

The Friends of the University of Reading ('the Organisation')

Grant Making Policy

1. Purpose

1.1 This purpose of this policy is to set out the principles, criteria and processes which govern how the Organisation makes grants.

2. Introduction

2.1 The Organisation is registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales as an Association Charitable Incorporated Organisation number 1173347 governed by a constitution. Its purpose is to support the work of the University of Reading.

2.2 Members of the Organisation elect a board of trustees which is responsible for the running of the Organisation. The Organisation is an entirely voluntary body with no paid staff.

2.3 The main sustained funding comes through donations from the membership by way of annual subscriptions.

2.4 Other funds may be received from trusts and foundations or other individuals and bodies.

2.5 Three main aspects govern the Organisation's grant-making.

- Principles which ensure that, even where there is donor involvement, decisions are ultimately made by the Organisation's trustees.
- Criteria which grant applications must meet in order to be considered for funding.
- Processes which set out how decision-making is carried out.

3. Principles

3.1 At their discretion, trustees may accept a donor's wish to make restrictions on how their gift will be allocated to grant-giving but the trustees will not accept any restriction if it cannot be met within the Organisation's grant-making criteria.

3.2 The membership's interest in and knowledge of the University of Reading are valued.

3.3 The Board of trustees has ultimate responsibility for all grant-making decisions

- in line with the Organisation's charitable purpose, and
- in line with any restrictions agreed with donors, and
- informed by, but not restricted by, any information put forward by the members.

3.4 All trustees are engaged in all grant-making decisions.

3.5 Normally applications for grants are assessed in a competitive process against published criteria.

3.6 Very exceptionally the Board may award a grant outside the competitive process if it feels that immediate action is merited.

3.7 Applications which support the work of the University in its roles which relate to the wider community are particularly welcome.

4. Criteria

4.1 Applications may be made by members of the University (staff or students) or associated organisations which share the purpose of supporting the work of the University.

4.2 Applications should have the approval of the head of department or equivalent as appropriate.

4.3 Applications should normally be for items of one-off expenditure costing between a few hundred pounds to a few thousand pounds.

- 4.4 Funds should normally be capable of being spent within 12 months of being granted though trustees recognise there are occasionally circumstances which make this difficult and in that case will be prepared to consider an alternative spending pattern if good reasons are presented.
- 4.5 If the purchase of an item would result in ongoing maintenance costs the applicant must make clear how these will be covered.
- 4.6 Applications may be from within a wide spectrum of areas, from equipment and books to beautification of the campus.
- 4.7 An application must explain why the item is needed and what it will achieve to support the work of the University.
- 4.8 Applications can be for part-funding towards an item in which case applicants must make it clear where the remaining funding will come from.
- 4.9 Grant requests which the trustees will not normally support are:
 - Contributions to general appeals
 - Activities which have already taken place
 - Grant-making by other organisations
 - Salaries
 - An individual student's fees or living costs

5. Processes

- 5.1 The grant making process has been created to be proportionate in the light of the modest sums involved while ensuring enough information can be assessed to ensure the grants meet the full criteria.
- 5.2 Application criteria, timescales and deadlines are openly published electronically.
- 5.3 On an annual basis (normally in early March), a call for grant applications is sent out to University departments and associated organisations with a deadline of around 6 weeks.
- 5.4 All applications are forwarded immediately after the closing deadline to all trustees.
- 5.5 Any factual queries are resolved as far as possible with the applicants.
- 5.6 The Board of trustees considers all applications at its spring meeting (normally in May).
- 5.7 Any application which does not meet the criteria is not further considered and the applicant is informed.
- 5.8 The Board of trustees then forms a priority list in the light of
 - Available resources
 - The respective merits of the applications particularly the difference the project could make to the work of the University relative to the project's cost and its potential impact on the University's work in the wider community.
 - The potential for leveraging further value such as joint funding alongside other sources.
- 5.9 Members receive the list and discuss it at the Annual General Meeting (normally in June).
- 5.10 The Board of Trustees will reconsider the list should any new material information come to light.
- 5.11 Applicants are informed of the outcome of their bids and the grants are paid.
- 5.12 Applicants are contacted again in the following year and progress of the projects reviewed by the Board of trustees.
- 5.13 Any difficulty in completing a project is discussed sympathetically with an applicant and a jointly satisfactory way forward that supports the work of the University is sought.