

ARTS COUNCIL NATIONAL LOTTERY PROJECT GRANTS

Governing documents

Arts Council National Lottery Project Grants is our open-access programme for arts, museums and libraries projects.

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This information sheet relates to Arts Council National Lottery Project Grants.
See [our website](#) for more information about Project Grants.

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Governing documents and Project Grants

All organisations (including unincorporated groups) applying to Project Grants need to have a governing document. This information sheet explains why we ask for a governing document and what we expect to receive.

Before you can begin an application for funding, you need to make an applicant profile for your organisation on our online system, and you will upload your governing document as part of your profile. We will review the profile you have created in a stage we call 'contact validation'.

Guidance on setting up your applicant profile for your organisation on our online system can be found [on our website](#).

What is a governing document?

A governing document is a legal document which acts as the rule book for the way in which an organisation (or group) will operate.

A governing document usually contains information about:

- the organisation's legal name
- an organisation's purpose and goals
- how decisions are made and by whom
- who controls the organisation's finances
- the appointment, retirement and removal of members
- what happens if the organisation wishes to wind up

Different types of governing document include:

- a constitution for an association
- a trust deed for a trust
- a will for a will trust

- articles of association for a company
- rules for an Industrial and Provident Society

Charities, registered companies and other formal organisational structures

There are legal requirements for the governing documents for charities, registered companies, Community Interest Companies (CIC), and other organisational structures. Guidance on these legally-required documents can be obtained from the relevant regulatory body.

Unincorporated groups and associations

For other types of organisation (for example, unincorporated groups or associations) governing documents are not required by law but it is good practice to have a document that sets out clearly what the group aims to achieve and how it operates. We still require this document to be able to validate a new applicant profile for an organisation, even if it is not required by law.

We are not able to offer advice on creating a governance document, but www.gov.uk and [NCVO](http://www.ncvo.org.uk) provide [guidance on](#) how to create a governing document for an unincorporated group.

Local authorities and other public sector organisations

If you are a local authority or other public sector organisation your governance and record keeping should be in accordance with the relevant statute and guidance issued by the relevant regulatory bodies.

Public sector organisations do not need to upload a governing document when you set up an applicant profile for your organisations, however our online system will not allow you to proceed without uploading something to this screen. We suggest uploading a note explaining your organisational status on a letter headed document.

Why we ask for governing documents

We want to make sure that the organisations we fund have an appropriate governing document in place to support the work that they do.

When we review an applicant profile for an organisation, we want to make sure that the information provided by organisations matches the details on their governing documents.

Organisations should ensure that their governing document allows them to carry out the activities that will be included in their application to us.

What we expect to see

Your governing documents must be up to date, correct, and in line with the requirements of your regulatory body. We will accept a scan of the original governing document.

Depending on what status you tell us your organisation has, we will expect to receive:

Status given in applicant profile	Governing document needed
Central government body	N/A – letterheaded explanation
Community Interest Company (CIC)	Articles of association (including evidence that they have been adopted – see below)
Company limited by shares	Articles of association (including evidence that they have been adopted – see below)
Company limited by guarantee (charity or non-charity)	Articles of association (including evidence that they have been adopted – see below)
Local government body	N/A – letterheaded explanation

Mutual society	Rules
Partnership or consortia	Appropriate governing document for lead organisation in the consortium (partnership agreement not acceptable at this stage)
Trust or foundation	Trust deed
Unincorporated group (charity or non-charity)	Constitution or rules (including evidence that they have been adopted – see below)
University	Charter or constitution
Other	As appropriate

What we will check

When you submit your governing document to us we will check:

- that the name of the organisation on your governing document matches the organisation name given on your applicant profile.
- that the governing document has been accepted by your organisation. This is usually shown by the document being signed by an appropriate office bearer, or by the document being the same as the one held by Companies House. We will accept a scan of the original signed and dated governing document, or a copy of the document that includes the Companies House certificate of incorporation where appropriate.
- that the type of document you have provided against the type of organisation structure you have told us best represents your organisation.

We will also conduct more in-depth checks on a sample of the governing documents submitted to us at this stage. This will include checking company registrations with Companies House and the Charity Commission, and other checks to establish the validity of the governing document.

What happens if your governing document is not accepted

We will get in touch to explain what the issue is, and what needs to be done to resolve it. If there are problems with your governing document, it may take us longer than our standard five working days to validate your applicant profile.

We may still validate your profile if there are minor problems with your governing document but we will tell you in your confirmation email that you must resolve the issues we have noted before making an application to us. We use the governing document during the eligibility and risk checking process, and if there are problems with the information provided this may affect how we view your application in terms of eligibility or risk. See the [How to apply guidance](#) for more information on how the document is used.

Once we have validated your applicant profile

By validating your applicant profile we are confirming that the information you have provided – including your governing document – has allowed us set up your profile; it does not indicate that we have approved your governance arrangements as set out in that governing document.

Once we have validated your applicant profile, it is your responsibility to keep this governing document updated on your applicant profile if it changes. Your governing document will form part of the application form for any applications you make to us. If we receive an application from you that includes an outdated or incorrect governing document, we may not be able to process it.

To upload an updated version of your governing document, go into the attachments section of your applicant profile, delete the existing version of your governing document and upload the new version. For more information on making changes to your applicant profile, see our [information sheet](#) 'How to create and manage your user account and applicant profile'.

When you make an application to us

Before you apply, check that your governing document allows you to carry out the activities that will be included in your application to us.

As you work through the application form, check that the version of your organisation's governing document brought forward from your applicant profile into the form is the latest version. If it is not, go back into your applicant profile and update the document there.

Although we have validated your applicant profile (which included your governing document), this does not indicate any approval of your governance arrangements as set out in that governing document. We use the governing document during the eligibility and risk checking process, and sometimes during appraisal for larger applications. The [How to apply guidance](#) provides more information on how the document is used.

If at any stage we request an updated version of your governing document you should ensure that you send us the latest, correct and adopted version of the document.

Contact us

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