made up of Trustees and staff.

- All decisions on grants over £150,000 and social investments over £400,000 go to the full Trustee board.

How to apply
Continued

Why we turn down applications

Each year we receive 3,000 applications from across the UK, and only one in ten will be funded.

We are trying to reduce the number of applications we receive, and the accompanying amount of wasted time and effort. We hope that being clearer about what we turn down will help.

We appreciate the huge amount of work that goes into making a funding application. Please check your answers to these questions before investing time in applying:

• Does your work closely match our identified priorities?

• Is your work commonly delivered elsewhere in the UK?

• What is the potential impact and reach of your work?

• Can you provide evidence of the difference you have made so far?

• Can you tell us everything we need to know to make an informed decision?

• Can you demonstrate you have the track record to successfully deliver the work?

• Is there a geographic case for your work?

Does your work closely match our identified priorities?

We turned down 32% - 691 applications - in the past year for this reason.

We strongly advise you read about what we fund and what we don't fund. Please don't try to fit a square peg into a round hole - if your work genuinely doesn't fit with our priorities then your efforts may be better focused on applying to other funders.

Is your work commonly delivered elsewhere in the UK?

We turned down 29% - 629 applications - in the past year for this reason.

With limited funds it is very difficult for us to prioritise between the many excellent, but similar, organisations that apply to us, this is no reflection on the quality or importance of this work. Successful projects will be a strong match to one of our aims and are likely to produce learning which can be shared with/have implications for the wider sector.

Examples of what we don't fund includes workshop delivery, advice centres, volunteer development, ESOL provision, standard work to improve employability skills, refuges, hostels, night shelters and standard services for homeless people, sports associations, playgroups, play schemes, out of school clubs, supplementary schools, playgroups, youth clubs and general capacity building/ professional development.

What is the potential impact and reach of your work?

We turned down 16% - 341 applications - in the past year for this reason.

With limited funds, we need to make the most effective use of our money. We can only fund work which makes a wider impact - beyond the immediate beneficiaries and life of the project. Community organisations such as youth clubs, community centres, volunteer groups, leisure activities and local orchestras play an important role in people's lives, but we can only fund these if the work is exceptional and likely to influence practice more widely. We cannot fund academic research unless the plans and partnerships are in place to deliver a practical impact as a result of its findings.

Can you provide evidence of the difference you have made so far?

We turned down 13% - 293 applications – in the past year for this reason.

We need to see that organisations are best placed to provide the work they do. Evidence of past impact, and how you've learned from it, helps us to make this judgement. If your organisation is new, we need to see that your plans are based on sound evidence or learning from elsewhere.

Can you tell us everything we need to know to make an informed decision?

We turned down 5%, 115 applications - in the past year for this reason.

Your application will need to be specific about the proposed work, the beneficiaries, the organisation's track record and partnerships to reach our second stage. These hints and tips give you more information about what we look for in an application.

Can you demonstrate you have the track record to successfully deliver the work?

We turned down 3% - 66 applications - in the past year for this reason.

We need to see that organisations are best placed to provide the work they do. If your organisation is new, we need to see evidence that you have the right people, partnerships and processes in place.

Is there a geographic case for your work?

We turned down 1% - 29 applications- in the past year for this reason.

We try and give priority to work in parts of the UK with limited access to resource and opportunities. These areas might be experiencing geographic isolation, high levels of deprivation, social and/or economic disadvantage.

Because of the breadth of our interests and high number of applications we receive, we don't currently provide individual tailored feedback for applications declined at first stage. Feedback is available for applications declined at second stage.

Application tips

- Please write in clear simple English - avoid jargon.

- Make sure the application is fact based – with figures and evidence which support your claims.

- Don't take up lots of space explaining the general issues that lie behind your work. Assume we have a basic understanding of the context in which you operate

- Ensure that you've clearly explained the organisation's track record, impact and partnerships, as well as what the organisation is going to do and why it is qualified to do it.

- Ask someone who doesn't know the project or your organisation to read the application before you submit it - if they can understand what you are proposing, it should be easy for the grant assessor to understand the proposal.