

1. Senior Responsible Owner

*All government grants shall have a named **Senior Responsible Owner** with clearly defined responsibilities throughout lifetime of grant.*

Managing Public Money:

1. Departments' primary concern when administering grants is to have due regard to the guidance set out in Managing Public Money; nothing in this document is intended to contradict or override that guidance.
2. This functional standard is not intended to be an additional spending control; departments retain accountability for decisions on all grant expenditure.

Important note on scope:

3. This functional standard applies only to **general grants** made by departments and their Arm's Length Bodies (ALBs) using Exchequer funding.
4. It does not apply to **formula grants** or **Grant-in-Aid**.
5. The term 'general grants' is broadly defined below, to assist identification:

General Grants: grants made by departments or their grant making ALBs to outside bodies to reimburse expenditure on agreed items or functions, and often paid only on statutory conditions. These are the grants, which are most closely related in administration to contract procurement, whilst remaining legally distinct.

Why?

6. This standard is to ensure that all government grants are afforded the appropriate level of scrutiny by the grant owning department, to ensure all of the functional standard for government general grants is being adhered to and grant funding is administered effectively.

Reporting requirement

7. It is a minimum requirement that the name of the Senior Responsible Owner (SRO), for each grant scheme, is entered on to the Government Grants Information System (GGIS) – this will provide assurance and assist the Cabinet Office with identifying cases for checking. The SRO field on the GGIS should be kept up to date, where the SRO changes during the life of a grant.
8. In addition, the name and contact details for the 'scheme administrator' should be recorded on the GGIS, to prevent inappropriate requests being directed to the SRO.

Functional Standard for Government General Grants Guidance Note

Person requirement

9. The SRO will usually be, as a minimum, at Senior Civil Service (SCS) level. However, in some cases a Grade 7 or SEO who has appropriate delegated authority might be appropriate. Proportionality will apply to ensure that nomination of SROs is manageable.

Responsibilities

10. We would expect the SRO to have the following responsibilities:

- oversight of the governance and sign-off process to ensure due regard is given to priority areas, including meeting the functional standard for government general grants;
- sign-off / approval of the Business Case as it moves through the approvals/ governance process;
- sign-off of the grant agreement/ terms and conditions;
- approval of the due diligence model and fraud risk assessment and mitigation strategy;
- ensuring details of the grant are entered on to the GGIS;
- reporting to the Cabinet Office as required, for example, submission to NGAP or in response to an audit request; and
- oversight and sign-off of annual reviews in relation to grants which cover multiple years.

Note: the above list is not exhaustive and would be in addition to any SRO requirements imposed by the grant-owning department.

SROs for Department's Arm's Length Bodies

11. It is important to note that some Arm's Length Bodies (ALBs) have opted for the role of SRO to be carried out by their Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) as they also fulfil the role of the Chief Accounting Officer for the ALB.
12. The use of CEO as SRO is common where the volume of grants awarded is not particularly high and / or when the CEO wishes to take direct responsibility for high value and / or contentious awards. Conversely, in many other instances, where ALBs make numerous low value awards, there may be the need for multiple SROs at an appropriate grade to cope with the volume of work. As discussed above, proportionality will apply to ensure that the nomination of the SRO and their workload is manageable.
13. In either instance of the ALB's CEO or other staff fulfilling the role of SRO, care must be exercised to ensure that the roles and responsibilities listed above are correctly carried out throughout the grant making process.