



Frequently Asked Questions

1. Am I eligible to apply?

To be eligible to apply, all of the following criteria must be met:

1. The applicant and, when applicable, partner(s) are registered not for profit civil society organisations (CSOs).
2. The applicant and, when applicable, partner(s) must be based in a Commonwealth Foundation member country and the project should take place in an eligible Commonwealth Foundation member country. A list of countries eligible under this call is available at Annex 1.
3. The application is for funding for a maximum of £50,000 per annum.
4. The applicant is applying for funding for a maximum of four years.
5. The applicant does not have an existing grant from the Commonwealth Foundation at the time the application window is open.
6. The average of the applicant's total income over the last two years is less than £3m.
7. The project must address one or both Commonwealth Foundation's outcomes (see Guidelines).
8. The applicant will provide the following documents as part of the application:
 - a completed logic model using the Commonwealth Foundation template.
 - a copy of the organisation's registration certificate (the official registration document provided by the relevant authorities in the country concerned).
 - a copy of the organisation's most recent audited accounts (it must include both the accounts and the opinion of the external auditor who has certified them; it should not be older than December 2016).
 - a copy of the registration certificate for all partner organisations.

2. What kind of audit report do applicants need to submit?

Applicants are required to submit a copy of the organisation's most recent audited accounts. The audit must include both the accounts and the opinion of the external auditor who has certified them and it should not be older than December 2016.

Please note that project audits cannot be accepted.

3. Can I submit the audit report at full application stage instead?

The audit report must be submitted at preliminary application stage together with the preliminary application form. Organisations that do not submit an audit report or

that submit an audit report that do not meet the requirements detailed in the guidelines (see question 2) will be deemed ineligible.

4. Do applicant organisations need to have partners?

It is not a requirement to work with partner organisations to implement the project. However, this might be important in some cases, for example, when the applicant organisation is not based in the country or region where the project will be implemented. An assessment of applicant (and partner's) capacity to implement the project will be made as part of the preliminary application assessment.

5. Can two or more organisations submit an application?

Yes, two or more organisations can submit an application. However, one organisation must act as applicant organisation and the others as partners. The applicant organisation will hold the contract with the Commonwealth Foundation.

6. Can an organisation be applicant in one application and partner in another?

Yes, an organisation can be applicant in one project application and partner in another. However, we will only take one of the applications to the final stage.

7. Can an organisation with an average total income of more than £3m be a partner in a project application?

Yes, project applications can include as partners organisations with an average total income of more than £3m, as long as they meet all the remaining eligibility criteria.

8. Can a government department or an individual be a partner in the project?

Only not for profit civil society organisations can be partners in project applications. The project can however engage government authorities as stakeholders as well as individuals as stakeholders or beneficiaries.

9. What is the grant application process?

The application for a grant is a two-stage process: preliminary application and full application. Organisations will have approximately two months to submit a preliminary application when the grant call opens. This will then be followed by a short listing process. Shortlisted organisations will be invited to submit a full application. At this stage, applicants will be expected to submit a full budget and a project plan with templates provided by the Commonwealth Foundation.

10. How do I apply for a grant?

To apply applicants will need to complete and submit an online application form using the online application system. A link to the form will be made available on the Commonwealth Foundation grants page when the call for applications opens. The Commonwealth Foundation will only accept applications that have been submitted using the online application system.

11. When will I find out if my application was successful?

Preliminary applications will be assessed in January and February 2019. If your application is shortlisted, we will invite you to submit a full application form in mid-March.

If you don't hear from us by April 2019, you can consider that your application was unsuccessful. The Foundation will send a formal notification to all applicants on the outcome of their applications by the end of July 2019.

12. What do I do if I have problems with my application?

Please email the grants team at cfgrants@commonwealth.int and a member of the grants team will assist you. We strongly advise you not to wait until the last few hours to submit your application as we might not have enough time to help you before the deadline closes.

13. How do I know if my application was successfully submitted?

Please note that filling in the application form does not automatically submit it. Please make sure that after you fill in the application form you go back to the main application screen and click on the submit button to submit your application. You will receive an email from the Foundation acknowledging receipt of your application soon after it is submitted. If you don't receive this email, your application was either not submitted or the email was sent to a wrong email that was provided in the form. If you don't receive an email, check if the email provided is correct and contact the grants team at cfgrants@commonwealth.int. We strongly advise you not to wait until the last few hours to submit your applications as we might not have enough time to help you before the deadline and we are unable to accept submission of applications after the deadline.

14. I had a problem submitting my application and missed the deadline. Can I still submit it online or send it by email or post?

Once the deadline expires, the online application system will automatically close for applications and you won't be able to submit your application.

We can only accept applications submitted online via the online application form and before the deadline passes.

15. Can organisations based in a non-Commonwealth Foundation member country apply?

Organisations based in non-Commonwealth Foundation member countries cannot apply for a grant. Please see Annex 1 for the full list of countries eligible to apply and countries eligible for project implementation.

16. Why is country [X] not included in the list of eligible countries?

Firstly, only CSOs from countries that are [members of the Commonwealth Foundation](#) can apply for our grants. The exact list of eligible countries changes

yearly, for various reasons. If you wish to find out about why a specific country is not in the list, please contact the grants team at cfgrants@commonwealth.int

17. What type of projects is the Commonwealth Foundation seeking to fund?

We are interested in supporting projects that strengthen civic voice so that it:

- Is more effective in holding governance institutions to account
- Enhances involvement in policy processes
- Shapes public discourse

Your project should address one or both of the following outcomes and may include the use of creative expression to achieve project aims:

1. Stronger civic voices engaging in policy processes to hold government to account:

Your project will strengthen the capacity of civic voices in contributing to:

- monitoring government commitments and action
- supporting the implementation of the sustainable development goals or other international agreements, and related local and national policy agendas
- Advocating policy priorities to government that address gender and other power imbalances, disparities and discrimination
- Strengthening participatory methods of engaging in regional, national and local governance processes
- Raising awareness and advocating for specific policy issues

2. Public discourse more reflective of less-heard voices

- Your project will support less heard voices to contribute to public discourse on development issues
- Your project will support less heard voices to access policy spaces and/or platforms with the potential to amplify voices and influence public discourse

18. Do you have examples of projects funded in the past?

Past and current projects funded by the Commonwealth Foundation can be found on our website: <https://commonwealthfoundation.com/projects/>

However, please note that not all of these projects fall under the outcome areas of this particular call.

- 19. I can't find some of the annexes mentioned in the Guidelines, including the list of questions that are part of the preliminary application form. When will these documents become available?**

The list of application form questions as well as other relevant call documents, will be made available on our website by 1 November 2018. These documents will also be available in the online application form under the page “resources” once the call is open for applications.

20. Can the project funds cover trainings provided to government officials to strengthen their skills?

As specified in the Guidelines, activities that are solely targeted at government officials and/or the private sector cannot be funded by the grant programme. It is fine to include such activities in the project if there is a strong rationale for it, but they must be covered by other sources of funding.

21. The guidelines say that I can't submit an application if I have an existing grant from the Commonwealth Foundation. What does this mean?

An applicant organisation cannot have two concurrent grants from the Commonwealth Foundation. In order to be eligible to apply for a grant, your previous project must have come to an end and you must have submitted satisfactory project reports. Please seek advice from the Foundation if you have any questions.

22. Can I apply for more than one grant in each cycle?

An organisation can only submit one application per grant cycle.

23. Can I apply for a grant to run a workshop or attend a conference?

The Commonwealth Foundation does not award grants solely to organise or attend training courses, workshops and conferences.