Frequently Asked Questions

Why do you cap the number of applications each quarter?

Due to a dramatic increase in applications in recent years and the modest grants we provide each year, we now cap the number of requests we accept each quarter to 50. This matches our limited capacity to ensure that every application receives appropriate consideration. It also improves the likelihood of success for eligible applicants.

How do I know when the application portal will be open?

We will always publish the next application window and deadline on our website.

Can I clarify a potential application before I apply?

Yes, we are happy to offer advice on the eligibility of your proposal. You can either email charity@wcit.org.uk or call 020 3871 0255.

How is the WCIT Charity funded?

The WCIT Charity is funded by generous members of the Worshipful Company of Information Technologists. Members are leaders, innovators and professionals who are united by a commitment to fellowship, service and societal impact. The WCIT is the philanthropic heart of the technology industry, and members 'Pay IT Forward' by championing education and technology for good, and by donating to the WCIT Charity.

Does the WCIT Charity have an AI policy?

While we do not currently have an AI policy, we do recognise that applicants may use AI tools to help draft or refine their applications. However, applications should remain authentic, accurate and specific to your organisation and beneficiaries. Generic or heavily AI-generated submissions are unlikely to be competitive.

Can we request pro bono help for our project?

Yes, we like to support charities with the pro bono expertise of our members. Their knowledge of IT, and how its selection and deployment should be approached and governed, is second to none. We welcome applications for projects that might need some additional guidance or insight, although we can't always guarantee that we will have a suitable volunteer to help. If you would like to apply for pro bono help as a separate request to your grant application, you can do so here.

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.

What are the reporting requirements for a grant?

Successful applicants will be asked to provide a progress and/or end-of-project report, along with photos and/or video and testimonials from beneficiaries.

Eligibility

Which charities can apply for a WCIT Charity grant?

We fund UK-registered charities whose beneficiaries are based in the UK. Because of our limited capacity we are not able to fund:

- CICs or other not-for-profit groups or organisations
- Schools, academies or PTAs (except our existing partner schools)
- Individuals
- Private companies
- Local authorities or councils

Our grants of up to £15,000 are made to small-to-medium sized charities that have been established for at least one year and that have both an annual income and unrestricted reserves below £1 million.

Can a new charity apply?

As long as your organisation was registered with the Charity Commission or the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator more than 12 months ago, you are able to apply.

What types of projects can receive funding?

Projects are eligible if they:

- Use technology in a meaningful way and support one or more of our priority areas:
    - Education
    - Inclusion
    - Tech for charities
    - Public understanding of technology
- Deliver clear, measurable outcomes for beneficiaries
- Benefit at least 25 people
- Request no more than £300 per direct beneficiary

We are particularly interested in innovative projects involving areas such as AI, data and analytics, robotics, digital skills or accessibility technologies.

Projects are more likely to be successful if they:
- Have potential for lasting impact and wider adoption
- Demonstrate strong value for money and social impact

Our funding should also represent at least 25% of the overall project budget.

What makes a strong application?

Successful applications clearly demonstrate:
- A well-evidenced need for the project
- Clear outcomes and how they will be measured
- An innovative use of technology
- Strong leadership and delivery plans
- Appropriate management of risks
- Long-term sustainability beyond the grant period
- Good value for money
- The potential for wider learning, adoption or replication

What is not funded by the WCIT Charity?

We are most interested in funding the development, testing or implementation of innovative technology-based solutions rather than the purchase of standard operational tools and services, so we do not fund:
- Website creation or redesign
- Off-the-shelf hardware or software
- Networking or telephony costs
- Apps for income generation or staff administration
- Consultancy fees

Furthermore, as we have limited funds we do not provide grants for:
- Core running costs
- Existing services, or projects already delivered
- Political or lobbying activity
- Loans, debt repayment or endowment-building
- International projects where beneficiaries are outside the UK

Costs and budget

What expenses can we include?

You can include all reasonable expenses linked to your specific project; these should be listed in your budget.

Can we include staff costs?
Yes, you can include staff costs, as long as they are linked to your project and do not represent the full amount of your financial request.

Can we buy laptops or tablets?
Unfortunately we do not fund off-the-shelf hardware, other than adaptive technologies.

What is meant by 'off-the-shelf' hardware or software?
This means any ready-made hardware such as laptops, tablets, robotics kits, monitors and mobile phones that can be bought from a retailer. It also means any commercially available software licences and subscription products.

What counts as reserves?
For the purposes of WCIT Charity funding, reserves include unrestricted income funds, general funds that are not ring-fenced for specific projects, and assets such as cash, investments and bank balances.

Our income is below £1 million but our reserves are over £1m - can we still apply?
We appreciate that some charities such as those providing lifelong care or contract-based services may have higher financial reserves, but as the WCIT Charity is a modest funder we do uphold the £1 million reserves limit.

Project scale and impact

How do you calculate the cost per beneficiary?
We calculate this by dividing the amount requested by the number of direct beneficiaries. The amount requested should normally equate to no more than £300 per direct beneficiary.

How would you like us to measure social impact?
We do not advocate a particular mechanism for measuring social impact, as the work that charities deliver varies so greatly. Instead, we suggest finding the right tools and models which will best suit your work, drawing on resources from the NVCO and Centre for Charity Effectiveness.

Are pilot projects eligible?
Yes, we welcome pilot projects and are happy to support these - especially where there could be a potential for your project to be scaled or replicated within the charity sector.

What is the difference between outputs and outcomes?
Outputs are the activities you plan to deliver, while outcomes are the difference a product or activity may make – we are most interested in the intended outcomes.

Funding request

What size grants do you typically award?
Our grants typically range from £5,000 to £15,000. You can see the most recent grants we have made on our Small Grants page or on 360Giving.

What do you mean by 'a meaningful proportion of the overall project budget'?
We prefer to fund most or all of a project. At a minimum, we require our grant to cover at least 25% of your total budget.

What do you mean by a technology project?
Technology should be a core part of the project rather than a supporting tool. We are most interested in projects that develop, test or apply technology to create measurable benefits for beneficiaries or improve how charities operate.

Would the WCIT Charity be open to match funding?
Yes, where your project budget exceeds our £15,000 limit, we are open to match funding, especially if the amount has already been secured.

Can we apply while other funding applications are pending?
Yes you can apply alongside other applications, but if you are then successful elsewhere for the same project, you must declare that to the WCIT Charity and your request with us would be cancelled.

What is the application process?

- Applications are submitted through our online portal
- Applications are reviewed against our eligibility criteria and funding priorities
- A shortlist is presented to the Charitable Operations Committee
- The Committee meets four times each year (usually around February, May, September and November) to make funding decisions
- Applicants are notified of the outcome shortly after the Committee meeting

Due to limited capacity we are unable to offer individual feedback to unsuccessful applicants.

Can I apply more than once in a year?

If your application has been unsuccessful you will not be able to reapply for another 12 months.

What are some examples of suitable projects?

Examples of projects we may fund include:

- An AI-powered tool to support people with disabilities
- A digital platform designed to improve educational outcomes
- A charity pilot using data analytics to improve service delivery
- Technology that improves digital accessibility and inclusion
- A project that helps charities test innovative technologies

Examples of projects we do not fund would be:

- Replacement laptops
- Standard software licences
- Website redesigns
- Telephone systems
- General operational costs

You can also see some of the recent projects we have funded here.

Please note that these examples are only illustrative and do not guarantee eligibility or funding.

Assessment process

How will my application be assessed?

Depending on the nature of the project, we may assess:

- Value for money
- Evidence of need
- Organisational size and capacity (we prefer to support smaller charities)
- Expected outcomes and impact measurement
- Innovation and scalability
- Contribution to your wider mission
- Potential for learning and replication
- Level of risk
- Financial health and sustainability

What makes a good digital inclusion project?

Digital inclusion and accessibility remain big challenges, and we welcome applications designed to address this. However, we receive a high volume of requests for community digital inclusion projects so we would encourage you to think about how a relatively small

grant from us could have the biggest impact on your beneficiaries, and what would make your project stand head and shoulders above any others. We will be most interested in projects which demonstrate the potential for a high Social Return on Investment. This guide to valuing digital inclusion from Just Economics/BT could help you think about some of the potential outcomes. We will also look favourably on organisations that are part of the Good Things Foundation's National Digital Inclusion Network.

What would be a strong education-related project?
We receive a large number of requests for education-related projects, especially STEM training for younger children and girls. We are therefore most likely to fund innovative approaches to improving learning outcomes or improving digital literacy, or projects that are developing technology-based educational tools.

What do you mean by 'public understanding of technology'?
This is a small area of focus for the WCIT Charity and is mainly covered by our grant to Gresham College for its Professor of IT who delivers free lectures to the public.

Why do you not fund hardware or software?
The requirement for up-to-date equipment and software is an on-going need for almost all small charities in the UK. Our grant funding is simply not able to address this need in any significant way and so we choose to have a narrower focus for our funding.

Does the WCIT Charity prefer local or national impact?
While the WCIT Charity is based in the City of London, we are a national charity and like to distribute our grants to the areas of greatest need. This may be a small local community or a national community that is underserved.