
Funding guidelines

Supporting positive change in communities

Tudor makes grants to smaller community-led groups that support people at the margins of society.

Our trustees are closely involved at every stage of the grant-making process and look forward to receiving your application.

A good funding relationship is based on trust. We trust that the organisations we fund know their communities and how best to work with them. Tudor's trustees want to listen carefully to our applicants and hear what they really need and how we can best support them, particularly during this time of great uncertainty.

If you have any questions or need more advice once you've read these guidelines please call the Information Team on 020 7727 8522. If you are Deaf, or have other communication difficulties, you can email us on access@tudortrust.org.uk Please don't use this email for general enquiries – it is intended for people who would find it difficult to contact us by phone.

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The Tudor Trust is an independent grant-making charitable trust. We fund a wide range of organisations working to support positive change in people's lives and in their communities around the UK.

We don't have specific funding programmes designed to advance any particular agenda as we think that the groups we support are best placed to identify challenges and develop solutions.

This means that we support work which tries to meet the many different needs of people at the margins of society in a wide variety of ways. We are interested in how organisations tackle these needs, and their root causes. We are keen to work with organisations which have a real understanding of the challenges facing the communities they support and the strengths they can build on. We also want to support groups which are clear about the change they want to make through their work.

“We support work which tries to meet the many different needs of people at the margins of society in a wide variety of ways.”

While we want to understand what you do we're also interested in how you do it: the key characteristics and qualities we look for are outlined on [pages 9 and 10](#) of these guidelines. There are some types of organisation and work which we don't consider for funding. Please see [page 11](#) for details.

Our funding guidelines are fairly open so we inevitably receive more applications than we can fund. We therefore have a straightforward two-stage application process designed to reduce the time and effort organisations spend on their first approach to us. The application process is described on [pages 13 to 15](#).

We know that voluntary and community groups are working in a climate of great uncertainty at the moment and that you are having to change and adapt in response. On [page 8](#) of these guidelines we explain more about how our approach to funding tries to recognise this uncertainty.

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What kind of organisations do we support?

Tudor wants to support smaller groups, embedded in their communities, which work directly with people who are on the edges of mainstream society in ways which encourage inclusion, integration and independence.

We don't just fund registered charities: we can also make grants to other organisations doing work which has a charitable purpose, such as constituted groups and community interest companies.

We want to support work that develops and promotes the social connections and relationships which make such an important contribution to the well-being and quality of life of individuals, and which strengthens communities. We're also interested in supporting organisations which challenge injustice and inequality in their communities and wider society, particularly where this work is rooted in the lived experience of those they work with.

We have heard from the groups we fund that the ongoing impact of the Coronavirus pandemic has put communities and the organisations working within them under huge pressure. Many have seen their funding reduce as need and demand has increased.

This is a time of challenge and uncertainty. We are therefore keen to support organisations which have the ability to flex and adapt, imagining new ways of doing things while holding true to their values.

Tudor's trustees are particularly interested in supporting smaller, under-resourced organisations: in our experience smaller organisations are well-placed to deliver positive change because they know their communities and can be highly responsive to need, providing an individualised and holistic response to the people they support. This was certainly evident over the last year, when smaller community and voluntary groups took the lead by responding to immediate need while also offering sustained support to their communities.

We have therefore chosen to focus our grants on groups with an annual income of less than £1 million. We might continue a funding relationship with an organisation which has grown larger than this over the time we have been funding, or approach a larger organisation ourselves to discuss a potential grant. But we won't consider unsolicited applications from organisations with an income of more than £1 million.

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What kind of funder is Tudor?

We want to respond to your ideas and energy and provide support in a way which is helpful and enabling.

Our funding guidelines are broad because we want to support the work that you really want to do. We aim to give you the opportunity and practical tools to do the work that you know is needed.

We aim to be flexible, which means that we are in a good position to support organisations which are in transition, whether they are entering a period of growth and development or are responding creatively to challenging circumstances, as so many are at the moment.

As an independent grant maker, an important part of our role is to support work which is untried and that has uncertain outcomes. However, we are not interested in innovation for innovation's sake: we also recognise the need for sound, practical work that seeks to bring stability and wellbeing into difficult places and situations.

We trust the groups we fund and aim to build open and straightforward relationships with them. We try to offer high levels of support and engagement when this is helpful and appropriate. Our two-stage application process gives us more time to engage with applicants who reach the second stage. There are no forms at second stage. Instead, through careful listening and constructive dialogue, we hope to give you the opportunity to think about your options and develop a proposal that focuses on the real needs of your organisation and the people you are working with.

“Our funding guidelines are broad because we want to support the work that you really want to do. We aim to give you the opportunity and practical tools to do the work that you know is needed.”

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What sort of grants can we make?

Because we try to respond to the needs identified by organisations themselves, most of our grants take the form of **core funding**: funding which goes towards the core costs of running an organisation, including salaries, overheads and day-to-day running costs. Last year 92% of our grants, by value, went towards core funding.

When we fund a charity we are increasingly looking to make **unrestricted grants**, on the basis that we trust the charity's trustees to decide how funding can be used most effectively in pursuit of their charitable objectives.

Our experience as a core funder means that we want to fund in a way which contributes to the health and strength of organisations, and which supports their ability to be flexible and adaptable. While we can make **project grants** this is increasingly unusual – our focus on the whole organisation, and our interest in building a relationship with the groups we fund, means that it doesn't usually make sense for us to fund time-limited, contained projects.

Capital grants, for building improvements or purchase, also have a role to play in strengthening organisations, helping them to deliver their work more effectively. Owning an asset can give increased stability and security to an organisation, and its community, and this is something our trustees are keen to support.

There is no maximum or minimum grant, though in practice it is unusual for us to make a grant of less than £10,000. This reflects the fact that we seldom make small project grants.

We usually make grants that run for one, two or three years. We understand that tackling deep-rooted problems takes time so we regularly fund over a longer period than this, usually by making a further grant following on from the original one. However, our interest in supporting work in the longer term has to be balanced against our need to encourage new groups and new thinking. This means that our funding can't continue indefinitely.

We aim to listen, so that we can respond fully to your organisation's specific concerns and priorities. Although our primary focus is grant making we also engage with the groups we fund in other ways, offering advice and development support where this is needed. We're particularly keen to work with organisations where a relationship with Tudor will unlock benefits that are not just financial.

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Who can we fund?

You don't have to be a registered charity to apply to us.

We can consider your application if:

- you are seeking support for work that has a **charitable purpose** and which meets the criteria we explain in these funding guidelines

and

- the application comes from an **organisation** which has both a **constitution and a bank account**. We can make grants to groups operating under a range of legal structures including registered charities, unincorporated associations, community interest companies, companies limited by guarantee and community benefit societies.

We don't make grants to sole traders, to individuals, or to organisations applying on behalf of individuals.

When we assess applications we are looking for a mix of characteristics and qualities in your organisation, your work and the community you are working with. One of the key things we look for is a strong focus on marginalised people and areas – on those individuals and communities who have limited access to resources and opportunities. We don't work to a fixed definition of marginalisation: we rely on our applicants to share their own understanding of marginalisation with us.

“One of the key things we look for is a strong focus on marginalised people and areas – on those individuals and communities who have limited access to resources and opportunities.”

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We understand that the way you work will almost certainly have changed in response to the Coronavirus crisis.

But we haven't changed the way we fund: we are still making longer-term grants and trying to fund in a way which is supportive and flexible. We've taken this approach throughout the pandemic. Our trustees felt it was important to maintain a horizon beyond the immediate emergency response, to provide some level of consistency and reassurance to groups at a time of great uncertainty.

We will continue to make grants by building a relationship and developing a conversation with those applicants who progress to the second stage of our application process. We don't ask for detailed financial information in a first-stage application, and when we ask you for financial information at the second stage it will be to help us get a sense of where you are as an organisation, what your challenges are and how we can help.

We know how hard it is to 'plan' in any detail at the moment, so if we make a grant we anticipate that your use of our funding may change over time, in response to changing needs and priorities. Ultimately we trust that the organisations we support hold the interests of the people they work with at the heart of their decision making. We know that you will do what you think is best in the face of changing circumstances.

Our thinking on reserves

Recently we've been asked to give more guidance on unrestricted reserves. We have always been pretty flexible in our approach to reserve levels, looking at applications on a case-by-case basis. This is our current position:

- We won't discount applications from groups with 'low reserves'. If your reserves position looks particularly challenging it would be worth giving us an insight into your current financial position. You can do this in the introductory letter we ask for as part of your application.
- We don't have a standard definition of 'high reserves'. Many groups we consider for funding hold unrestricted reserves equivalent to around six to nine months expenditure. If you are holding reserves above this level we suggest that you use the introductory letter to explain the situation, to help us understand your financial position. It is increasingly unusual for us to make a grant to an organisation holding more than 12 months expenditure in free reserves: this is because one of the factors we take into account when assessing applications is the degree to which an organisation needs our immediate support.

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What are we looking for?

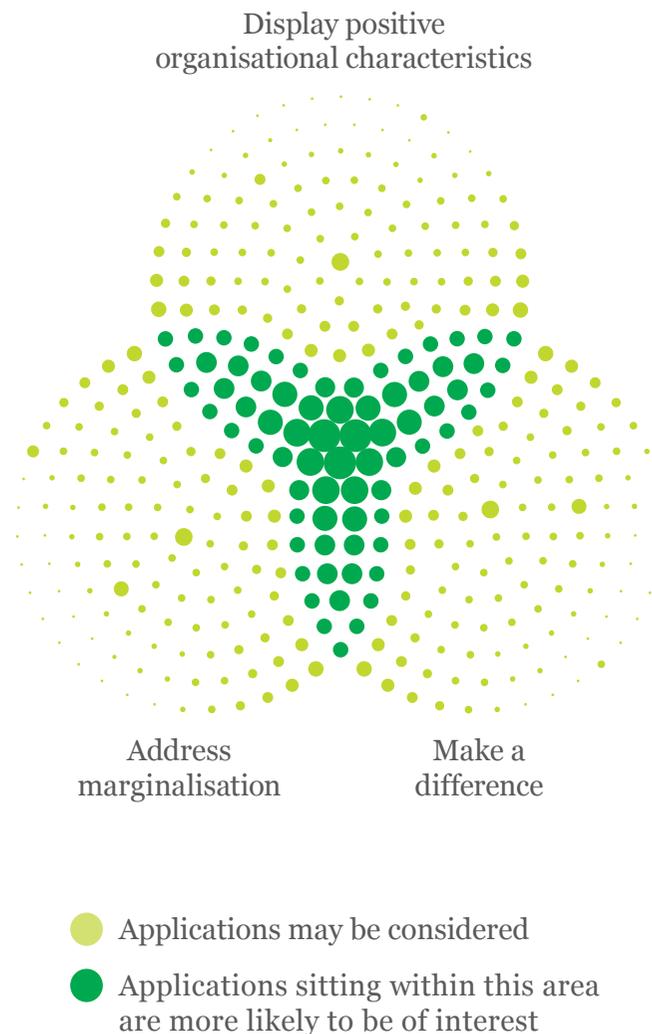
In this section we give an overview of what we are looking for when we consider an application.

Tudor wants to support organisations which:

- [Address marginalisation](#)
- [Display positive organisational characteristics](#)
- [Make a difference](#)

We don't expect every application to demonstrate all of these characteristics and qualities but we are looking for a combination of them when we review a first-stage proposal. We are likely to be more interested in applications which combine elements from all three of these areas, though there will be occasional exceptions to this.

The diagram opposite may help you to visualise our approach. We explain more about what we are looking for under each heading on the [next page](#).



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What are we looking for?

Tudor wants to support organisations which:

Display positive organisational characteristics

- Encourage and develop positive social connections and relationships
- Are embedded in their community and can identify and channel the potential within that community
- Offer longer-term engagement and support
- Listen to and are responsive to their users and give users a voice
- Have vision, energy and commitment and are reflective and open to change
- Want to make a step change in the way they work, but need support to do this
- Make good use of the resources they have

Address marginalisation

- Engage with a marginalised community or engage with a particularly marginalised ‘community of interest’ – a group of people with a particular shared need, experience or identity
- Provide direct support to individuals in real need, and/or work with individuals and communities to challenge injustice and inequality
- Are rooted in overlooked and neglected areas where funding is hard to come by
- Affect the lives of marginalised people and communities in a positive way

Make a difference

- Generate a ripple effect – a wider impact beyond the immediate beneficiaries of the work
- Display new thinking or demonstrate best practice: offer an exemplar others can learn from
- Are interested in reflecting on their work and are generous in sharing their findings with others

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What Tudor doesn't fund

Although Tudor is a broad-based funder there are some things that we don't fund.

To save yourself time and effort please check this exclusions list before starting work on your proposal. If you're not sure whether you can apply, or have any questions about eligibility, please call the Information Team on 020 7727 8522 for advice.

Exclusions

- Individuals, or organisations applying on behalf of individuals
- Larger groups (both national and local) with an income of more than £1 million
- Statutory bodies
- Hospitals, health authorities or hospices
- Medical care, medical equipment or medical research
- Universities, colleges or schools
- Academic research, scholarships or bursaries
- Nurseries, playgroups or crèches
- Arts, culture, heritage, sports and leisure (unless used as a route to more holistic engagement and support, beyond the immediate benefit to the individual)

- Basic needs support such as food banks, meal provision, baby banks and hygiene banks (unless there is also wider holistic engagement and support)
- Animal charities
- Uniformed youth groups
- One-off holidays, residentials, trips, exhibitions, conferences, events, experiences and gifts
- Community transport schemes
- Routine repairs and minor improvements to community buildings (community centres, church halls, village halls etc)
- The restoration or conservation of buildings or habitats
- Landscaping or equipment for playgrounds, parks or recreation areas
- The promotion of religion
- Work outside the UK. We run a targeted grants programme promoting ecological agriculture in Zimbabwe, Kenya and Uganda but we don't consider unsolicited proposals from groups working in these countries or anywhere else outside the UK
- The promotion of philanthropy and endowment appeals
- Retrospective funding: costs that have already been incurred.

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There are no deadlines – Tudor makes grants on a rolling basis so you can apply at any time.

We will acknowledge your application by email once we have received it and then aim to let you know within a month whether your application has progressed to the second stage, or not. Once an application gets to the second stage it usually takes us around three months to give you a final decision.

So on average it takes around four months for a grant to be approved: please bear this in mind when you are thinking about the best time to apply.

Grant prospects

Tudor has broad and open guidelines so inevitably we receive many more applications than we can fund. Last year we received around 2,500 applications. In practice, around **one in eight** applications receives a grant.

This is why we have a two-stage application process. We realise that putting together a full funding application is demanding and time consuming so we ask all applicants to complete a brief first-stage proposal instead.

If you reach the second stage your chance of success will be much higher. But a grant isn't guaranteed: a few applications drop out before they reach the final committee stage and not all applications discussed by committee members will get a grant.

“One of the crucial things we look for in the applications we receive is a strong focus on support for the most marginalised – on those individuals and communities who have limited access to resources and opportunities.”

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We understand that making a funding application at the moment may feel even more difficult than usual. The way you work may have changed a great deal over the last year, and we know that it is hard for organisations to plan in the usual way when things are so uncertain.

So when we read your application we will be looking for a sense of your direction of travel, an understanding of what you do and your ability to learn, respond and adapt.

Sharing a sense of how your work has changed as you have responded to the pandemic and its challenges will help us to understand where you are as an organisation. But we are still keen to understand what is at the heart of the work you do. What is it that remains unchanged in terms of your values and approach? What achievements are you building on?

We are introducing online applications from April 2021 – you can reach the portal via our website. There is a brief form to complete, which asks for basic information about your organisation. You will also be asked to upload three documents: along with the form these make up your first-stage application. There is a full explanation of the process on our [website](#), but here are details of the three documents we will ask you to upload:

An introductory letter

Use this letter to introduce your work, set it in context or give us information which does not sit comfortably elsewhere. This letter gives you some additional space to ‘fill in the gaps’ and tell us things which aren’t covered by our questions, or which you think it would be helpful for us to know, so do make use of it! However please keep it brief – no longer than two sides of A4.

“When we read your application we will be looking for a sense of your direction of travel, an understanding of what you do and your ability to learn, respond and adapt.”

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Your answers to these five questions

Your answers to these questions will help us understand your organisation and how you work in the context of your community. Don't worry about making your application 'professional' or glossy – we are looking for openness and a clear sense of the work you do and how and why you do it.

Your answers to the five questions should take up no more than two sides of A4. Please try to answer the questions individually, using them as headings for your responses:

1. Please tell us about the work you do.

- Use your response to this question to give us an idea of the full range of the work you do (or the work you plan to do if you are a new organisation).
- Make sure that you tell us how many people you work with (or the number of people you hope to reach if you are a new organisation). This helps us to get an idea of the scale and scope of your work.

2. What change are you working towards with the community you support?

- Your answer to this question should help us understand why you do the work you do. What does your work mean for your community – what difference does it make?
- Remember that when we use the word community we don't just mean your local area: your community can also be a 'community of interest' – a group of people with a particular shared need, experience or identity.

3. Tell us something about the community you work with and the challenges it is currently facing.

- Your community might be a geographical community or a community of interest – or both!
- It is fine to use some official statistics to explain the challenges faced by your community but we are most interested in your organisation's direct knowledge and experience of these challenges – how do you know about them? What did you do to find out?
- Your answer to this question can help us understand how you listen to your community and amplify the voices of its members – sometimes giving examples or including a quote or very brief story can be helpful here.

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4. What strengths and opportunities do you see in your community?

- Often when you apply for funding the focus is on need and what your community lacks. Here we are interested in the other side of the coin – what positives can you build on? What assets does your community have and how do they contribute to what you do?

5. How can Tudor best help you?

- This is where you can explain what kind of support you are looking for. You can give an indication here of the level of funding you are looking for – or not! We don't need you to attach a figure to your request, although if you have a clear idea of the amount of grant you are looking for it is fine to tell us this here.
- There might be other kinds of non-financial support which you'd find helpful, above and beyond a grant. You can tell us about this here.
- If you are applying for a **capital grant** remember that we are most interested in what goes on inside the building, rather than the details of the construction work needed. We want to understand the difference a new building or building improvements would make to your day-to-day work.

Your most recent accounts

If your organisation is too new to have annual accounts please attach a copy of a recent bank statement instead – you need to have a bank account in your organisation's name to apply to us. But if you have accounts we do need to see them at this stage.

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If your application is taken to second stage a member of Tudor’s staff will get in touch with you to introduce themselves as your grants manager and discuss the next steps.

At the second stage we want to identify the information we need to move your application forward and discover how best Tudor could support your organisation and its work.

Sometimes, in talking through your application, some rethinking takes place which means that the request which goes to our trustees has developed from the one you originally put forward. There are no standard forms to complete at the second stage, instead the assessment process involves an in-depth conversation, via phone or Zoom. We might visit, when that is possible.

Tudor considers all applications as quickly as possible. We aim to make a decision on most applications within three months of their progressing to the second stage, although in some circumstances we can act more swiftly. Complex applications sometimes take longer to develop.

Once your application has been discussed at committee, your grants manager will write to you with the trustees’ decision.

“We make grants by building a relationship and developing a conversation with those applicants who progress to the second stage of our application process.”

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We review all the applications we receive and filter out those which aren't eligible under our guidelines. Then every first-stage application is assessed by two members of staff and a trustee.

Tudor's resources are limited and the trustees have to make hard choices: this means that most of the many excellent applications we receive cannot be taken beyond the first stage.

We don't provide individual feedback on why we are not taking a proposal through to second stage. In most cases there is nothing 'wrong' with an application we turn down. Sometimes we don't take an application forward because other applications seem stronger in particular areas, such as their focus on marginalisation or the wider impact of the work being undertaken.

Sometimes we have more 'internal' reasons for saying no, to do with maintaining a degree of balance in our grant making. For example we may feel that we are potentially funding too much of a certain type of work or that a disproportionate amount of funding is going to a particular part of the UK.

In other situations the decision on whether to take an application forward may be based on the level of benefit we think an organisation may gain from the additional engagement, beyond a grant, which Tudor can offer.

We will give individual feedback if you don't receive a grant following engagement at the second stage.

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If you receive a grant

When your grants manager writes to you with the trustees' decision on your application their letter will let you know why our trustees were keen to support your work. It will also include straightforward terms for the grant's payment. You can find our grant conditions on our [website](#) if you would like to know more about these before you apply.

We will also discuss with you how you might assess and report back on your progress during the life of your grant, in a way that is useful to you as well as to us. We want to make reporting back as straightforward as possible, so if you have any ideas about this please do share them with your grants manager.

One of the things we will ask you to think about as you develop your full application is how you will assess your work and the difference it makes to your community. We are interested in helping the groups we fund think about how they can reflect on their work, so they can learn, adjust and improve.

“This is a time of challenge and uncertainty. We are therefore keen to support organisations which have the ability to flex and adapt, imagining new ways of doing things while holding true to their values.”

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If you have previously been refused funding by Tudor please don't re-apply until at least 12 months after the date of the refusal letter.

An organisation can normally only have one grant at a time from Tudor, so please don't apply for a further grant if you are already a grant holder. If you would like to discuss changes to how your current grant can be used, or options around using Tudor's support more flexibly, please discuss this with your grants manager.

If you are currently receiving a revenue grant from us and want to apply for [continuation funding to develop the same area of work](#) please reapply well before your current funding runs out. We can consider requests for continuation funding from three months after the final payment of your current grant.

We strongly suggest that you contact your grants manager for advice before making an application for continuation funding. While we can accept continuation funding applications that simply respond to our usual first-stage questions, your grants manager may suggest that you answer different questions or write something more focused about the work our funding has supported so far. This may help you to make a stronger case for a new grant.

If you want to apply for [a grant for a completely new area of work](#) we ask you wait until the previous grant has ended – usually 12 months after the date of the final payment.

“While we can accept continuation funding applications that simply respond to our usual first-stage questions, your grants manager may suggest that you answer different questions or write something more focused about the work our funding has supported so far.”

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Introduction to Tudor

What kind of organisations do we support?

What kind of funder is Tudor?

What sort of grants can we make?

Who can we fund?

Our grant making in 2021–2022

What are we looking for?

What Tudor doesn't fund

Timescales and when to apply

How to apply

The second-stage application

Feedback?

If you receive a grant

[Re-applying to Tudor](#)

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If you still have questions about how to apply or need guidance on any aspects of these guidelines please call the Information Team on 020 7727 8522. Alternatively, if you are Deaf or have other communication difficulties please email us on access@tudortrust.org.uk and we will do our best to help.