



Application guidelines

Is my organisation eligible for funding?

You are eligible for our funding if you are a registered charity, educational establishment or organisation with a formal not-for-profit constitution such as a community interest company; CICs limited by shares may also apply, although please note the new guidance on page 5 about Persons with Significant Control. We do not fund individuals or private companies.

What sort of projects does the WCIT Charity fund?

As an IT charity, all projects we fund must make use of information technology, and must relate to one or more of our priority areas - **education, inclusion, IT for charities, and public understanding of IT**. Projects need to demonstrate an innovative use of IT, be scalable for wider replication, and be sustainable over time. As all of our grants are restricted, we expect recipients to produce formal reports on their outcomes.

Given the large number of applications we receive and the smaller number of grants we can actually make, it may be useful to understand which sorts of things are more or less likely to receive funding.

We will not fund core running costs (including the operational running costs of existing IT infrastructure), political/lobbying work, local authorities or councils, loans/debt repayments, work that has already been delivered/existing services, consultancy costs, or projects that seek to build an endowment.

We are less likely to fund a hardware refresh (e.g. replacement of laptops/desktops), off the shelf software packages, websites, network and telephony costs, migration to cloud services, large national charities with significant income and reserves, or projects where our contribution and impact may be very small.

We are more likely to fund the development and delivery of innovative new services, solutions, training, apps, analytics, AI, robotics, or accessibility features/hardware; projects where we are a material or sole funder; projects where we are sole funder of the IT component of a larger project; and organisations that could benefit from our pro bono support.

Can new organisations apply?

We accept applications from new organisations, as long as they are legally constituted and can provide us with the required documents. If a new organisation cannot provide us with their most recent audited or independently examined accounts, then an account overview (with clear details of income and expenditure) will be sufficient.

How much can I apply for?

We are a small funder and therefore usually only fund projects up to £15,000. In a minority of projects, where funding is over £15,000, and once our members have established a working relationship with the charity or educational organisation concerned, the WCIT Charity will consider requests for funding to support the implementation of the project. This policy ensures that any financial support from the WCIT Charity is given added leverage by being linked to the expertise and advice of our members.

We want to put our money where it can have the most impact. Therefore, funding applications to the WCIT Charity for a small fraction towards the cost of a large project (e.g., £15,000 toward a £300,000 initiative) are unlikely to be successful. We will, however, risk-share with other funders.

How do I apply for funding?

To apply for funding, please go to the online application page where you can start your application. Online applications can be saved whilst you are working on them. You will receive a confirmation email once we have received your application.

Please contact the Charity Coordinator if you are unable to submit your application online.

Do you fund international work?

Our funds are for the benefit of UK communities. Therefore, we do not fund work where the beneficiaries are abroad, even if the applying organisation is UK based.

What is the application process?

Our Charitable Operations Committee meets four times a year (February, May, September and November) to review the grant applications.

You will usually hear back from us with a decision within 6-8 weeks after the application deadline. Please note that, due to limited capacity, we are unable to offer individual feedback to unsuccessful applicants.

What documents need to accompany my application?

Applicants for grants under £5,000 are requested to provide:

- A document proving charitable status (which must relate directly to the applicant organisation)
- Most recent audited or independently examined accounts.
- A copy of your current safeguarding policy if the proposed project works with children and vulnerable adults. This should include, where relevant, digital safeguarding.
- For CICs and Companies Limited by Guarantee: a copy of your Person with Significant Control (PSC) Register.

Applicants for all grants over £5,000 and less than £15,000 are requested to provide:

- Most recent audited or independently examined accounts.
- Memorandum and Articles of Association/Constitution.
- A copy of your current safeguarding policy if the proposed project works with children and vulnerable adults. This should include, where relevant, digital safeguarding.
- Contact details of an external referee who can provide a reference on the charity's effective project or service delivery. The contact must be external to the organisation and be happy to be named. They should not be related to any applicant staff or volunteer.
- For CICs and Companies Limited by Guarantee: a copy of your Person with Significant Control (PSC) Register.

Applicants for all grants over £15,000 are requested to provide*:

- Most recent Audited or Independently Examined Accounts.
- Memorandum and Articles of Association/Constitution.
- A copy of your current safeguarding policy if the proposed project works with children and vulnerable adults. This should include, where relevant, digital safeguarding.
- Most recent Annual Report or minutes of AGM. If the organisation is new, the minutes from the meeting when the Constitution was formally adopted are acceptable.
- Contact details of three external referees who can provide a reference on the charity's effective project or service delivery. The contacts must be external to the organisation and be happy to be named. They should not be related to any applicant staff or volunteer.
- For CICs and Companies Limited by Guarantee: a copy of your Person with Significant Control (PSC) Register.

*Please note that grants over £15,000 are only awarded in extraordinary circumstances.

Can I apply more than once in a year?

If your application has been unsuccessful and you wish to reapply in the same year, we strongly recommend that you contact our Charity Coordinator to discuss this further and receive feedback on how to improve your initial application.

I need help with my application what should I do?

If you need help deciding whether our funding is for you, or if you need help at any stage with your application, please email our Charity Coordinator via charity@wcit.org.uk or telephone 020 7600 1992.

How do I apply for pro bono support?

WCIT members' knowledge of the potential of IT, and how its selection and deployment should be approached and governed, is second to none. Their personal network of contacts can be a source of advice and guidance on many technical or business areas to help not-for-profit bodies get the best out of IT. If you require some independent, strategic level pro bono help for an IT project, then please complete the short online form and waiver found on the [pro bono](#) page.

If you wish to apply for both funding and pro bono support for a project, then please proceed to our online grant application form, which has a section dedicated to requesting pro bono help.

If my application is successful, how do I realise the grant?

We will let you know if your application is successful and send you the grant terms, conditions and communication guidelines. Once these have been accepted, we will transfer the funds straight into your organisation's bank account. You will need to provide us with the account name, account number, sort code and building society roll number if relevant.

What is the reporting process?

If your application has been successful, we will typically ask for a short report or case study half-way through the grant term, and a final report at the end of the project. We particularly welcome images and videos, but we will need written permission to use these in our publications and on social media.

Why is grant information shared on 360Giving?

All publicly available information on grants made by the WCIT Charity is shared on open datasets, most notably via 360Giving. This is part of our commitment to being transparent about our funding. For further details, please read our [Open Data Policy](#), and for an overview of the information we share, please [click here](#). Acceptance of a grant is on the understanding that the relevant details of your grant will be published on an open dataset.

Community Interest Companies/Companies limited by Guarantee

In the interests of democratic and distributed control, we will no longer accept applications from CICs/Companies limited by Guarantee that have one or more PSCs who:

- hold more than 50% of the shares
- hold more than 50% of the voting rights
- have the right to appoint or remove the majority of the board of directors

This is to ensure grantees have strong collective governance, so that important strategic decisions including the appointment of new directors are shared equally between at least three unrelated people, and that undue influence/control does not rest with one or two people.

Writing your application

Financial background

In the online grant application form, we ask that all our applicants submit the following information for the last three financial years:

- Total income
- Total spending
- Charitable spending
- Unrestricted reserves
- Total assets
- Total liabilities
- Number of employees
- Number of volunteers

Please provide financial data as per your Charity Commission filings. If your organisation has been established within the last three years and does not have three sets of accounts, enter details of the accounts that are complete. If your organisation is currently running at a deficit, please provide more details on the background to this under the 'Additional information' section. While ensuring that our grantees are financially viable is a key component of our due diligence process, we understand the difficult climate in which non-for-profits operate at the moment.

Please note that all applicants will need to submit the most recent audited or independently examined accounts. These can be uploaded online before you submit your application.

Addressing the need

The most successful grant applications are those that ensure it is clear why the proposed project is so needed by their communities. When addressing the need for the project, statistics, quotes from potential beneficiaries or partners and case studies are particularly efficient in making a compelling case.

Be clear about your project structure

We want to have a good understanding on how your project will be delivered. It is possible that we will have little or no prior knowledge of your organization and the way it operates. Please be very clear about your project structure. This should include a description of the activities that will be run, the delivery method/s that will be used (such as peer-led learning, for example) and a timeframe of the activities. We understand some of these may slightly change during the course of the project.

Leadership and management

We know that highly skilled and passionate leadership can make all the difference in making sure a project is successful. Please let us know who will lead on the proposed project and what their experience is in delivering this kind of work. If you are applying for funding towards hardware, please let us know who will install and maintain the equipment. Please note that, if you are applying in partnership with other organisations, we want to know about their leadership and management too.

Outcomes

Setting outcomes for your project is hugely important. It not only gives us a framework within which we can monitor the progress of your work, but also helps your organisation think through the intended results of your work. Please keep your project outcomes clear, succinct and ideally, measurable. While we understand that not all outcomes of a project will be IT related, they must relate to IT in some way.

Partnership working

If you work in partnership with one or more organisations, please let us know what their expertise is and what their involvement in the project looks like. From your application, we want to have enough information about your partners to allow us to apply our normal due diligence processes to them. Please note that for projects under £15,000, there is usually no need to send us your partners' audited accounts.

Address the risk

No project is without risk, and we are keen to know how you will address it. If you have a risk management plan that you can share with us, you can copy and paste this in the application. Please note that just listing the potential risks is not sufficient as we want to ensure you have plans in place to manage those risks. While we understand that not raising sufficient funds for a project constitutes a significant risk, we would prefer that you address those risks that are likely to come up during the project delivery phase.

Sustainability

We are keen to fund projects that are sustainable and to fund organisations that operate in a sustainable way. If you plan to continue your project beyond the life of the WCIT Charity funding, please explain how you intend to do this and raise the necessary funds. If not, please explain why the project is time limited.

On rare occasions we may enter into a multi-year funding arrangement. However, this is very unusual. We are typically unable to become a long-term funder and where we make grants in capacity-building, follow-on grant applications are rarely successful.

Financial request from the WCIT Charity

Under the Financial Request section, please let us know the following:

- Amount of financial support requested from the WCIT Charity
- Breakdown of requested amount – this should include a detailed budget for the requested amount. If you cannot provide us with this, please use this sub-section to explain why. Please note that this will have to be reported on at the end of the projects. We understand that the project budget breakdown may change slightly during the delivery phase.
- Total cost of the project – this can be different from the amount of funding requested from us.
- Funds secured from other sources for the project – if you have not secured funding from other sources, but have applied for funding from other organisations, please let us know in this sub-section.

Our tips for a good application

- Tell a compelling story and bring your application to life. Remember, you can always upload images or case studies before submitting your application or insert links to videos/websites in the body of your application.
- Keep your application short and concise, stay within the suggested word count and check your spelling.
- Be realistic when setting your outcomes and honest about your predicted project impact. We welcome frankness and we have realistic expectations of the relationship between project investment and outcomes.
- Avoid using jargon.
- It may be a good idea to ask someone who does not know much about your project to read your application and give you feedback. Ask them if the application make sense to them and whether they can remember the key points.
- Ask for help. If you need help with your application or further clarification on certain questions/requirements, please do not hesitate to contact us.