
1. Introduction to the trust fund

The Bryn Melyn Group Foundation Trust Fund exists to provide young people who have been in care with opportunities and 'second chances'. It aims to enhance the life chances of care leavers and reduce their experience of social exclusion. Cash grants will be made where the applicant meets the criteria set out in this document and funds are available to meet the request.

The Bryn Melyn Group Foundation recognises that many young adults leave care having been denied basic rights as children including the right to education, the right to a safe and secure home and the right to live without fear. Many young people will have learned to cope with life by the time they leave care, although most will have poor self esteem and significantly less developed social skills than their counterparts in the wider population. The Bryn Melyn Group Foundation does not believe that being 'able to cope' is a good enough aspiration for our care leavers and will seek to provide funds to applicants where such provision is likely to contribute to that individual's continued personal development and improve their quality of life in ways which are important to them.

2. Governing Principles

- decisions about awards will demonstrably contain aspects of 'good parenting'
- applicants will need to demonstrate how the request, if funded, would empower them to move forward in their life, however small or large the step
- people make mistakes, and an applicant will not be debarred from making further applications to the fund if they have failed to achieve the benefits anticipated from earlier award(s). The Foundation will not however allow itself to become a bottomless rescue fund for any one individual or individuals
- grants will be linked to allowing people dignity and aspiration and will not be linked to the kind of low expectations traditionally assigned to the care leaving population
- the principal of minimising oppression experienced by care leavers will be paramount in all decisions
- the Foundation will take some responsibility for researching other sources of funding and will aim not to give out money where other forms of statutory or non-statutory funding is available to meet the same need, and where an application is rejected for this reason, will endeavour to provide appropriate information to the applicant about alternative sources of support
- all decisions will be measured through the Trust Fund's evaluation process and need to be justifiable against the ethical objectives of the Foundation and against any criteria currently in force.

3. Eligibility

Grant applications will be accepted from care leavers aged 18 - 26. Applications from those aged 27 - 29 will be considered where the application relates to education, training or enterprise.

4. Criteria for Payments

There is no limit to the number of applications an individual can make to the Trust Fund. An application identical to one which has already been turned down will not normally be considered, unless a) the reason for non-payment was due to lack of funds or b) the original application was referred for further details.

The maximum single award will be £800.00 and there will be a maximum limit of £800.00 in a twelve month period payable to any individual, whether in stage payments or as a result of separate applications. Applications which are eligible under one of the following headings will be considered.

- Household, major or minor - hardware, furnishings etc.
- Emergency living expenses
- Education - equipment, books, term time top up etc.
- Training, enterprise & employment
- Exceptional medical needs, therapy, therapeutic activities

Other needs as may arise and be considered by the committee to fall within the principals of the Trust Fund.

5. Decision Making

The full management committee of the Bryn Melyn Group Foundation Trust Fund will meet four times a year to decide on outstanding applications and review awards already made. Any non urgent request for payment will be directed through this process, however it is recognised that many requests will by their nature require a much more rapid decision making and payment process. It is anticipated therefore that many decisions will be made through the 'fast-track process'.

Decisions on amounts up to £100.00

- any one trustee

Decisions on amounts form £101.00 - £550.00

- any three trustees, or single trustee where grant follows pattern of decisions commonly reached previously

Decisions on amounts over £550.00

- Meeting of all trustees

Electronic means of communication including telephone, facsimile and email will be accepted methods of reaching agreement .

6. Payments

The management committee will decide with the applicant how the money needs to be paid. This will normally be by cheque, direct into a specified bank account, or straight to the supplier. Where the applicant requests other payment methods, such a request will be considered according to individual circumstances.

7. Monitoring and Evaluation

A system is in place for the evaluation of all decisions made. An annual report will be produced which will inform any alterations to the system or criteria for making awards.

8. Information, Application & Confidentiality

- A list of grants made by the Trust Fund and a summary of outcomes based on evaluation carried out will be published at the end of each year. It will not give details of specific individuals . This document is available to anyone with a legitimate interest in the Trust Fund.
- All personal information submitted by applicants and referees will be held by the trustees in complete confidence and made available only as necessary for the administration of the business of the Trust Fund to members of the management committee and advisors as appointed by the trustees.
- Application forms are available from the address at the end of this document. Any eligible person, or their representative can receive these details.

9. Contact

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