

Frequently Asked Questions

Who can apply?

Please refer to the 'Which grant is for me' page of our website.

Do we have to be a registered charity to apply?

We are only able to support UK registered charities unless the organisation applying has 'exempt' status - this is restricted to churches and educational establishments. If your organisation is not one of these then unfortunately you are not eligible to apply to us.

What do you fund?

Please refer to the 'Which grant is for me' page of our website, which also has detailed information on what we do not generally consider for funding.

We particularly like to support organisations working in some of the most deprived areas, right at the grass-roots, unafraid to tackle difficult social issues and working in partnership with other charities and churches to produce something greater than the sum of its parts.

While we do occasionally look at pump priming new, strategic initiatives that are likely to have a major impact on people and communities, such as by funding new posts to build capacity or extend project reach, most of our grants go towards making improvements to buildings.

Our roots are Christian but many of the projects we fund support people of all faiths and none. We've also supported a range of inter-faith and reconciliation projects that help break down barriers and increase understanding between people and groups within communities.

What size of grants do you give?

From January 1, 2019, our small grants range from £1000 up to £15,000 for projects with a total cost of up to £1 million. Most of our grants fall into this category but larger grants are available for projects costing over £1 million.

We take into account the amount raised towards a project, along with the project's objectives and scope and the extent of deprivation in the community concerned.

Do you require some funding to have been raised?

In the case of larger projects, we normally require 30% of funding to be in place before making a grant. It is helpful to show local community commitment, and to demonstrate that other funders may be involved and supportive. We can discuss this with you at the time you make your application.

Do you give more money to areas of deprivation?

At the heart of our grant-giving is helping those most in need. In order to ensure money goes to those areas where people are most in need, we have doubled the amount we increase grants by using the deprivation scale from January 1, 2019. In 2017, 30.3% of our grants were given an uplift by a scale factor because of the level of deprivation in their communities.

When you apply online, you will receive an immediate email acknowledgement to let you know that we have received your application. On average, it takes between three and six months for an application to be processed, considered by the Trustees and for the decision to be communicated to you. There is no particular deadline and we have a rolling application process. We receive a large number of applications and we take great care in reviewing each one individually.

The Trustees do not normally make retrospective grants, but could be prepared to consider applications for work already done which was urgent, such as essential emergency roof repairs.

How often do the Trustees meet?

The Trustees normally meet five times per year. However, applications for smaller projects are generally considered on a monthly basis outside of these meetings.

Who decides how much money a project receives?

The Board of Trustees (whose members are listed on the website) consider each application on its own merits, based on your application form and where appropriate, a report from one of our grants officers. If the application meets the Trust's criteria, a grant will be considered based on the overall cost of the project, the amounts raised to date and other factors.

Our project has already finished but we still have a major funding gap – can we still apply?

If you are raising funds for a major capital project and the work has already started, it may be possible to apply. If, however, you are running a programme of activity that has already been completed, the Trust will be unable to support this. If in doubt, please contact us.

What happens if we are asked to put our application on hold pending further fundraising?

The application will stay "live" on our system for up to two years. If we have not heard from you within that time, the application will be filed and a new submission will need to be made.

How long before we can make a further application?

If you have received a grant, then you will need to wait two years after that grant has been awarded.

My application was rejected – why?

The Trustees take a range of considerations into account, including such factors as to whether the application meets the charitable objects of the Trust, previous grants, costs, available resources, the sustainability of the project, and the viability of the fundraising plan. These factors are examples and this is not an exhaustive list. While the Trustees aim to support as many good projects and organisations as possible, it is unfortunately not possible to provide funding to all; they may simply have declined to make a grant because of the volume of applications received.

Our previous application was rejected, so can we apply again?

Yes, the Trustees will consider each application on its merits. It might be helpful for you to look at the guidelines on our website, where you will also find examples of projects we have supported.

Where does the Trust's money come from?

The Trust is the charitable owner of Benefact Group - a financial services company specialising in insuring churches, charities and historical buildings, as well as providing advisory, insurance broking and investment services. Benefact Group passes all available profits to the Trust.

The fact that an applicant may have an insurance agreement with Benefact Group or any of its subsidiaries is not known to the Trustees when they make their decisions on grants.

If we are successful in receiving a grant, do you expect an acknowledgment or publicity?

On the application form, it states: "In the event of receiving a grant... Benefact Trust may wish to disclose the recipient of the grant and the nature of the application."

The Trustees are obliged to publish details of the grants that they have awarded in the Annual Report and Accounts. In addition, the Trust seeks to publicise its grant making activities, e.g. on the website and through other publicity material. This information is useful, for example, for other potential applicants who may approach the Trust for support.

We send a receipt for you to sign, acknowledging that you have received a grant, which must be returned to us. We also send a grant certificate to be displayed within the project building. Your grant should, where possible, be publicised, e.g. on social media, in physical and digital literature, on noticeboards and newsletters, in the media, on websites or on a plaque/donor recognition board. If needed, appropriate artwork can be supplied to help you with this.

There are also a range of resources to support beneficiaries with publicity on our website, including press release templates, social media guidance and advice on who to tell and how.