



Guidance: Applying for a Small Grant

If you have any communication support needs that make reading this guidance or completing an application form difficult or impossible, please contact us on 0141 353 4321 or funding@therobertsontrust.org.uk to discuss alternative ways to apply.

Who and what are Small Grants for?

- For registered charities working in Scotland, with an annual income of between £25,000 and £100,000, that support people who are experiencing (or are at risk of experiencing) poverty or trauma
- Unrestricted or restricted revenue funding* of between £2,000 and £15,000 per year, for up to five years
- Apply any time – no set closing date.

****Definitions:***

Revenue funding is used to cover the costs of providing day-to-day services. We can provide revenue funding in two ways:

Unrestricted: can be spent on annual running costs of your organisation, such as salaries, heating, lighting, services, consumables and small items of equipment.

Restricted funding: can only be used for a specific project, activity or designated purpose, as applied for or designated by us.

Who can't apply?

- **Charities who are already in receipt of revenue funding from us.** You can only hold one revenue award at a time. This includes revenue funding from our previous Open Grants programme (which closed in early 2020). If you wish to apply for further funding, the earliest you can do so is 6 months before the end of your current grant period. If successful, we would not release any funds before your existing grant ends and you've sent us your End of Grant Report.
- **Housing Associations and Arm's Length External Organisations (ALEOs).** These types of organisation are not currently eligible for funding from us. However, we are committed to reviewing our guidance and criteria across the course of our strategy. To be kept informed, please [sign up to our mailing list on our website](#).

What do I need to apply?

- **A minimum of three unconnected Trustees on your charity's Board.** By unconnected we mean not related by blood; married to each other; in a relationship with each other or living together at the same address.
- **Recent independently examined annual accounts.** If your organisation is a newly registered charity which has not yet produced accounts, we'll ask you to send us details of an independent referee, a recent bank statement and a projection showing your organisation's expected income for its first year.
- **A safeguarding policy.** If your organisation directly supports children and young people or vulnerable adults, we would expect you to have an appropriate policy document which sets out how you will keep them safe.

What type of work will you fund?

Through our Small Grants, as with all our funding, we want to support work that addresses the impacts of poverty and/or trauma under one or more of these themes:

1. Financial Security: addressing the financial and material effects of poverty on people and communities.

2. Emotional Wellbeing and Relationships: ensuring people have emotional wellbeing, and confidence and strength in their relationships with others.

3. Education Pathways: equipping people for the future through learning and skills pathways.

4. Work Pathways: improving employability services, and employability rates for key population groups currently underrepresented in the labour market, and overrepresented in low paid, insecure work.

We recognise that some organisations' work may have a broader focus than the themes listed above, for example, community centres or hubs who are delivering a range of services within their communities in response to local issues. We are happy to consider requests for work which aims to build resilience within communities, to tackle issues associated with poverty or trauma, and provide people with the support they need to thrive.

Examples of work we may consider funding under this broader community approach include:

- The running costs of a community hub based in an area with high levels of economic or social deprivation, providing various activities such as a parent & toddler group; a community pantry, lunch clubs, and community café; youth work; access to advice services; training and community events.

Across all themes, we can fund work that:

- meets people's **immediate needs** around poverty and/or trauma
- provides **earlier help** which aims to prevent or reduce the likelihood of experiencing negative outcomes relating to poverty and/or trauma
- tests **new approaches** or does **more of what works**
- is **universal** (aimed at a wide group of people or an entire community) or **targeted** (focusing on a specific beneficiary group, e.g. young people), as long as it shows how it will meet the needs of people (at risk of)

experiencing poverty or trauma.

Groups of people affected by poverty and trauma

We would like to fund work focusing on these specific groups of people who we know are more likely to experience poverty or trauma, although we will also consider work which is not specifically aimed at these groups.

- Certain family groups (larger families, single parents, those with care-experienced children)
- Women
- People with a disability
- People from a BAME background
- Asylum seekers and refugees
- People experiencing severe and multiple disadvantage
- People living in certain geographical locations (particularly remote and rural ones)
- Older people
- Young people under 25

What can I apply for?

- Revenue funding of **between £2,000 and £15,000 per year** for up to five years, depending on your need or request.
- We can consider **unrestricted funding**, which can be used to support any costs within your organisation, to help you further your work. Where there are elements of your organisation's work that do not fit with our themes, you may not be eligible for unrestricted funding.
- Alternatively, we can consider **restricted funding** for a specific salary, project or service, including any associated equipment costs. We can consider fully funding a small project or part-time salary, or part-funding a larger project, service or full-time salary.
- You don't need to have any match funding in place when you apply, however if the total costs of your project, service or salary exceed our

maximum award size, you will need to consider additional sources of funding.

- You can only hold one revenue grant from the Trust at any one time.
- If your organisation also needs capital funding specifically towards the costs of a vehicle, you can apply separately for a [Community Vehicle Grant](#).

What will not be considered for funding?

We're happy to fund most costs, however there are certain costs and activities we would not consider supporting:

- Work which takes place outside Scotland
- Funding for individuals
- Projects and activities which incorporate the promotion of political or religious beliefs, or requests for salaried posts and volunteer costs where there is a requirement to be of a particular faith or none. This is because of the Trust's commitment to support and enable equal access to activities, employment and volunteering opportunities, regardless of whether an individual is of a particular faith or none
- Feasibility studies or academic research
- Replacement of statutory revenue funding for mainstream playgroups and nurseries
- Standalone costs of childcare provision, although we may consider broader support for low-income families, where childcare forms part of this. We may also consider requests to fund the provision of targeted childcare places for low-income families, however, we will prioritise those which include wider family support.
- Day care or residential care for older people
- Standalone events or festivals – i.e. events that are not part of a larger programme of work relating to poverty and trauma
- Any retrospective costs already incurred by the applicant organisation
- Any costs not incurred by (or the salaries of staff not directly employed by) the applicant organisation.
- Capital costs such as building or renovation works, although as above we may consider small items of equipment as part of your revenue request.

If any of the above costs make up a large part of your organisation's annual expenditure, we will be more likely to restrict any grant we award you.

What do you look for in an application?

We consider a number of key criteria when assessing applications. As well as meeting the basic requirements and fit with our themes, as outlined above, we want all organisations who apply for a Small Grant to demonstrate how they focus on poverty and trauma. This is one of the most important considerations to us as a funder and will influence the level of funding that we are able to offer.

- **Focus on poverty and trauma:** Organisations should show us that they recognise the challenges people in their community are facing in their lives related to poverty and trauma, as well as how their organisation's work will respond to this and support them.

We also would like all organisations who apply for a Small Grant to demonstrate how they:

- **Focus on community:** by showing that they involve their community in the organisation, for example on the Board or through volunteering; and that they listen to their community and respond to their needs. By community, we mean either a geographic community or a community of interest.
- **Focus on collaboration:** by showing that they are aware of other groups and services in their area and are linked in with them.

Other criteria we consider include:

- The size of grant the applicant organisation is asking for, relative to its annual income – we try to be proportionate in how much we award
- The organisation's financial position, including its sustainability and whether it has an immediate need for our funds
- How well the organisation is governed.

You'll find more information about what we look for in an application and [what's important to us on our website](#).

How do I apply?

We consider Small Grant applications as part of a rolling programme of funding. You can apply at any time, bearing in mind our timescale for decisions, detailed below. You can download a copy of our application questions and help text [here](#).

Please complete the [online application form](#).

With this, we also ask that you provide:

- A copy of your most recent independently examined or audited annual accounts
- A full job description, including contracted hours per week and salary scale, if your request is for funding towards a specific salary cost.

What happens next?

1. **We'll email you to confirm** we've got your application and when you can expect to receive a decision.
2. **We'll aim to tell you the outcome of your application within 8-10 weeks.** This is dependent on receiving any additional information we may ask for – delays in receiving this extra information could mean the decision takes longer.
3. **We'll send all correspondence about your application via email**, so it's important that the email addresses and contact details you provide in your application are correct. We'll normally contact the person you've listed as the 'application contact' in the first instance, so it's helpful if this person is available during the assessment period. Please let us know if there are any changes to the contact details provided.
4. **We'll assign one of our Funding Officers to assess your application.** They may get in touch with you during the assessment period and will be able to help you with any changes or updates you might need to make to your application.

If we award you funding:

1. **If you have been awarded funding, we'll email you to let you know.** Before we can pay your funds, we'll ask you to provide a copy of a recent bank statement for your organisation's account (within the last three

months).

2. **We may also ask you to complete certain actions before we can pay your funds.** This is more likely to be the case for restricted awards rather than unrestricted. For example, we might ask you to provide evidence of other funding or let us know when a new postholder has been appointed etc.
3. Once we have the information we've asked for, we'll do our best to **pay the funds** to your organisation's bank account within two weeks.
4. **If we have awarded you less than £5,000 and for one year only, you don't need to send us a report** at the end of your grant year. However, we would love to hear from you if there's anything you do want to share with us. You can send us pictures, videos, quotes or anything else to funding@therobertsontrust.org.uk
5. **If we have awarded you less than £5,000 a year for more than one year, you don't need to send us a report.** However, we will call you at the end of each grant year to see how you're getting on and if there's any way we can support you.
6. **If your grant is for £5,000 or more, we'll ask that you send us a brief report** at the end of each grant year telling us about your progress. We may use this information to highlight stories and case studies used as part of our Communications work. We may also arrange to visit you or speak to you on the phone to find out how you're getting on and whether you need any additional support from us.
7. **As you approach the end of your grant,** we know you may be thinking about further funding. You can reapply to us from 6 months before the end of your grant period. If successful, we would not release any funds before your existing grant ends and you've sent us your End of Grant Report.

Take a look at the [Support for grant holders section on our website.](#)

If we do not award you funding:

1. **We'll send you an email in which we'll try our best to explain why we've not awarded you funding.** We will also let you know in our email how soon you can re-apply. If the reason we haven't awarded you funding is something we think you can address, you may be able to re-apply once you have been able to do so. We'll explain this in the email.

2. **If you would like to have a chat** with us about our decision and whether – or how soon – you can reapply, you can email us on funding@therobertsontrust.org.uk and your Funding Officer will get back to you within five working days.

Feel free to get in touch

If you have any questions about applying for a Small Grant, please contact us on 0141 353 4321 or funding@therobertsontrust.org.uk.

We've done our best to make sure the above guidance is clear, however, if you have any feedback on this, we'd welcome the chance to talk to you about it.