



Guide to accepting a  
conditional grant offer

## **Awards for All England guide to accepting a conditional grant offer**

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Our website: [www.biglotteryfund.org.uk](http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk)

### **Accessibility**

Please contact us to discuss any specific communications needs you may have.

### **Our equality principles**

Promoting accessibility; valuing cultural diversity; promoting participation; promoting equality of opportunity; promoting inclusive communities; reducing disadvantage and exclusion. Please visit our website for more information.

### **We care about the environment**

The Big Lottery Fund seeks to minimise its negative environmental impact and only uses proper sustainable resources.

### **Our mission**

We are committed to bringing real improvements to communities and the lives of people most in need.

### **Our values**

We have identified three values that underpin our work: being supportive and helpful, making best use of Lottery money and using knowledge and evidence. You can find out more about us, our values and the funding programmes we run by visiting our website [www.biglotteryfund.org.uk](http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk)

The Big Lottery Fund is committed to valuing diversity and promoting equality of opportunity, both as a grantmaker and employer. The Big Lottery Fund will aim to adopt an inclusive approach to ensure grant applicants and recipients, stakeholders, job applicants and employees are treated fairly.

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# About this guide

## **This guide tells you what you need to do if we offer you a conditional grant from our Awards for All programme in England.**

You should read this guide before you apply and check that you can meet our requirements. Please also refer to this guide if we offer you a conditional grant.

Receiving a conditional grant offer is a big step towards making your project ideas a reality. It means that we want to fund your project and have set aside some funds for it. You are nearly at the stage where you can celebrate your success and start making a difference to your community.

However, before we will pay you the grant you need to confirm what you told us in your application. This means that you and a senior person from your organisation will need to sign and return our offer letter and accept our terms and conditions.

You will also need to send us some documents that allow us to check how your organisation is run. We explain what these documents are and why we need them in this guide.

## **You must not start your project until we have received, checked and approved these documents and you have received a letter from us confirming the grant.**

If what you send is satisfactory we will tell you when we will pay the grant into your bank or building society account. We will also give a date when we will announce the grant to the public and the media, so you need to make sure that news of the grant is not shared or made public until then.

If what you send is unsatisfactory we will see whether the problem can be resolved. Occasionally there may be a more serious problem. In these cases we will withdraw our conditional grant offer and write to you telling you the reasons why.

- \* Use this guide to check that you can meet our requirements.
- \* Refer to this guide if we offer you a conditional grant.

**Read this guide before you apply and refer to it alongside our offer letter.**

# We are here to help

**If you get a conditional grant offer you will naturally be excited to hear that we want to fund your project. However, please don't put off dealing with the paperwork!**

Remember you must not start your project until we have received, checked and approved the documents you send us and you have received a letter from us confirming the grant.

Please read our conditional offer letter as soon as you receive it, as it explains what you need to do next. Also read the checklist enclosed with the letter as it tells you what you need to send back.

If you do not understand anything get in touch with us as soon as you can.

Sometimes we find that there are problems with what we receive back, or we do not receive everything we ask for. If you return everything quickly you will have more time to sort out any problems.

We give you 20 working days to return everything we need and include a deadline in our conditional offer letter. This is because the money we have set aside for your project could be given to other projects that are ready to go ahead and can meet our requirements.

\* Contact us if you have questions.

\* Don't leave it until the last minute before sending

## How to contact us

Our conditional grant offer letter will include the name, phone number and email address of the person dealing with your application.

They will do everything they can to help, so please do get in touch with them if you do not understand something.

Make sure you have the project ID of your application to hand whenever you contact us. You will find this at the top of the conditional offer letter.

**Contact us if you do not understand anything. We will be pleased to help.**

# What you need to send us

What we will ask you to send depends on the type of organisation you are.

Our requirements for each type of organisation are summarised in the table below. We explain each requirement on pages 6 to 11 of this guide.

If you are a branch of a larger organisation that has management and financial control over your work we also need a letter from the larger organisation accepting overall responsibility for the grant.

We explain this on page 10.

- \* Use the table below to check which of our requirements are relevant to your organisation.
- \* Make sure you can get everything we need together quickly.

	Offer letter and terms and conditions	Bank or building society details form	Governing document
Registered charity or company limited by guarantee	✓	✓	
Other voluntary or community organisation	✓	✓	✓
Parish or Town Council	✓	✓	
School	✓	✓	
Health body	✓	✓	

Our requirements for Churches and Parochial Church Councils are the same as those for registered charities.

**Check which of these requirements are relevant to your organisation.**

# The conditional offer

We will send you two copies of the conditional offer letter, together with a checklist, declaration and our terms and conditions of grant.

You must return one copy of the letter and the enclosures to us. Please keep another copy for your records.

Read the terms and conditions carefully to make sure you can comply with them. If you do not understand any of them, contact us and we will go through them with you.

The declaration is where you confirm that:

- the information you put in your application form is true and has not changed since you applied
- the documents you are sending us are current, accurate and have been adopted or approved by your organisation
- your organisation has the power to accept the grant and carry out the project described in your application form
- you understand that if you make any seriously misleading statements or knowingly withhold any information, it will make your application invalid and you would be liable to repay any funds to us.

The senior or legally responsible contact named in your application form must sign the declaration. If they have changed since you submitted your application, contact the funding officer named in your conditional offer letter for advice. If your organisation is a company, the declaration must be signed by two people. The second signatory must be a director or the company secretary and a different person to the senior or legally responsible contact.

We need original signatures; we will not accept photocopies.

The letter, declaration, checklist and terms and conditions taken together form your grant agreement with us. You need to return them all to us, stapled together. Please don't send us just the declaration.

**All organisations must sign and return the conditional offer letter.**

- \* Make sure you understand the terms and conditions of grant.
- \* Check that the right people sign and date the declaration.
- \* Send original signatures, not photocopies.
- \* Return the letter, declaration, checklist and terms and conditions, all stapled together.

**Send back the letter, checklist, signed declaration and terms and conditions.**

# The bank or building society details form

We will send you a bank or building society details form which you must complete and return to us to provide the details of the account you want any funding paid into. Please ensure that the bank account you provide meets the requirements set out on page 17 of the Guide for applicants.

You must complete all the questions marked with an asterisk\*

- \* Check that you have completed the box asking for the total number of authorised signatories.
- \* Tick the box to confirm your bank account meets our bank or building society requirements.
- \* Do not use correction fluid on the form, as we will not accept it if you do. If you make a mistake on your bank details form please contact us to request a new form.

If you already have a separate bank account because you've had funding from us before, you can use the same account for this funding too.

**Complete the bank or building society details form carefully.**

# Your governing document

Your governing document sets out in writing how your organisation works.

It may be called a number of things, such as a constitution, set of rules or trust deed. It explains what your organisation is set up to do and how it does it.

We need to be sure that your organisation is set up properly and able to manage a grant. Considering your governing document is one way we do this.

Schools, health bodies and town or parish councils are statutory bodies, while registered charities and companies are regulated, so we do not usually need to see their governing documents. We also do not usually need to see the governing documents for Churches and Parochial Church Councils.

For all other voluntary and community organisations we ask you to send your governing document to us if we offer you a conditional grant, so that we can check that we can fund your organisation. If we find we cannot fund your organisation we will have to withdraw our offer.

If your organisation has a membership, we will check that it is open to all and that anyone can join, unless you are able to provide a good reason in your application why this is not the case. We will usually consider proposing and seconding to be unacceptable and we expect there to be the right of appeal for anyone refused membership. We will check that your membership rules do not contravene equalities legislation and that subscription fees are not prohibitive.

Your governing document should include the following:

- ▶ Your organisation's name, aims and objectives.
- ▶ How it achieves those objectives.
- ▶ How its governing body is elected or appointed.
- ▶ How people can join the group.
- ▶ A dissolution clause that explains what will happen to the assets if the organisation folds.
- ▶ The date when the organisation adopted the governing document.

★ We have published two guides to help you understand the checks we'll carry out on the information you provide us: 'A guide to our checks on your information' and 'A guide to risk analysis'. You can find these on our website or by contacting our advice line on 0345 4 10 20 30.

- \* Check that your governing document is up to date and it reflects how your organisation operates.
- \* Make sure a senior member of your governing body (such as your chair, vice chair or treasurer) has signed and dated your governing document.
- \* Check that you have not changed your governing document using correction fluid, as we will not accept it if you do.

# Branches

Independent branches of larger organisations can apply directly to us. They must have their own governing document and be allowed to manage funds and staff without referring to another body.

Dependent branches can also apply directly to us if they:

- have their own governing document (or have adopted the parent organisation's governing document), **and**
- produce their own annual accounts (which may be included in the parent organisation's annual report), **and**
- have a bank (or building society) account and are responsible for how the funds in it are spent.

If we offer a dependent branch a grant we will ask the parent organisation to accept overall responsibility for it. So you will need to get a letter of endorsement from your parent organisation and return it to us. The letter must be signed and dated by a senior officer of your parent organisation, written on its official headed paper and include the following text:

**To: The Awards for All funding manager.**

**I confirm that [enter name of applicant organisation] is a branch of [enter name of parent organisation] and I am authorised to sign this letter on its behalf.**

**My organisation supports the application from this branch and I understand that ultimate legal and accounting responsibility for the grant will lie with us as the parent organisation.**

**I confirm that the answers in the application form submitted by the branch are true and accurate and that both the parent organisation and the branch will comply with the Awards for All terms and conditions of grant.**

Signed

Date

Name

Job title

**Dependent branches need a letter of endorsement from their parent organisation.**

- \* Find out who to contact in your parent organisation as soon as you can.
- \* Send them a copy of your application form and the conditional offer letter, checklist, and terms and conditions of grant.
- \* Make sure the letter of endorsement is written on your parent organisation's headed paper.
- \* Make sure the letter of endorsement includes the name and job title of the senior officer of your parent organisation and that they sign and date it.

**Find out who to contact in your parent organisation as early as you can.**

# Withdrawing a conditional offer

Sometimes we identify a problem when we check the information you have send us. It is usually something simple, such as missing information or a document that has not been signed. If this happens we will get in touch with you. Provided you returned the documents by the deadline in our conditional offer letter, we will extend this deadline by up to 20 more working days. As long as you resolve the problem by our new deadline we will confirm the grant.

Occasionally we discover a more serious problem. This is usually when the documents you have sent do not confirm what you told us in your application (for example, we find that your bank account does not meet our requirements or your governing document has a clause restricting membership).

If we do discover a more serious problem we will contact you and explain that we will have to consider withdrawing our conditional grant offer. We may offer to extend the deadline in our conditional offer letter by an extra 20 working days if we think you may be able to resolve the problem during this time.

However, we will not offer you more time if:

- it is likely to take longer than an extra 20 working days to resolve the problem
- resolving the problem requires significant changes to the way your organisation is run or the project you applied to us for.

We cannot keep extending our deadlines as the money could be given to other projects that are ready to go ahead and can meet our requirements. Also too long an extension might take us beyond a project's start date and we can't fund activities that have already happened. So you must resolve the problem by our new deadline. We will not extend it again.

It is always a difficult decision when we have to withdraw a conditional grant offer from a project we wanted to fund. This only happens in a small number of cases and you can apply again as soon as you have resolved the problem. The fact that we have withdrawn a conditional offer will not count against a new application.

**If we have to withdraw our conditional offer you can reapply once you have resolved the problem.**

- \* It is your decision whether to make any changes needed for us to confirm the grant.
- \* There will only be a short amount of time to resolve a problem so if you need longer it may be better to apply again.

