



WCoMC Charitable Fund Grant Assessment Process

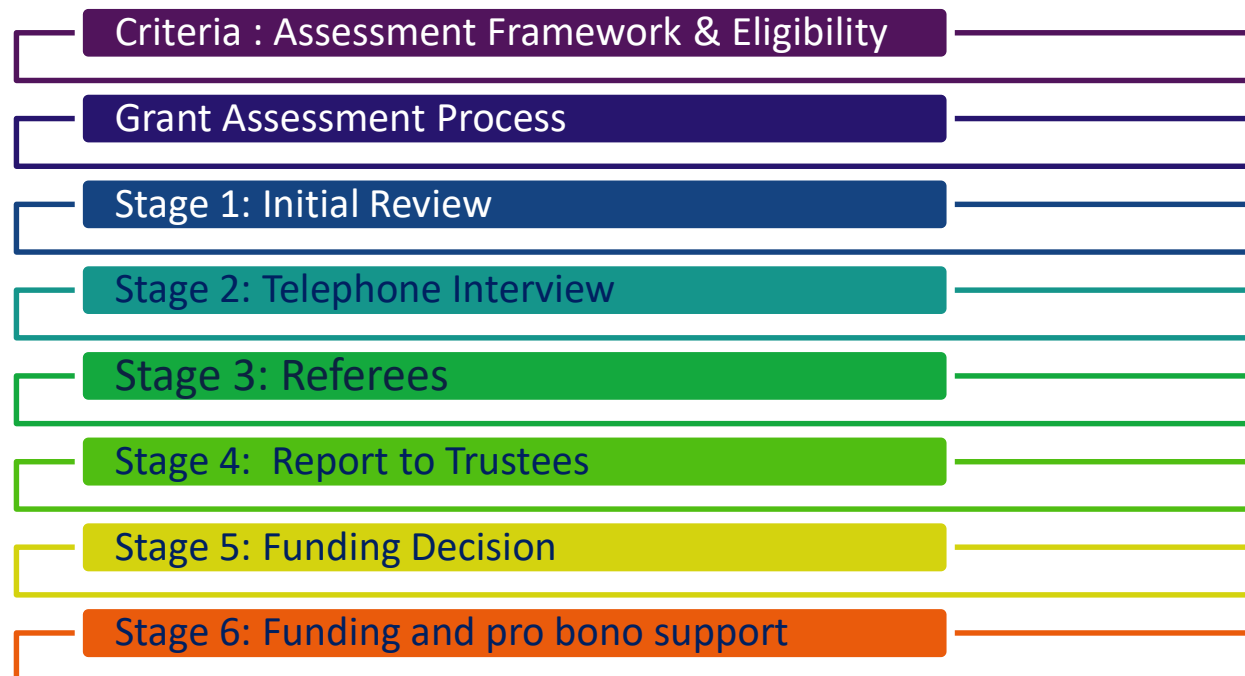
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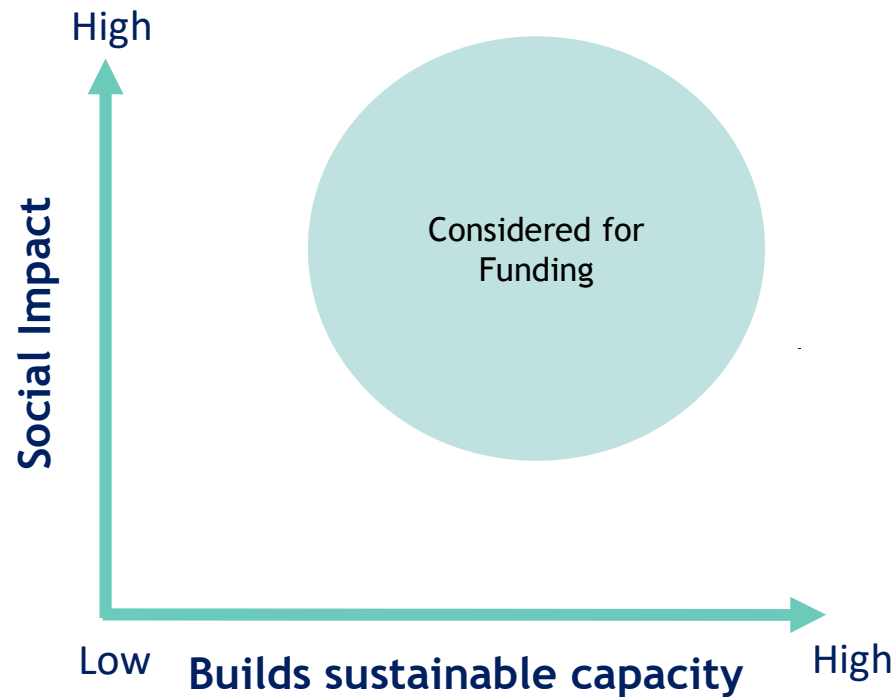
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Charitable Fund

Contents / New process



Overview of the Fund's Assessment Framework



Two key criteria to be assessed, both scored out of 5. Will the funding help:

- build sustainable capacity in the organisation – which can deliver public benefit in the long term
- demonstrate positive social impact as a result, or at least put in place metrics to demonstrate such impact.



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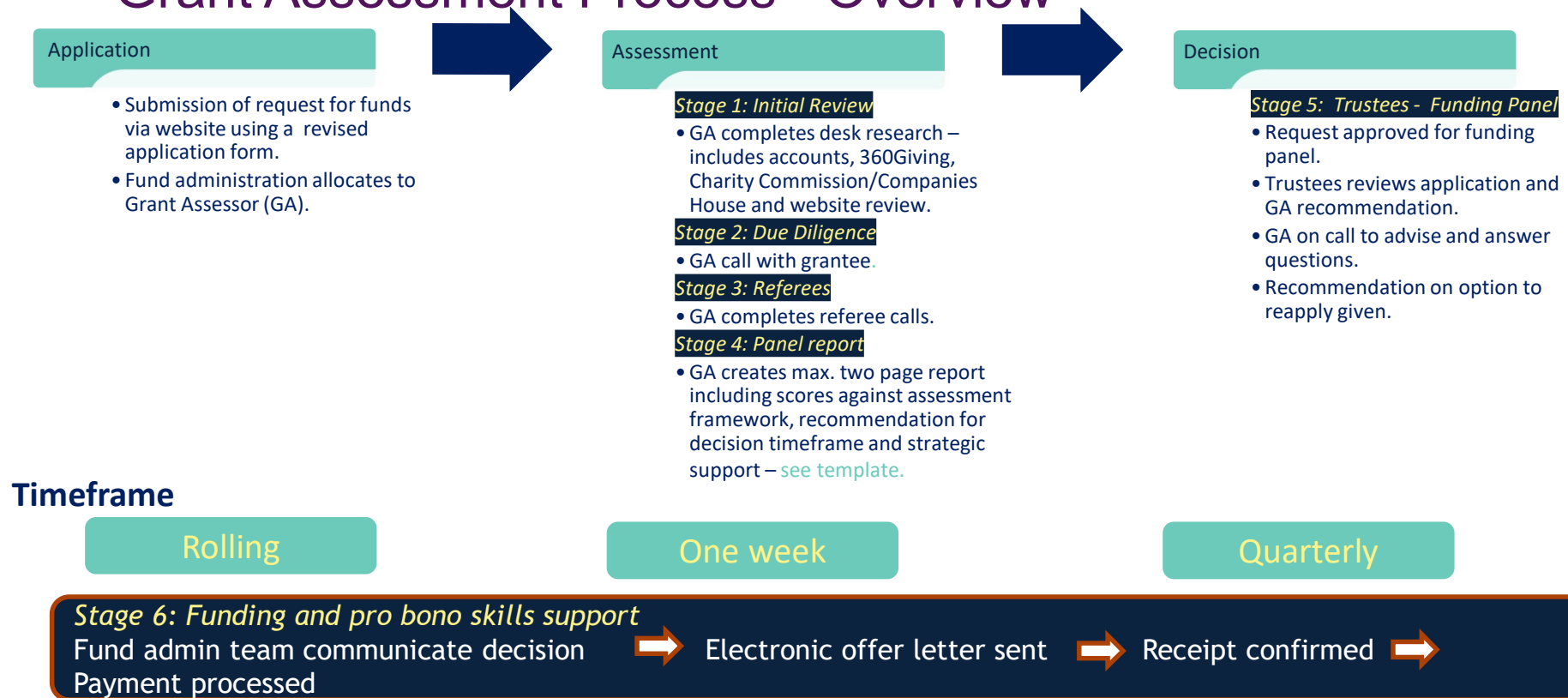
Charitable Fund

Core Eligibility Criteria

- We will only fund UK-registered organisations that are...
 - Registered charities,
 - Community Interest Companies (“CICs”),
 - Charitable Incorporated Organisations (“CIOs”),
 - Community benefit Societies (“CBSs”).
 - ...and that have
 - Annual income of less than £500,000
 - Been established for two or more years
 - A skilled team of staff and/or volunteers
 - And the odd smart individuals who try...
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Grant Assessment Process - Overview



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Charitable Fund

Grant Assessment Stage 1: Initial Review

Purpose

Use desk research to decide whether the application is worth interviewing.
If not, efficiently provide constructive value added feedback to the applicant

- Initial Review: a yes/no question about whether to progress this application to Stage 2.
- Aim to take no longer than **60 minutes** to complete this stage and update the Fund Admin – who should update the tracker.



Assessment Stage 1: Grant Assessor Focus

- Does the application:
 - build sustainable capacity in the organisation – which can deliver public benefit in the long term
 - demonstrate positive social impact as a result, or at least put in place metrics to demonstrate such impact?

We are NOT looking for perfect applications but need to feel there is potential in terms of these two criteria.
- It is worth remembering that different types of application might have different outputs, outcomes and impact. For example, a “matched funding” application to unlock larger funds may require a judgement about probabilities of success, whereas a straightforward service delivery grant request might have direct measurable outcomes
- Whatever the nature of the application the Grant Assessor needs to carry out basic checks / desk research on the organisation, e.g. review their website, charity commission entry, audited and management accounts (where possible) and, possibly, 360Giving data on previous funders.
- If the application passes this initial assessment, then it is NOT a decision to fund – just whether there are any reasons not to interview them e.g. about their pre-existing situation or that the potential in terms of the two key criteria is not evident.



Stage 1: Providing Feedback

Feedback must be provided via our Admin team to all applicants, when Grant Assessor decides not to progress the application

Provide an explanation of why “No” and at least one sentence of further detail, to customize this feedback to the applicant.

This feedback is important to help applicants learn but be careful of spending too much of your time – it is easy to start writing paragraphs and drifting into consultancy for the applicant.

It will be crucial to them if they wish to reapply.



Stage 2: Telephone Interview

Purpose

To give a clearer understanding of the organisation: Strengths, governance, challenges, what it is hoping to achieve with the help of funding, other possible support requirements (pro bono).

- The Telephone Interview is a chance to get a feel for the organisation and its leadership. Not an inquisition but a chance to tease out where there is strong leadership, clear purpose and the organisation has a high impact.
- Aim to take no longer than **60 minutes** to complete this stage and update admin.



Stage 2: Examples of focus for questions

- Current position
 - clear idea of purpose
 - service delivery
 - financial position
 - governance / trustees
- Service and activity delivery
 - Priorities
 - demand for existing service
 - new activities or services
 - staff numbers and quality & skills needed
- Impact
 - what impact do they have on their beneficiaries
 - how do they measure impact – if indeed they do!
- Funding position over a 12 month horizon (2years if possible)
 - additional costs / income needs to get
 - plans to fill the gap, e.g. Govt. support



Stage 3: Referees

Purpose

Chance to cross-check assessment, explore weaknesses and revise opinion if needed

- Check references for organisations that are worthy of funding.
- 2 referees nominated by applicant - 1 x trustee or board director and 1 x independent
- Independent referees MUST NOT be trustees, directors, employees or beneficiaries of applicant organisation.
- The referees should have been briefed so you can just call them - the speed with which they respond will be the first indicator of the esteem in which they hold the applicant organisation!
- Suggested call duration 10-15 minutes each



Stage 3: Questions for Trustees / Referees

- Questioning on operations of organisation can be strong indicator of the strength of governance (well-informed is good) and you will get a sense of their opinion on the management:
- Does referee have the same vision for the organisation as the leadership?
- Do they understand the challenges organisation is facing?
- Does the organisation seem overly reliant on one key person?
- What are the other board members like? How involved are they? Does this match what the leadership told you?
- Everyone is going to be “nice” but questions requiring straight answers can save time and require greater honesty e.g.
 - “You’re a local councillor, in our opinion is this one of the most effective homeless charities in your area?”
 - “As a headteacher, if there are budget cuts after the crisis, would the service this charity provides be something you would prioritise and why?”
 - “Why did your company choose to sponsor this charity over others; who else did you look at?”

Stage 4: Report to Trustees

Purpose

Succinct write up of the application and a summary of due diligence

- Reports are the basis of the discussions and decisions at Trustee meetings
- Flag any issues or concerns explicitly
- Any financial data used in the report must be confirmed with the applicant
- Use the template and fonts provided and avoid jargon

Two pages maximum, including:

- Scoring
- Overview of the organisation
- Request for funds
- Overview of the financial situation (current and forecast)
- Skills support needed
- Recommendations



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Stage 5: Funding Decision

Purpose

Final decisions on funding applications is with the Trustees

- Structured discussion
- Assessor does not present the organisations, but are their advocate / representative in the meeting
- Answer questions from the panel of Trustees
- Be honest about potential weaknesses in the application
- Final decision



Stage 6: Funding and pro bono support

Notifying successful applicants:

- Assessor: notify successful applicants following panel meetings
- Connect grantees with support needs via Pro Bono Committee
- Admin: Update records, Send funds

