

Access Fund Bursary Policy

Before applying to our Access Fund Bursary, it is essential that Volunteers and parents or guardians (where applicable) have read and understood the contents of this document. You are encouraged to download this document for your own records.

Introduction

Project Trust has an **Access Fund Bursary** (the Bursary) which supports Volunteers financially in reaching their fundraising targets. The **Access Fund** is made up of charitable donations to Project Trust, some of which are restricted to this specific purpose; the Bursary is therefore subject to availability as well as the eligibility criteria and application process.

Applications are reviewed by the **Access Fund Panel** (the Panel) made up of Project Trust staff members, and decisions are made on a case-by-case basis. Successful applicants will receive an **Award** towards their fundraising target, which is applied internally against their target by Project Trust. The Panel decides the outcome of applications and amount awarded, subject to approval by the Chief Executive Officer.

Volunteers who are thinking about applying, or who have any questions about the Bursary, are encouraged to approach the **Fundraising Team** for advice.

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1. Accessibility

Project Trust aims to make our volunteering experience accessible.

The Bursary is available to young people from the UK whose circumstances would make it difficult to reach the fundraising target. Awards are typically no more than 50% of the fundraising target, and are made depending on the circumstances of each applicant.

Project Trust's dedicated Fundraising Team work with Volunteers to help them reach their fundraising targets. Project Trust believes that supporting Volunteers to raise a significant amount is important, as it allows them to develop skills and have a sense of ownership and commitment to their experience. Project Trust's Fundraising Team help Volunteers with fundraising efforts including:

- Applying to grant-making Trusts and other bodies that can provide funding.
- Planning fundraising events and getting publicity for what they are doing.
- Meeting other Volunteers to share ideas and combine efforts.

2. Eligibility

Before applying, please ensure you meet the minimum eligibility requirements:

- You are a UK national between 17 and 25 years of age.
- You have been offered an international placement with us and have returned our [Volunteer Placement Acceptance Agreement](#).
- You are still actively fundraising and have not yet departed for your Project.

3. Criteria for Bursary Support

Each application is considered on a case-by-case basis, but the Panel primarily reviews applications against the criteria below. Volunteers who meet any of the criteria are encouraged to apply to the Bursary:

- My household income (parents/guardians) is below £35,000.
- My parents/guardians receive Income Support or Universal Credit.
- I am care-experienced (see Project Trust's definition below).
- I am a young carer.
- I receive an Education Maintenance Allowance or am entitled to free school meals.
- I have a disability.
- One of my immediate family members (parents/guardians/siblings) has a disability.
- I don't have parental or familial support for taking my placement.
- I can't fundraise in my local community.
- Other exceptional circumstances have inhibited my fundraising efforts (if you wish to apply on this basis, please approach the Fundraising Team for advice).

Care experienced is an umbrella term which can mean children or young people who are:

- Looked after at home through a Compulsory Supervision Order (CSO);

- Looked after away from home in a residential children's house, in a foster placement or in a kinship placement (Looked After or Non-Looked After)
- Previously looked after, where at some point in their lives they have had any of the above experiences. The child or young person may never have been formally looked after

4. The Application Process

Awards are made at the discretion of the Panel, which is described in the following section. The full process of applying for a Bursary entails:

1. Application

Volunteers are required to complete an [Application Form](#) that outlines their case for financial assistance. The application comprises details of the nature of their request and, where relevant, details about their parent(s) or guardian(s) and household income. Anyone providing personal details in the application is required to sign a declaration before the application can be considered by the Panel.

2. Evidence

Panel members may request further documentary evidence, where relevant. This will be communicated to the Volunteer or their parent(s) or guardian(s).

3. Panel Meeting

The Panel will meet to assess applications & additional information, to establish the likely level of support which will be required in order to allow the Volunteer to go on their placement.

4. Outcome of Application

Following the Panel's decision, the Volunteer is advised as to whether they will be offered a Bursary, and the amount of the Award.

5. Accepting the Offer

If the Panel is able to offer an Award, the Volunteer will be asked to formally accept the offer by completing a form which acknowledges the terms of the Award, below.

6. Receipt of Award

The Award is applied internally towards the Volunteer's fundraising target.

Volunteers who have questions of any nature about applying to the Bursary are encouraged to approach the Fundraising Team for advice.

5. The Access Fund Panel

The Panel is made up of Project Trust staff members who convene after an application is received and fully signed & evidenced. They will use the received application, as well as any other documentary evidence or factors which have been disclosed to Project Trust, to decide whether a Bursary can be offered, and the amount of the Award. The Chief

Executive Officer has the final decision over any Awards. Three out of five of the Panel must be available to review applications.

The current Panel consists of:

- **Peter Wilson**, Volunteer & Schools Engagement Manager.
- **Heloise Allan**, Director of Development.
- **Sheila McNeil**, Director of Finance.
- **Fra MacIntyre**, International Programme Manager.
- **Tom Chambers**, Volunteer Fundraising Coordinator.

6. Withdrawal of the Bursary Award

An Award may be withdrawn by written notice sent to a Volunteer if, in the opinion of Project Trust, the Volunteer or a parent, guardian, or other person has not provided accurate information in the application or supporting evidence.

If a Volunteer does not take up their placement with Project Trust before departure, any Award will be automatically returned to the Access Fund for future reallocation.

7. Confidentiality

Project Trust respects the confidentiality of Awards made to Volunteers. Panel members will not mention or discuss the status or existence of a Bursary application or Award in front of any other Volunteer. Queries about the Bursary will be treated with equal confidentiality as submitted applications or received Awards.

Project Trust views the receipt of an Award as a fundraising method equally legitimate to receiving a grant from a Charitable Trust, and encourages Volunteers to do the same.

8. Conditions of the Award

Where a Bursary has been awarded, the recipient may be asked by Project Trust to:

- Contribute to promotional material.
- Write or present to donors, Trusts and partner organisations.
- Take part in research as part of ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the impact of such Awards.

Project Trust will also expect any recipient to attend their Debriefing course, unless they are prevented by extenuating circumstances, such as illness. Where possible, Project Trust will provide advice to apply for external funding to make attendance possible.

An Award may therefore interact with the consent to appear in promotional materials if originally withheld in the Volunteer Placement Acceptance Agreement. In the instance of such a request following a Bursary Award, Project Trust is committed to transparency regarding the use of such materials, as well as consideration for the comfort and agency of Volunteers in receipt of an Award.