

Guidelines for Grant Applications

Please read this information carefully before completing an application form

Introduction

Stevenage Community Trust has been providing financial support to charitable organisations and individuals in need since its creation in 1990. As an independent charity, the Trust receives no statutory funding, and relies heavily on donations and support from individuals and businesses.

The Trust sometimes makes grants on behalf of other organisations or distributes monies given to the Trust for particular purposes. Grants made in this way may have different or more restrictive conditions attached than those made from the Trust's own funds. In acting for other organisations, or accepting monies with particular conditions, the Trust will be mindful of the limitations of its own charitable objectives and of its commitment to equal opportunities in grant giving.

General Information

The following information is taken into account when considering an application for a grant:

Applications will only be considered on the application form. Please complete the form clearly and answer all questions as fully as possible. Incomplete applications or those lacking information, or supporting documentation, will be declined.

The organisation, group or person to benefit from the grant must live, operate or support those living in Stevenage and/or the surrounding villages of Almshoe Bury, Aston, Benington, Cromer, Datchworth, Graveley, Knebworth, Great Wymondley, Little Wymondley, Old Knebworth, Rabley Heath, Walkern, Watton-at-Stone, Weston, and Woolmer Green. This also applies for applicants representing a national or international charity.

Beneficiaries must be in financial hardship, which must be quantified clearly on the application form and with supporting evidence provided.

We will not support applications for the purpose of:

- pursuing political objectives
- religious evangelism
- pursuing trade union objectives save for the welfare functions of trade unions
- animal welfare
- any other purpose inconsistent with the Trust's charitable objectives
- retrospective grants (items or services already purchased)
- the supply and fitting of flooring materials, except in exceptional circumstances

Given that our resources cannot meet every need, the Trust prefers not to fund the following:

- replacement of statutory funding
- general appeals
- large national/international charities
- educational projects that should be covered within the national curriculum
- the costs of medical treatment
- ongoing costs
- organisations who are fundraising for national charities/organisations who do not put their own needs first when fundraising

Submitting an application does not guarantee that funding will be provided, this is at the discretion of The Trust.

Grants for Individuals (hardship)

- Applications MUST be submitted by a professional person from a recognised organisation who has an ongoing professional relationship with the applicant e.g. social worker, teacher, health professional, support worker.
- Referrers must obtain consent to share personal information from the beneficiary before making an application.
- Applications must include a copy of the beneficiary's bank statement covering a 1-month period within the last 3 months. Where multiple bank accounts exist, a statement will be required from each account.
- We can only discuss the application with the professional who submitted the application and are unable to enter into discussions with the beneficiary themselves.
- Payment will not usually be made directly to an individual but items of equipment or services will be purchased on their behalf.
- Approved funds that remain unspent after 3 months will be withdrawn unless a satisfactory reason is provided for non-spend.
- Where appropriate, equipment including furniture and white goods will be provided by a supplier nominated by the Trust. This is likely to include second-hand and reconditioned items.
- Equipment, furniture and household items must not be sold on. If the items are no longer needed, Stevenage Community Trust must be given first refusal to them.
- Unless it is genuinely unsuitable e.g. due to previously notified size restrictions, the client will be expected to accept the item offered in-line with their application. Refusal without good reason will result in the grant being withdrawn.
- Funding will be withdrawn after two weeks following notification to the client that an item is available for delivery, unless a good reason is provided.
- Grants in the form of a gift card must be spent entirely in accordance with the approved application and copies of all receipts must be provided to Stevenage Community Trust within one month of issue or the grant returned.

Grants for Individuals (heating)

- Applications are considered between the dates of 1st October and 31st March.
- Applications MUST be submitted by a professional person from a recognised organisation who has an ongoing professional relationship with the applicant e.g. social worker, teacher, health professional, support worker.
- Referrers must obtain consent to share personal information from the beneficiary before making an application.
- We can only discuss the application with the professional who submitted the application and are unable to enter into discussions with the beneficiary themselves.
- Payment will be made directly to the energy provider and not to an individual.
- Details of the energy provider must be provided in the form of a full and recent utility bill or letter, statement or contract from the energy provider showing the name, address, account number/pre-payment meter reference. This must include payment information for the provider or we will be unable to process the application.

Grants for Individuals (Christmas gift cards)

- Applications MUST be submitted by a professional person from a recognised organisation who has an ongoing professional relationship with the applicant e.g. social worker, teacher, health professional, support worker.
- Referrers must obtain consent to share personal information from the beneficiary before making an application.
- We can only discuss the application with the professional who submitted the application and are unable to enter into discussions with the beneficiary themselves.
- The beneficiary must be the main carer for at least one child under 18 who permanently lives with them.
- Beneficiaries must be in financial hardship through low-income employment or state benefits.
- The family must use the gift card wisely to benefit the children at Christmas-time.
- A referral does not guarantee that a gift card will be issued.

Grants for Organisations

- Applications must be for charitable purposes.
- We will look favourably on applications 1) that have clear objectives and outcomes 2) where fundraising has been undertaken and/or other funding streams explored.
- Organisations do not have to be registered charities but must be governed by a management committee or board of trustees and have a written constitution or governance document.
- Organisations must have their own bank account with at least 2 signatories (who are not related).
- All applicants must supply a copy of their most recent financial accounts, or in the case of new organisations, a copy of a recent bank statement.
- We will not fund organisations with more than 6 months unrestricted reserves without a satisfactory explanation.
- Other than in exceptional circumstances, organisations must allow a minimum of 12 months between applications.
- We will not fund organisations for more than 3 consecutive years, unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- It is a requirement that any grant seeking organisation that works with children, young people or vulnerable adults has a child and vulnerable adult protection policy in place. No grants are to be made to any such organisation without confirmation that they have an appropriate policy.
- Grant meetings are held approximately every three months. Further details can be found on the website at www.stevenagecommunitytrust.org/grants
- The success of the application will depend upon:
 - the amount of money available
 - whether the application meets the Trust's criteria
 - the priority given to the application relative to the other applications received
- Payment will be made by cheque or electronic bank transfer. For bank transfers, proof of the organisation's bank account details will be required in the form of a copy of a voided cheque, voided paying-in slip, bank statement or letter from the bank.
- Funds must be spent within 12 months or notified to the Trust.
- Payment cannot be made to an individual.
- If your application is successful, you or a representative of your organisation will be expected to attend our Grant Presentation Ceremony to share details of how the funds have benefitted you or your organisation, details of which may be used for publicity purposes.

Grants for Elite Athletes

- Applications to assist with funding for elite athletes must be submitted by a recognised official and cannot be accepted from the athlete themselves.
- Athletes must be performing at a regional level or higher and on a pathway to compete at a national/international level to be eligible to apply for a grant.
- As per the general information, we are unable to support ongoing costs but would be more likely to consider funding specific items required, kit, competition fees etc.

Monitoring

In order to evaluate the success of our grant giving, every applicant, excluding third party referrals, is required to complete a monitoring form to show how the grant has been spent. Failure to complete and return a monitoring form within 6 months or at the end of the project / once equipment has been purchased, whichever is sooner, will affect future funding requests.

The grant must be spent entirely for the purpose it was intended. It is advisable to retain receipts of any product or service purchased as they may be subject to future audit.

You must notify the Trust if any balance remains 12 months after the grant was issued or on completion of spend.

Publicity

Successful applicants (organisations and elite athletes) are expected to:

- attend our annual grants presentation evening, if applicable
- promote Stevenage Community Trust as described in your application and publicly acknowledge the grant in the local press, on their website, via social media etc.
- Allow Stevenage Community Trust to take photographs in relation to the funding for use in our publicity e.g. website, newsletters, annual report, local press, social media.

Alternatively, indicate reasons why you do not agree to publicity in your application (which will not prejudice any decision).

Unsuccessful Applications

The Trust reserves the right to refuse grant applications without giving reasons to the applicant or enter into communication about the refusal. A grant refused on one occasion does not mean that the Trust will refuse another, and unsuccessful, but eligible applicants are encouraged to re-apply at a later date. The Trust, where it can, will assist and advise all applicants on the criteria for a fundable and successful application.

Abusive or threatening behavior

Please note that we will not tolerate abusive, threatening or intimidating behaviour towards any of our staff, volunteers or suppliers. The implication of such behaviour will be for your application to be declined, regardless of whether we have previously indicated that a grant would be awarded to you. Any future applications will also be refused.