



**Ministry
of Defence**



Covenant Fund

Armed Forces Covenant: Local Grants

**Grants of up to £20,000 for Community Integration and
Local Delivery of Services**

**With additional opportunity to apply for Digital
Development training and support – see page 14 for
details**

Guidance for Applicants

The Covenant Fund: Background

The Armed Forces Covenant sets out the relationship between the nation, the government and the armed forces. It recognises that the whole nation has a moral obligation to current and former members of the armed forces and their families, and it sets out how they should expect to be treated.

The Covenant Fund has £10 million each year to support the Armed Forces Covenant by funding projects which address specific priorities.

This programme: Armed Forces Covenant: Local Grants

Applicants are expected to have experience and a track record of working with the Armed Forces Community, as well as a real understanding of the issues facing the Armed Forces Community. We will be asking for evidence of real engagement and partnership working - with either an armed forces charity or an armed forces unit. This is not a general fund for organisations to support their core activities simply by adding members of the armed forces community to their beneficiary group in order to apply for funding.

All applicants should work closely with their Local Covenant Partnerships to ensure that their project is properly connected locally, responds to recognised need and does not duplicate other provision. See how you can do this below.

Programme categories - what we mean by Community Integration and Delivery of Local Services

Under this priority we will fund projects that respond to the local needs of the Armed Forces Community and improve recognition of the Armed Forces Covenant, and that:

- **help integrate Armed Forces and civilian communities across the UK,**
and/or
- **deliver valuable local services to the armed forces community.**

Community Integration

Community Integration projects should create strong local links between the Armed Forces community (i.e. current and former members of their armed forces and their families) and civilian communities; and be able to clearly demonstrate how they will have impact in overcoming barriers to better integration; and improving perceptions, attitudes and understanding.

We want to see projects which are rooted in their communities and which have grown out of a specific local need. It is important too that the project is not just the Armed Forces delivering something for the civilian community or vice-versa. For the

project to be truly effective in achieving community integration there should be shared development, delivery and benefits for both communities.

Delivery of local services

Delivery of Local Services projects should be local projects which offer financial advice, housing, mental and physical health, employability or social support for serving armed forces personnel, veterans, and their families. Projects must be well connected, both to their beneficiaries and to other relevant organisations, and be able to demonstrate how the services they provide will be well-publicised, accessible and joined up.

Project Focus

In order that we can understand your plans we will ask you to tell us which of the following is the *main* focus of your application:

- Health and wellbeing
- Education and employability
- Events and commemorations

What we have supported so far under this programme

We have been making grants under this programme for three years now and so far we've supported a range of projects across the UK. You can see the lists from Rounds One and Two on our website. Projects we are funding include a number to address mental and physical health issues, for adults and children, through providing sports, arts, gardening and community events; refurbishment of venues and equipment in shared social clubs and halls; welfare, housing and benefit advice services; mentoring and employability programmes.

Here are a few examples from earlier rounds. **You don't have to replicate these projects.** We are interested to hear your ideas to address need in your community. These do however demonstrate the range of projects we are supporting.

AF&V Launchpad	£20,000	Co-ordination and delivery of support to the armed services community
<p>Launchpad is a registered charity, providing affordable supported rental accommodation with on-site support to Armed Forces veterans of all ages and their partners. Their accommodation, in Newcastle and Liverpool, provides a base from which their residents can successfully make the transition from military to civilian life. Launchpad accepts veterans who have complex issues, which can be resolved over a maximum of two years. Launchpad was awarded a grant to allow them to purchase a minibus to take veterans to job interviews, training venues, confidence building activities, health and welfare appointments and to work with other organisations on community projects. Being able to transport the veterans will save the charity and the individuals the cost of public and private transport.</p>		
Rosie Kay Dance Company	£18,000	Community Integration
<p>5 SOLDIERS: Scottish Tour and Community Engagement Programme of this full-length dance theatre work. The work was made after a period of field research with the 4th Battalion the Rifles. Local outreach involves dance leaders working with community participants and families and children from military bases, to create bespoke choreographed original commissioned 'curtain raisers' in each location on the tour.</p>		
Housing Options Scotland	£20,000	Co-ordination and deliver of support to the Armed Forces community
<p>An advice project to guide members of the armed forces community to better understand the civilian housing market in Scotland</p>		

Regimental Charity of the Duke of Lancaster's Regiment (King's, Lancashire and Border)	£12,000	Community Integration
<p>The Lions of England – commemorating the past, celebrating the future. 1 July 2016 marked the centenary of the first day of the Battle of the Somme and, coincidentally, the Anniversary of the Duke of Lancaster Regiment. The Regiment wanted to use the occasion as an opportunity share their regimental heritage with the wider community across the North West. The grant was awarded to support an event to raise awareness of the regiment and engage with the local area in order to build strong connections and improve relationships. Prior to the event school visits took place in conjunction with the Lancashire Infantry Museum and there was a regimental commemoration in the cathedral, a lunch, a band concert and stands and attractions showcasing the part played by the regiment throughout its history to modern day.</p>		

South Tyneside Council	£20,000	The co-ordination and delivery of support to the Armed Forces Covenant
<p>Ex service personnel and reservists employment project: this project will promote the benefits of employing ex-servicemen and create permanent links between potential employers and those organisations supporting ex-servicemen, and promote the benefits of employing reservists and the support available to those who chose to do so.</p>		

Royal Caledonian Education Trust	£19,480	Community integration
<p>Forces Kids Live is a drama programme produced in association with Hopscotch Theatre Company to increase awareness of the challenges many armed forces children could face, in particular dealing with separation and moving schools. It is also intended to improve teachers' knowledge and confidence to develop and implement strategies to support armed forces children.</p>		

The Tower Digital Arts Centre	£20,000	Community integration
<p>To work with the base at HMNB Clyde to establish a cinema facility for use of MOD personnel and their families, off site and with opportunities for special community events.</p>		

Amgueddfa Cymru National Museum Wales	£16,350	Community Integration
<p>Take a Seat: The proposed project involves veterans and family members, including wounded, injured or sick (WIS), carrying out work to install benches at intervals as required along main pedestrian routes at St Fagans open air museum. The project provides fifteen individual benches needed to facilitate access around the site for disabled and elderly visitors, including carers of wheelchair users. Doing this work</p>		

alongside AC-NMW's traditional building team, gives the volunteers involved an achievable target, an outlet for their particular skill set, an opportunity to succeed with a tangible result. The project is divided to install individual benches, time limited, carried out in small groups as a cheerful event leaving feelings of achievement and boosting self-esteem.

MediaActive Projects CIC	£18,023	Community Integration
<p>Community Unity: The aim of the project is to involve young people in activity that will stimulate social cohesion through a shared endeavour: developing new skills to enable them to explore and share stories and in so doing to better understand their respective communities. The difference between the way of life of serving families and local families is marked. The project will improve understanding by exploring both the past and present relationships between RAF Cosford and RAF Shawbury and their local communities.</p>		

The key criteria

We'll assess whether your project fits with what the Covenant Fund is all about. The main criteria for Local Grants are:

- ✓ How well the project addresses the priority and how it will meet the specific requirements of that priority
- ✓ Evidence of the need for the project
- ✓ Engagement, partnership working and collaboration
- ✓ How well the project is likely to be delivered
- ✓ To what extent the project represents value for money
- ✓ To what extent we can have confidence that the project will have lasting impact, delivering changes that last beyond the funding period

Please also note that:

- we cannot fund a service that is or should be provided by others (for example, by Government Departments or local authorities)
- projects must not generate a profit, top-up an existing Grant-in-Aid or raise funds for the charitable sector
- We can only provide one off funding so where there is an ongoing cost – such as maintenance or staff costs, we will look for clear and realistic plans for future funding

Who can apply?

The application must be from either

- a registered charity
- a local authority
- a school or other statutory organisation
- a Community Interest Company or
- an armed forces unit with a UIN.

This organisation will be the accountable body for the grant.

Who cannot apply?

- **Individuals** cannot apply and cannot be a partner organisation.
- **Unincorporated organisations** which are *not* registered as charities cannot apply. If they have been properly constituted under an adopted governing document and have been operating under that governing document for at least three years then they can be a partner organisation.
- **Partnerships** and **social enterprises** that are not registered charities or Community Interest Companies cannot apply but they can work as a partner with an eligible lead applicant.

What can you apply for?

Under this programme, we will make awards of up to £20,000. We can pay for most of the things you'll need for your project whether it is people's time, buying or hiring equipment, or minor improvements to land or buildings, although it is highly unlikely that we will fund projects with budgets that are dominated by staff costs or capital costs, such as minibuses. There are a small number of things **we can't pay for** either because they are not in the spirit of the Covenant Fund, or because of relevant legislation or tax rules. These include:

- Topping up existing grants and aids from another Government Department
- Where money only benefits one person
- Repeat or regular projects that require a source of uncommitted funding
- Investments
- Paying for ongoing costs of existing partnership activity
- Organisational fundraising activities
- Endowments (to provide a source of income)
- Projects, activities or services that the state has a legal obligation to provide
- Retrospective funding for projects that have already taken place
- Excessive contingency costs; management or professional fees

This is not an exhaustive list as we feel it is more useful to focus on what you are trying to achieve and how you are going about this than to issue long lists of eligible and ineligible costs.

If your project strongly addresses one of the funding priorities; the spirit of the Covenant Fund Local Grants and the criteria set out in this guidance, your costs should be eligible. You can find further information about eligible costs in the Frequently Asked Questions on our website

Working with Local Covenant Partnerships

Local Covenant Partnerships (LCPs) are formed of the public, charitable, voluntary and business sectors and representatives from the armed forces for each area of England, Scotland and Wales, and are administered by local authorities. Your local authority may have an 'Armed Forces Champion' or someone in a similar role who should be your first point of contact.

We work with Local Covenant Partnerships to ensure that the projects we fund are well-connected and needed locally, and do not duplicate other provision. This is vitally important to us.

If you do not already know your Local Covenant Partnership and cannot find the right contact by going through your local authority by phone or on their website, you can find further guidance below: **Finding your Local Covenant Partnership**.

If your project works across more than one Partnership, you should approach the Partnership in which the majority of the work will take place.

We strongly recommend that all applicants in England, Scotland and Wales, even those that already have existing working relationships with their Local Covenant Partnership, approach the Partnership for the area in which the project is to be delivered in good time to get their input into your plans. The benefit of this is that you will be able to take on board their thoughts about your proposal before you finalise your application to us. It may be that your Partnership suggests you delay your application and they will be able to help you develop your project, or they may be able to suggest an alternative source of funding that will be more appropriate for your project.

Your Local Covenant Partnership contact may ask you to send them a draft of your application, a project outline, or they may offer to discuss your project over the phone. They are not assessing your project – so you won't necessarily need to tell them all the details, have the budget figures ready or have prepared all the answers to the questions on the application form.

Finding your Local Covenant Partnership

If you do not already know your Local Covenant Partnership and cannot find the right contact by going through your local authority, please send an email to your relevant area (below) and we will get in touch with you to help.

Scotland
COVENANT-GrantFund-Scotland@mod.uk

Wales
COVENANT-GrantFund-Wales@mod.uk

England:
East COVENANT-GrantFund-East@mod.uk

London COVENANT-GrantFund-London@mod.uk
North East COVENANT-GrantFund-NorthEast@mod.uk
North West COVENANT-GrantFund-NorthWest@mod.uk
South East COVENANT-GrantFund-SouthEast@mod.uk
South West COVENANT-GrantFund-SouthWest@mod.uk
West Midlands COVENANT-GrantFund-WestMids@mod.uk

If you are not sure which region you are in, please check the map on our guidance page.

Northern Ireland and overseas applicants do need not to get any partnership support

Regional and Devolved Administrations

In your application we will also ask you which **Regional or Devolved Administration** area your project is based in. This helps us to understand demand across the country and who to contact to make sure we get regional input to our assessment process. If you are not sure which area you are in please see the map on the Covenant Fund pages of the gov.uk website <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covenant-fund-guidance-on-how-to-apply> which also gives the name of the Brigade HQ for each region.

The RDA areas are:

- Northern Ireland
- Scotland
- Wales
- East
- London
- North East
- North West
- South East
- South West
- West Midlands

If you are applying from Overseas you will need to indicate this on the form.

Parliamentary Constituency

We would like to know which Parliamentary constituency your proposed project will take place in. This helps us to tell people about the work we are funding.

To find this you can use this link <http://www.parliament.uk/mps-lords-and-offices/mps/>

Your project budget

You will need to prepare for yourselves a detailed budget for the work you want to do. We only need to see a summary of this and you will have room to put a maximum of ten expenditure items in the online form, plus a free text box to explain where any other income is coming from.

There is no requirement for you to have any kind of 'match' funding, or any other income but of course, if your project is costing more than you are applying to us for we will want to know how you will be making up the difference and how sure you are of this planned income.

Please enter your budget rounded up to the nearest pound – do not use pence.

How to apply

There is a single stage application process for organisations applying to this programme. Applications must be submitted online. There is a link to the application form on our website. www.covenantfund.org.uk

If you have applied before please note that the application process has changed. You no longer need to draft your application in a Word document, in order to copy and paste your answers into the online form, because the new process allows you to view all questions, begin to complete, save and return to your work.

Do check that you have fully answered all the questions because if not, we might not be able to consider your application.

If you have any questions about completing the application form, then please contact us at enquiries@covenantfund.org.uk.

We want to continually improve our materials and processes, so the application and these guidance notes may be updated from time to time.

When to apply

You are welcome to submit your application at any time from 23rd April 2018, and we will be making decisions four times in every 12 month period, so no one should have to wait more than 20 weeks for a decision – and in most cases it will be far sooner. If you have fixed dates for when your project must take place – such as commemorative occasions or school term times you will need to note the following:

- Applications submitted by midday **13th May 18** will be decided before the end of June 18.
- Applications submitted by midday **29th July 18** will be decided before the end of Sept 18.
- Applications submitted by midday **30th Sept 18** will be decided before the end of Nov 18.

- Applications submitted by midday **17th Dec 18** will be decided before the end of Feb 19.

We will endeavour to meet these timings but the timetable might need to be changed if unexpected volumes of applications are received.

Please also note that from time to time we may have to take the application form off-line briefly to make small amendments. This should only be for a couple of hours at a time so please check again later.

After you submit your application

We will check your application to ensure that you have provided all the information we have requested and if you and your project are eligible for the programme. We may contact you during our assessment if there are things we are unclear about – but do not assume us making contact or not is any indication of your likely success in receiving a grant

We will review the information you provide in your application and, where relevant, data and information from the Charity Commission, Companies House or other regulators' websites relating to your constitution and audited accounts from the past two years. We will assess your application against the key criteria and we will then send your application along with all other complete, eligible applications received to Regional and Devolved Administrations Boards (RDA) for the area in which your project will operate. The RDA Boards will look at each application, and comment on whether the project fits with local need

Final decisions will be made by the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust Board members, who will review the portfolios submitted to all the RDAs together using balancing criteria in addition to the key criteria. The balancing criteria include the relative strength and value for money of the project when viewed as part of a national portfolio of projects and the need to ensure the right mix of projects across the UK.

Funds are limited and therefore the Trustees will use its discretion to choose which projects to fund in order to ensure that we have a good spread of funded projects and to differentiate between projects that are considered fundable. Please note that we may also take the decision to part-fund proposals (this may involve awarding less money than was applied for).

Please see Frequently Asked Questions on our website if you want more details about the RDA Boards, Local Covenant Partnerships and the Trustees.

After the Trustees have met we will send an email to the two contacts you have provided on your application form to tell you whether or not you have been awarded a grant.

If you are offered a grant

If we plan to fund your project you'll need to accept our grant offer and the terms and conditions of the grant within **4 weeks** of receiving the offer letter. Once we have as the necessary documents back we will pay the full amount of the grant. You'll then have up to 12 months from the date of our offer letter to undertake the activities funded by us. We will ask you to report any changes or problems with your project, as soon as you can and let us know too of any great press and media coverage you get so we can share the good news about your work.

If you are not successful

We will let you know why you did not get awarded a grant on this occasion – which may be simply because there was a lot of competition for funds and other applicants met the Fund's aims more strongly. You are welcome to reapply – there are currently no restrictions on when you can reapply though we may need to review this in the future – but you may want to reconsider your application and talk to your Local Covenant Partnership about how your proposal might be improved.

NEW from October 2017

Digital Development Opportunities

- Do you need help understanding social media?
- Does your team want to learn how to produce creative content?
- Are you unsure about how to manage governance in the digital age?

If so – you may wish to take part in the Covenant Digital Development Programme

If you are successful with your Local Grant application your organisation will be able to benefit from the Covenant Fund's Digital Development Programme. A new resource will be made available online to all organisations working with the military community in early summer 2018 and will continue to grow into a significant facility for the sector.

This programme will be delivered by Services Sound and Vision Corporation (SSVC) the forces media organisation, in partnership with COBSEO, the Confederation of Service Charities, and the leading charity law firm Bates Wells and Braithwaite.

If you are successful with your Local Grant bid you may also be able to get **training and additional bespoke support** – and you can make your case for receiving this alongside your project application, in the same online submission to us.

The Digital Development Programme: What is included?

If you are successful in an application to the whole Digital Development Programme your organisation can experience:

- A digital 'audit' of your social media channels, content, and website to help you see what you're doing well and what could be improved
- A two-day training course run by media experts showing you how to produce great content with just a smartphone, how to make the most of your social media channels, and reach the audiences you want through digital platforms
- Membership of the Digital Academy Network to help you share experience and advice with other students
- An invitation to Digital Academy Forums held around the country where you can attend workshops and talks on social media, creative content, and governance
- Access to a helpline where experts can help you with digital or governance issues
- A new dedicated website with advice, guidance, information, examples and regular updates to help you with your digital media content creation, and governance and management of your online presence.

All these services could be delivered at no cost to your organisation. Training courses and events will be held in a range of locations across the country, to keep travel costs to a minimum.

Who is eligible?

We want to help organisations who are regularly or wholly focussed on working with the wider military community now and in the future. You could be eligible if you support older veterans, early service leavers, serving personnel or their families – or all of these groups. You might also want to apply if you have a significant number of military family members participating alongside your mainly civilian beneficiaries and can show your long term commitment to their welfare or integration into your local community.

You don't have to be currently using social media or digital channels to access this programme.

This Programme is designed for organisations with specific challenges or user needs in digital communications. It is not designed for organisations with well-developed digital teams or channels and so we will not expect larger charities or statutory organisations to apply. Military units can apply and will be considered as long as this work does not appear to duplicate other opportunities which SSVc offers to serving personnel and civilian staff.

The named participants may be staff members or, for small organisations with few or no staff members, may be trustees or their equivalent. It is essential that this individual is anticipated to be able to apply what they learn from this programme to benefit your organisation – and not see it as a personal or career development opportunity, although it may well serve that purpose too. We would also like organisations to disseminate the information and ideas that they have gained among their colleagues and trustees where appropriate.

We expect participating organisations to be able to commit the time of the staff member or other nominated person, so do think before you apply about whether this is feasible – both in terms of the activities out of the office and to what you will then want to take forward to demonstrate new ways of operating in the digital environment.

How to apply

If you are eligible, interested and able to commit to the expectations for participants then you should apply at the same time as submitting your Local Grant bid. To do this just complete the few short questions at the end of the main application online form.

How will we select participants?

We want to know how this Programme can benefit your organisation so we can decide who has access to it. As well as checking that you are eligible to take part we want to know how you think that improving your digital knowledge and activity will help your organisation with any or all of your activities to help you serve the military community better.

Good examples of your needs could be:

- A need to understand and improve fundraising through digital channels
- Using social media to network with potential beneficiaries
- Raising staff skill/confidence levels to promote their Covenant work

Poor requirements are ones that are too broad or undefined such as:

- We want our own social media channels
- We want to reach young people

Tell us in the application form how your organisation and beneficiaries will gain from your participation. Tell us about any specific and credible plans for using learning and skills in near future. Confirm that you can commit time and resources to participate.

Once our Trustees have decided which organisations to offer Local Grants to they will consider the bids for the Digital Development Programme and make their selection. If there is high demand they will choose those which appear to be able to demonstrate the fullest commitment to this area of work and to improving their offer to their beneficiaries through new digital methods.

What happens next?

Once the Trustees have met we will let you know about your success with your application for a Local Grant *and* for the Digital Development Programme. Once you have formally accepted your grant offer, you will then be contacted directly by SSVc to coordinate convenient dates and locations for you to take part.

We expect you to have taken up your place within 12 months of your grant offer letter and will ask you to evaluate your experience, and report on how it has benefited your organisation's work within 15 months of this offer.

Even if you are unsuccessful in your application for a place on the Digital Development Programme, if you are awarded a Covenant Grant we will let you know in due course when the digital resources website is available to you, so you can benefit from the guidance and ideas to enhance your own work.

If you have any questions about the Digital Development Programme or your application for a Local Grant please do contact us via email at enquiries@covenantfund.org.uk