

MCF Community Awards Frequently Asked Questions

1. What can the Awards be used for?

Awards can be used to support charities, social enterprises and community interest groups to carry out projects and support services to:

- Deliver a defined project supporting people locally and operating within your Province
- Pay for salary costs relating to a defined post supporting people locally and operating within your Province
- Contribute towards core operating costs relating to running a charity that is supporting people locally and operating within your Province

If these organisations are operating locally but are based in a neighbouring Province you can still shortlist the organisation for an Award, but should check whether your neighbouring Province intends to shortlist them also and let us know.

2. What size of Award are available?

Grants are available for up to £25,000, up to £15,000, up to £6,000 and up to £4,000.

We say “up to” because we can only offer a grant for no greater than one year’s average income for that charity. For example, we wouldn’t give a £25,000 grant to a charity that only has an average income of £4,000 as we want to ensure they are capable of spending their grant responsibly.

3. What types of activities must a charity be carrying out to be eligible for an Award?

The charity needs to be carrying out activities that provide support to people in the following ways:

- **Financial hardship**
For example relieving household or individual low income, poverty or debt. Helping people avoid getting into, or helping them out of, financial hardship, and the relief of the effects of financial hardship.
- **Social exclusion and disadvantage**
For example relieving isolation and loneliness; age, race, ethnicity or gender and sexual inequality; family breakdown or crisis; the effects of rural or urban deprivation; barriers to participation; ex-offenders and/or ex-service personnel readjusting to society; homelessness; digital exclusion; access to employment and/or training; accessibility; and barriers to a fulfilling life.
- **Health and disability**
For example relieving the effects of living with poor physical and/or mental health and wellbeing; physical and learning disability; the impact of caring; living with life-limiting conditions; long-term illness; end of life and palliative care; and barriers to an active life.

- **Education and employability**

For example supporting disadvantaged children and young people up to the age of 25 by removing barriers to education and employability through enhanced educational opportunities, self-improvement and social skills leading to an educational, training or employment outcome. In addition, to help children and young people to break free from the disadvantage they are, or are at risk of, experiencing.

4. Are there any charities or organisations that we cannot shortlist for an Award?

The following organisations cannot be shortlisted:

- Charities currently in receipt of a grant from the Foundation. The team in London can let you know which charities are currently being supported in your Province if you are unsure.
- Charities that have been in existence for less than two years. We need to be reassured that the charity has been performing effectively for at least two years.
- Air ambulances, lifeboats and other rescue services. This is because each Province is given up to £4,000 annually to support a local air ambulance or other rescue service.
- Religious buildings. This is because grants for religious buildings are available from the Foundation through alternative funding.
- Organisations that are not registered charities, unless they are a social enterprise or community interest company.
- Umbrella fundraising organisations, such as Community Foundations.
- Provincial masonic charities.
- RMBI Care Homes.
- Individuals, including PhD students.

5. Are there any types of project that we cannot shortlist for an Award?

In line with Foundation grantmaking policy the following types of projects cannot be shortlisted for an Award:

- Arts and heritage projects¹
- The environment
- Animal welfare
- Civil liberties and human rights
- Local or national fundraising appeals
- New build and large scale capital projects
- Capital repairs or maintenance of existing buildings
- Political lobbying
- Routine delivery in schools
- Hospital equipment in NHS hospitals, such as MRI scanners
- Projects solely carried out outside of England and Wales.
- Funding for individuals, including PhD students

¹ Projects that use the arts, the environment or animals in ways to support the needs of disadvantaged people may be considered.



6. How long will the Award funding last for?

We expect the grant to last for 12 months, but occasionally a charity may need longer to spend the grant. In these instance we can agree with the charity to spend the grant over a longer period, up to a maximum of two years.

7. How have you allocated grants to each Province and Metropolitan Grand Lodge?

The number of grants awarded to each Province is allocated by way of counting the number of active freemasons (members, not memberships) in each Province and designating that Province as smaller (up to 2,500 members), medium (between 2,501 and 5,000 members) or larger (more than 5,001 members). If you are unsure how many grants your Province has been allocated contact the team in London to confirm. Each Province is then allocated four, six or eight grants depending on its size.

Members	£25K Grants	£15K Grants	£6K Grants	£4K Grants	Total per Province
Less than 2,500	1	1	1	1	4
2,500 to 5,000	1	1	1	3	6
More than 5,000	1	2	2	3	8

Metropolitan Grand Lodge has been allocated a greater number of grants due to the high number of members (over 30,000). In total there will be 300 grants offered across England and Wales, in recognition of the tercentenary of Grand Lodge.

8. Are all the other Community Support and Research (formerly referred to as ‘non-masonic’ grants) grant programmes still in place?

Yes. The Community Awards are intended as a standalone programme in 2017 in addition to all the other grant programmes that the Foundation provides.

9. Are we able to match fund an Award with a grant from the Province or the Provincial Masonic Charity?

Possibly, although we won't know how much each of your shortlisted charities have been awarded until the public voting has been completed in summer 2017. Once we know the outcome of the public vote we can discuss match-funding options with you.

10. Why are you having a public vote to select the size of grant given to each charity?

We intend to ask the public to vote on the shortlist of charities that you and your Provincial team have approved. In this way, we hope to reach as many people as possible, who may be unfamiliar with our work and with Freemasonry more generally. Through these Awards, we can promote the often unreported generosity of Freemasons to the general public, thereby helping to generate a positive perception of the Craft and of the tireless work you and all the members in your Province do to help non-masons in need.

11. When do we need to submit our shortlist of charities to you?

31st October 2016.

12. When does the voting open to the wider public?

June and July 2017. We will use the time after you have provided us with your shortlist to invite the charities to apply for an Award and then assess their applications.

13. Can Freemasons vote in the public vote?

Yes. The voting is open to everyone.

14. How will you promote the public vote?

We will use our website, publications and social media to let people know about the vote. We will also rely on the shortlisted charities to let people know. After all, it is in their interest to get as many votes as possible so that they receive the largest grant.

15. Can we incorporate the winning charities into our Provincial AGM or a similar event?

This may be difficult to coordinate as the winners won't be announced until the end of the summer 2017. If your event is after the announcement there is no reason why you can't invite them along, but note that we will be paying our grant as soon as possible, direct to the charity, once they have been awarded.

16. How will the Award be paid to the successful charities?

We will pay the grant directly to the charity in a BACS payment. £4,000 and £6,000 grants will be made in a single payment. £15,000 and £25,000 grants will usually be paid in two instalments.

17. Will there be cheque presentations involving the Province or a local Lodge?

With 300 grants awarded at the same time this would be too difficult to coordinate, and we intend to make the grant payment directly to the charity by BACS. We will expect the successful charities to take part in any Provincial event that is taking place wherever practical and possible.

18. How do the Awards relate to the Tercentenary grant of up to £10,000 UGLE are offering to Provinces?

These are unrelated. The UGLE grant is intended to be used by the Province to carry out a community event in the tercentenary year. To find out more about the UGLE tercentenary grant please contact Keith Gilbert on kgilbert.tpc@ugle.org.uk to discuss the tercentenary funding from UGLE. Keith is a member of the tercentenary planning committee and is reviewing proposals.

19. Who do I contact with any questions about the Awards?

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