



Purpose of this Policy

The purpose of this policy is to set out the principles, criteria and processes that govern how The Shears Foundation makes grants.

A grant is defined as a financial award the Foundation makes from its funds to support charitable activities. Grants will only be made to charities registered with the appropriate body in The United Kingdom and also Exempt Charities. Grants will not be made to any other type of organisation, unless under exceptional circumstances and this must be agreed unanimously by The Trustees.

Introduction

The Shears Foundation is a registered charity number 1049907 benefiting communities particularly, though not exclusively, in Tyne & Wear and Northumberland. It is governed by The Trustees. Two of The Trustees (currently Lyn Shears and Bruce Warnes) have delegated responsibility for day-to-day activities.

The Activities of the Shears Foundation, as identified on the Charity Commission website are:

FUNDING SELECTED ORGANISATIONS AND PROJECTS IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, ENVIRONMENTAL, SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, HEALTH & WELFARE AND CULTURE ALL WITH AN EMPHASIS ON EDUCATION AND RAISING AWARENESS AND GENERALLY IN OR FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE NORTH EAST OF ENGLAND.

The Trustees ensure proper governance of the Foundation's grant-making in three ways:

- Through grant-making principles which ensure that decisions are ultimately made by the Foundation's Trustees. These principles clarify that funds given are the Shears Foundation's asset, albeit with degrees of restriction on their use.
- Through published grant-making criteria which set out the activities The Trustees wish to support in furtherance of the Foundation's charitable objectives. The criteria also exclude activities which The Trustees do not wish to support because they do not consider them to be in line with the Foundation's purpose. The Trustees accept that they will on some occasions make grants outside published criteria but that in all such cases the activity supported will be charitable in law.
- Through grant-making processes which set out how decisions are reached for awarding grants.

Grant-making principles

The principles which underpin The Trustees' governance of the Foundation's grant-making take into account the scale and range of its grants and strike a balance between proper oversight of decision-making and responsive & timely communication with applicants.

The principles are as follows.

- The Trustees have ultimate collective responsibility for all grant making decisions in line with the Foundation's charitable purposes.

- The Trustees may assign certain decision-making responsibilities to the individual Trustees named in this document who have responsibility for the day-to-day running of the Foundation. Such delegated decisions are subject to scrutiny and review from time to time.
- The Trustees reserve the right to apply conditions to any grant.
- The Trustees also reserve the right not to approve any recommendation or nomination if they (or those acting with their delegated authority) determine that the resulting grant would not be charitable or would conflict with the Foundation's stated policies or damage its reputation.

Grant-making criteria

The Foundation's published guidance on criteria for applications groups is set out on its website. Copies of this Policy are also available to download from the website. The goal is to make grants to a wide range of charities whose work falls into one of five core priorities:

- The development of culture and the arts.
- The development and provision of educational opportunities for adults and / or children.
- Protection, preservation or enhancement of the natural environment.
- Creating stronger / better / more sustainable communities.
- Promoting health and medicine, with an emphasis on research or education.

In addition, The Trustees have a budget each year for *Disaster and Emergency Relief* Grants which are dealt with outside the normal grant making process as detailed below.

Geographically, The Trustees place a great deal of emphasis in supporting groups whose work is in the Tyne & Wear and Northumberland regions. Applications from charities working in these areas are given priority. Trustees will also consider applications from charities in North Yorkshire (including York), West Yorkshire and Greater Manchester. Occasionally The Trustees will also consider applications from UK based charities, working overseas, that fit with the ethos and objectives of The Trustees.

National charities undertaking specific work / projects in the above geographical areas will normally be considered by The Trustees.

Trustees will not generally consider applications from outside these regions or from charities registered outside the UK, unless there are special circumstances.

As a registered charity, The Foundation can only make grants to support activity which is charitable in law. The Foundation will only generally make restricted grants that are to be used specifically for the purposes outlined in the applicant's grant application.

The Foundation will make grants for core revenue funding, including for staff wages and general running costs.

Other factors that The Trustees will take into account when considering grant applications are:

- The available quarterly grant making budget.
- The level of grant funding being requested.
- The similarity of the application to other charities / projects that are already being supported.
- The geographical spread of current grant making.
- The spread of current grant making across our priority areas above.
- Whether or not a charity / project is being funded from a range of sources / funders.
- Whether or not a charity / project shows collaborative working with other groups, organisations and charities.

- The quality of any feedback and outcomes achieved from any previous grants

All applications for support must be made using the Shears Foundation’s on- line application process which can be accessed via our website: www.shearsfoundation.org

Grant requests which The Trustees will **not normally support** are:

- Grants for Capital Projects.
- Grant applications from Individuals.
- Religious causes or groups.
- Political causes, groups or fundraising for lobbying.
- Single identity groups where there is no evidence of integration.
- Pre-school groups and playgroups.
- Domestic pets – but we may support charities involved in using animals for medical / care support purposes.
- Where, in the course of carrying out due diligence checks about an applicant, anomalies or legal issues become apparent.

To ensure the Foundation’s resources are used solely to further its charitable objectives, and it can understand and assess the impact of grants, The Trustees normally expect that all grants will have three measurable objectives agreed at the beginning of the funding period as part of the grant offer.

Grant-making processes

The amount available for grant making in each year is determined and agreed annually by The Trustees.

All applications to the Shears Foundation must come through the website, unless in exceptional circumstances where The Trustees will accept an application in another form.

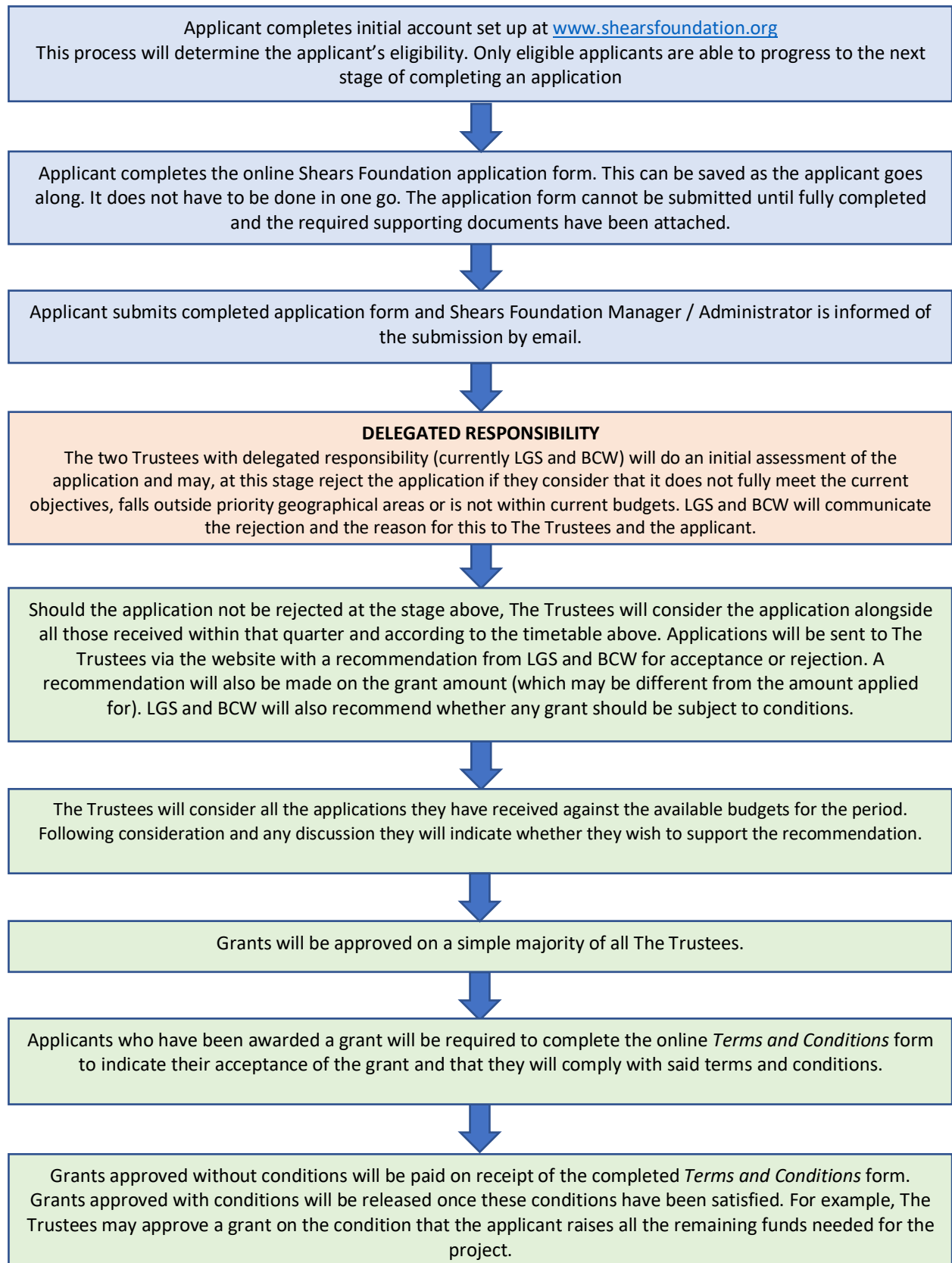
The Shears Foundation requires an annual grant application from all groups, including those that it has had an ongoing relationship with. However, there are two key exceptions to this:

- £100,000 annual contribution from the Shears Foundation to the Linden Fund, held by the Community Foundation
- £50,000 annual donation to the Bradford Grammar School Bursary Scheme

Grant applications are considered according to the following time table:

Quarter	From	To	Application cut off	Applications out to Trustees	Deadline for responses from Trustees
Q1	1 April	30 June	23 June	w/c 23 June	14 July
Q2	1 July	30 Sept	23 September	w/c 23 September	14 October
Q3	1 October	31 December	24 December	w/c 24 December	14 January
Q4	1 January	31 March	24 March	w/c 24 March	15 April

The Trustees aim for the Foundation’s grant-making processes to be transparent and to address the interests of applicants to this end, all grant requests (with the exception of grants from our *Disaster and Emergency Relief* budget) go through the following process:



Exception to the Grant Making Process

For grants made under the *Disaster and Emergency Relief* budget, the normal grant application process will not apply because of the urgent need to release such funds. After carrying out the necessary due diligence checks, The Trustees can agree to pay a grant to a recognised charity without a full application. In these circumstances, The Trustees can agree to pay a grant to a non-UK based charity provided they are wholly satisfied that it is bona-fide.

Due Diligence

The Trustees delegated with managing the Shears Foundation on a day to day basis will undertake due diligence checks on all applicants. These will include, but are not limited to:

- Checking the Registered Charity Number is valid.
 - Checking the bank statement that applicants provide for anomalies.
 - Checking the Charity Commission website for any anomalies, filing irregularities etc.
 - Doing a GOOGLE search of the charity to flag up any issues, news stories etc.
 - Drawing on the local knowledge of The Trustees and others.
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