

WAR

Open and trusting grant-making

13th May 2021

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Background



1. Emergency Responses: more trusting, lighter touch grant-making; ready to strip away complexity and work with urgency and flexibility
2. Questions of equity and power
3. Opportunity for a different kind of philanthropy: simpler, respectful, inclusive

Together, we seek to translate words – trust, speed, light touch – into visible, practical and durable changes to behaviour and practice.



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1. Eight commitments
2. Community of practice: peer learning and action
3. Research:

- **Strengthening the case for unrestricted funding**
- **Re-imagining applications and assessments – characterised by trust and respect**

4. Blogs (<https://www.ivar.org.uk/two-practical-ideas-unrestricted-funding/>)

5. ‘Collaborative accountability’ to support continuous adaptation and improvement

6. Collaboration with Trust-Based Philanthropy (<https://trustbasedphilanthropy.org/>)



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Eight commitments:

1. Don't waste time
2. Ask relevant questions
3. Accept our share of risk
4. Act with urgency
5. Be open
6. Enable flexibility
7. Communicate with purpose
8. Be proportionate



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We commit to making grants in a way that reflects the realities facing VCSE organisations now and for the foreseeable future.

Commitments	Examples
<p>We will only ask relevant questions – we will only collect information that we must have to make funding decisions; we will test our application forms rigorously to make sure our questions are clear and do not overlap</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If information is available elsewhere, i.e. from the Charity Commission or if we already hold it, we won't ask for it again (<i>Access to Justice Criminal Justice Fund</i>)• When assessing new organisations we do not have a standard application form. We start with a conversation and then ask for two sides of A4 explaining what they want to do, supplemented by publicly held information, their website or social media etc (<i>Millfield House Foundation</i>)

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We commit to managing grants and relationships in a way that reflects our confidence in and respect for the VCSE organisations we fund.

Commitments	Examples
<p>We will enable them to respond flexibly to changing priorities and needs – we will give unrestricted funding; if we can't, we will make our funding as flexible as possible</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Being a smaller funder gives us the ability to be flexible and open when it comes to charities re-directing their funding should they need to. This past year has shown that now more than ever funders need to respond to changing needs. Applications for core funding are encouraged <i>(Charterhouse in Southwark)</i>• All our funding is for core funding towards core costs and unrestricted core funding, unless project funding is specifically requested. We review our definition of core costs regularly and are increasingly discussing as a Board and with applicants our commitment to providing unrestricted core funding. <i>(John Ellerman Foundation)</i>

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We commit to managing grants and relationships in a way that reflects our confidence in and respect for the VCSE organisations we fund.

Commitments	Examples
<p>We will use light touch reporting – we will ensure that our formal reporting requirements are well understood, proportionate and meaningful</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ABCT has a light touch reporting requirement. Grantees need to submit no more than two pages and it can be in any format. The Trust is also happy to accept monitoring reports prepared for other funders. If due to timing, an organisation is applying again at the end of a grant, the monitoring report and next application can be combined (<i>AB Charitable Trust</i>)• We trust the organisations we support, and our reporting is proportionate to the size of grants awarded. Often an organisation can cut and paste its report to us from their reporting template. It shouldn't add to their administrative workload. We would work with an organisation should they come to us to say they are struggling with reporting – and find a way to make it work for us both (<i>Haberdashers' Company</i>)

Open and trusting grant-making

Sign-up to our eight commitments and join our community of practice.

Fill out our online form

<https://www.ivar.org.uk/flexible-funders/>

- Adopt the eight commitments to open and trusting grant-making
- Share what you are doing to put them into practice
- Be part of a conversation with other funders and with voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) organisations to help us adapt and improve



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