



Ministry  
of Defence

## **Covenant Fund 2017/18**

**Families in Stress**

**Expression of Interest**

**Summary guidance**



**Please note: This summary guidance is for information only – detailed guidance on how to apply will be issued when the programme reopens for applications in March 2017.**

## **The Covenant Fund: Background**

The Armed Forces Covenant sets out the relationship between the nation, the government and the armed forces. It recognises that the whole nation has a moral obligation to current and former members of the armed forces and their families, and it sets out how they should expect to be treated.

The Covenant Fund has £10 million each year to support the Armed Forces Covenant by funding projects which address specific priorities. During 2016/17 and 2017/18 this includes Families in Stress.

### **Families in Stress**

Under this priority we will be seeking projects that support families of serving personnel who are experiencing a significant stressful life event and would benefit from an intervention from a provider who can offer specialised, localised (or easily accessible) and immediate support. These life events could include: life-changing injury, bereavement, domestic abuse, relationship break-up, those subject to the civil or service justice system or mental health issues.

Beneficiaries should be the families of serving personnel based either in the UK and overseas. Projects must either be new or enhance the support that is already available with an emphasis on long-term self-sufficiency. Projects should fill gaps in provision and not replicate or replace services already provided by statutory authorities or existing charitable provision; nor create dependency. There is no specific time frame for the support, however it must be based on resolving the issues faced, rather than prevention, and show evidence of how this would take place from the moment the beneficiary has made contact. Projects should demonstrate an understanding of the diverse nature of Service families (e.g. geographically dispersed, deployment status, accompanied/ unaccompanied overseas, single parents, single Service personnel (where the family may be a relative such as parent), reservists, foreign and commonwealth personnel and their families, Service children and those with caring responsibilities etc.) and offer immediate and/or easily accessible support. Applicants also need to be working in close partnership with their local Armed Forces base, and this must be demonstrated within the expression of interest, followed by a letter of endorsement from the base at stage 2.

Projects must also demonstrate how they support at least one of the principles that underpins the UK Armed Forces Families Strategy; fairness, choice, empowerment, resilience.

Projects are required to capture evidence and must be evaluated against the need identified. This evidence will be shared across the sector. Costs for self-evaluation should be built into the project budget.

Under this priority we will not fund capital schemes such as play parks or projects that extend to families of veterans.

Information about projects under this priority we have awarded funding to 2016/17 will be available from late March 2017.

## The key criteria

There is a two stage application process for the Families in Stress priority; this expression of interest form is the first stage. If your project is one we invite to stage two, you will be asked to complete a full application form.

At stage one - the expression of interest - the main assessment criteria are:

- ✓ how well the project addresses the priority
- ✓ how it will meet the specific requirements of that priority
- ✓ evidence of a close working partnership with an Armed Forces base
- ✓ engagement, partnership working and collaboration
- ✓ how well targeted the project is

At stage two - the full application - the main assessment criteria are:

- ✓ how well the project is likely to be delivered
- ✓ a letter of endorsement from partnered Armed Forces base, including contact details
- ✓ to what extent the project represents value for money
- ✓ to what extent we can have confidence that the project will have lasting impact, delivering changes that last beyond the funding period

Please note also that:

- we cannot fund a service that is or should be provided by others (for example, by Government Departments or local authorities)
- projects must not generate a profit, top-up an existing Grant-in-Aid or raise funds for the charitable sector
- MOD can only provide one off funding so where there is an ongoing cost – such as maintenance or staff costs, we will look for clear and realistic plans for future funding

## Application Process

There is a two stage application process for organisations applying under the Families in Stress priority; with an expression of interest stage followed by a full application stage.

Expression of interest must be submitted online. When we reopen for applications we will provide a link to the application portal on our [website](#). In the expression of interest form you will be asked how your project will meet the specific requirements of the Families in Stress priority. This is a critical part of our assessment. If your project does not clearly address the priority, or you cannot demonstrate how it will meet the specific requirements, it will not be funded.

If your project is one of the ones that is invited to submit a full application, we will send you further information and guidance.

## Who can apply?

The expression of interest must be from a local charity (or branch of a national charity) or Community Interest Company that provides specialist services. This organisation will be the accountable body for the grant.

As we have a limited amount of money we will not award multiple grants to one organisation through this priority, or across other Covenant Fund priorities, so you should focus on one main application.

## Who cannot apply?

Individuals cannot apply and cannot be a partner organisation.

Unincorporated organisations which are not registered as charities cannot apply. If they have been properly constituted under an adopted governing document and have been operating under that governing document for at least three years then they can be a partner organisation.

As partnerships and some forms of social enterprise are not registered charities or Community Interest Companies, they cannot apply but they can work as a partner with an eligible lead applicant.

## What can you apply for?

Under the Families in Stress priority we will make awards of up to £300,000. We can pay for most of the things you'll need for your project whether it's people's time, buying or hiring equipment, or minor improvements to land or buildings.

If your project strongly addresses the Families in Stress priority; the spirit of the Covenant Fund and the criteria set out in this guidance, your costs should be eligible. You can find further information about eligible costs in the Frequently Asked Questions on our [website](#).

Projects requesting over £100,000 or requiring more than £50,000 capital funding will have to be very good, high impact exemplar projects, in order to be successful.

## Local Covenant Partnerships

You need to make sure that your project fits well with other similar and linked provision where you want to deliver it. You should therefore talk to other relevant organisations to ensure you complement, and do not duplicate other services, and to ensure that there is a local need for your project.

One of the first things you should do therefore is to talk to your local covenant partnership(s) in the area(s) you plan to deliver your project, as they will be able to offer you advice and support. If you are not sure you can find details of your local Covenant partnership [here](#)