



Sheffield
Hospitals
Charity

Guide to Accessing Charity Funds

Sheffield Hospitals Charity

Sheffield Hospitals Charity (**SHC**) is the official charity partner of Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (STH), and Sheffield Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust (**SHPU**).

We exist to help Sheffield's hospitals, community teams and mental health and learning disability services to fund the costs that the NHS can't. By funding support for patients, and staff, life changing research and more we enhance care from birth to the end of life and everything in between.



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Charitable Expenditure

All charitable expenditure must be in alignment with our **Charitable Objects** summarised as:

To support the charitable purposes connected to STH and SHPU and to advance health and welfare for the public.

We translated our Charitable Objects into practice by developing four funding priorities in collaboration with STH and SHPU. These priorities reflect the areas where charitable funding can have the greatest impact for our Trusts and the people of Sheffield:

- (1) Supporting patient & centred experiences
- (2) Supporting caring and cared for staff
- (3) Reducing health inequalities in Sheffield
- (4) Maximising technology, research, and innovation

Every application we support must align with at least 1 of our 4 funding priorities and satisfy the three-fold charitable purpose test mentioned below.

What is 'charitable purpose?'

A purpose is considered '**charitable**' if it:

- Falls within 1 of the 13 statutory descriptions within section 3(1) of the Charities Act 2011; and
- Is for the public benefit.

Section 3 (1) of the Charities Act 2011 includes: "the advancement of health or the saving of lives" which is the most applicable to the Charity's work.

Public benefit has 2 aspects:

- Must provide an identifiable benefit (provable so can't be an opinion) that outweighs any harm; and
- Must benefit the public or sufficient sections of it, and not give rise to more than incidental private benefit (must always link back to patient care/ advancement of health)

NHS Charities have created a simple 3-stage test to interpret the legal framework above, and make it practical for everyday funding decisions:

- **Over and above NHS provision**- funds cannot be used to pay for what the NHS is mandated to provide. To do so would fail the public benefit test, as its not 'additional benefit'.
- **Good value** -funds must be utilised effectively, which is part of demonstrating 'public benefit'
- **Supporters would be proud**- ensuring initiatives align with Charitable Objects and are genuinely charitable- i.e. are not primarily for private benefit.

Our Funds

The Charity manages over 180 funds, with the majority being classified as '**Special Purpose Funds**' (SPF). SPF's can only be used in line with the specified fund Objectives, which will be restricted to a specific condition/ward, role and/or activity. Our SPF's are all linked to specific Directorates within STH and facilities at SHPU.

To utilise SPF's applicants must ensure their proposal aligns with the Objectives of the fund and satisfies the 3-fold charitable purposes test. Applicants must also secure the support of 2 Fund Champions.

In addition to Special Purpose Funds, we also hold a small number of funds which are classified as **General Funds**. Unlike our SPF's which have Fund Champions from across both STH and SHPU assigned to them, our General Funds only have SHC staff assigned to them. This difference is because General funds are not restricted to a specific area/condition so can be used much more widely.

Trustees

The involvement of NHS staff is essential to ensure that funds are used in the ways that best support our NHS. However, it is important to note that any individuals, including NHS staff, who solicit, collect and/or receive funds from donors, do not acquire a Trusteeship role in relation to those donations. This

means that they have no authority to direct or determine the spending of those funds.

The Charity's Trustees are responsible for ensuring that all funds are applied only in furtherance of the Charity's Objects. This responsibility is part of their legal obligation to act in the best interest of the Charity and to comply with its purposes. Spending outside those Objects would be considered unauthorised and potentially unlawful, even if well-intentioned.

Fund Champions

Each SPF has designated Fund Champions- these are staff within the Directorate who have clinical, financial or operational expertise. Fund Champions play an important role in helping the Charity administer funds effectively. When an application is made to a SPF, Fund Champions are required to review the request and provide feedback, either supporting the proposal or raising concerns about how the funds would be used.

Fund Champions provide valuable insight into whether an application is practical and aligned with Directorate priorities, helping the Charity assess its suitability for funding. However, Fund Champions do not have the authority to approve or block expenditure.

We expect Fund Champions to act with honesty and integrity-supporting worthy applications and raising concerns where appropriate. They cannot prevent expenditure by refusing to engage or withhold support without valid reasons. Persistent failure to respond or provide justification may lead to

removal from the role. Importantly, Fund Champions should not be concerned with depleting funds: charitable funds exist to deliver public benefit, not to sit idle as savings. Prompt and purposeful use of funds ensures donations achieve the impact intended for patients, families and staff.

Any member of STH or SHPU staff can be a Fund Champion, but we recommend a mix of expertise to best support the Charity to make a well-informed assessment of an application. Ideally, Fund Champions should include senior leaders (such as Clinical, Operational or Nurse Directors), finance or business specialists (Finance & Business Managers), and frontline staff involved in delivering direct patient care.

If you'd like to become a Fund Champion or step down from the role, please contact the Charity's Finance Manager at: finance@shct.nhs.uk

Fund Utilisation

Charitable funds should be used promptly to deliver public benefit and not held indefinitely without purpose. In line with our Ethical Fundraising & Gift Acceptance Policy, if a fund remains inactive for a period of 5 years, then the Charity will work with Fund Champions and wider teams to encourage appropriate expenditure. Where this is not possible, and in line with Charity Commission guidance, we may seek to de-restrict or merge the fund so that it can be used for broader charitable purposes. This ensures that donations achieve the impact intended and continue to benefit patients and staff.

Fund Statements

As the start of the new financial year, the Charity notifies Fund Champions of the outstanding balance of funds. These notifications are known as 'Fund

Statements'. Fund statements will be issued on a quarterly basis throughout the financial year.

From time to time, the Charity might contact Fund Champions to notify them of changes to the Fund Objectives or Fund Champions.

What we fund and what falls outside our remit

We exist to support NHS services in Sheffield. However, charitable funds are limited so we cannot support every request we receive.

We can only support funding applications which:

- Align with our Funding Priorities/ Charity Objects.
- Align with Fund Objectives; and
- Satisfy the 3-fold charitable purpose test.

In the table below we have provided specific examples of the funding support we can and cannot provide. This is to provide guidance and is not intended to be an exhaustive list:

Purpose		
Staff-general	Wellbeing hubs, calm rooms, enhanced staff rooms and rest areas. Morale and resilience boosting support (capped at £500 for teams that constitute primarily non-medical staff). Psychological and counselling support. Team-based educational, training and development support. Staff focused digital tools (simulation software, wellbeing platforms) Small gifts to staff working on Christmas day (£6) SHC branded Fleecees -for staff working in the community/ across sites.	Birthdays, anniversaries or retirement, staff parties, dept. get together and meals. Routine NHS staffing costs. Gifts as a thank you for doing the job. Performance incentives Tea/coffee/milk for staff rooms. Toiletries for personal hygiene. Alcohol, tobacco or unhealthy foods. Mandatory uniform/PPE and other items designated as a routine employer responsibility to provide.

Staff-study leave	Up to £1,000 per person for enhanced training per FY (£1,200 if band 2-5 to cover travel and accommodation). The training must be relevant to the role.	Funding requests exceeding the proscribed limits. Travel and accommodation costs for band 6 staff and above. Personal career development unrelated to role.
Patient/Family support	Wellbeing initiatives (inc. art and music therapy, comfort packs, alternative therapies, counselling, bereavement support, psychological support, information & welfare support, and family support). Specialist furniture Entertainment devices/systems Sensory equipment. Patient facing digital tools (apps, communication/interpretation aids and video call systems) Innovation and pilots that improve experience/outcome	Routine treatment/services. Subscription to entertainment services (e.g. Netflix, Sky). TV licensing costs associated with internet access on any site where Wi-Fi is available as standard. Requests which are not aligned with Trust/Charity environmental objectives

	Small gifts for patients in hospital over Christmas.	
Environment and Facilities	Ward level enhancements. Enhancement or creation of family rooms, gardens, quiet spaces, calm rooms, day rooms, waiting areas, ambulatory care, hubs, neurodiverse friendly spaces, parent/ relatives' accommodation. Art installations, light boxes, sensory enhancements, wayfinding and zoning. Christmas decorations or similar (must be compliant with Trust policy)	Routine maintenance Large scale capital projects that are NHS Trust responsibility. Items designated as routine employer provision e.g. staff lockers, staff parking, changing areas etc) Recognition ideas where this is not compliant with the Trust Policy Capital works on properties not owned by STH/SHPU Standard forms of equipment to enable to regular functionality of facilities (i.e., desk, chairs, white boards, air condition units and general office supplies).

Equipment	State of the art diagnostic or treatment equipment. Standard but essential equipment located closer to patient care areas. Items to support relatives to stay on site. ‘Home from home’ furniture and furnishings. Sensory and entertainment items. Training and simulation equipment for patients and staff.	Standard NHS equipment or items previously funded by Trust budgets. IT infrastructure (servers, payroll systems). Personal devices for staff. Hardware and software required for NHS staff to undertake their regular duties, including working remotely. TV’s in ward areas and radios (in communal and busy areas) Ongoing revenue costs NHS mandated facilities (e.g. heating, lighting, AC)
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Community	Projects that connect hospital services with the local communities aimed at addressing health inequalities, supporting patients in their community and/ supporting more broadly the aims of the 10 Year Plan.	General community projects with no Trust link Personal financial support to community members
Research and Innovation	Pilot studies Seed funding Research projects that align with our Research Strategy and seek funding for: 1. focused on short-medium benefit to patients 2. Research infrastructure and capability building initiatives 3. Research technological and digital innovation with clear patient/staff benefit	Ongoing NHS research budgets Salaries for statutory research posts Projects with unclear patient benefit Early research with little or no prospect of impact on patients. Publication costs of research that we have not funded. Projects primarily supporting academic outcomes. Projects where commercial benefit is the primary aim.

		Over-reliance on charitable funding. Alternative funding available. Primary beneficiaries' are trainees and university students
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Applying for funding

You can apply for a Grant if you are:

- A staff member employed or holding an honorary contract at STH or SHPU
- A Charity or Organisation which is part of the wider health community, where there is a direct link back to STH or SHPU.

Details of how to apply for a Grant can be found in the dedicated staff section of our website: [Apply For A Grant](#)

Grants under £5,000

Small Grants

There are 3 pathways:

- Small Grants (accessing SPFs);

- Little Wishes -only available to areas that have no SPF's; and
- Study Leave.

Applications are open year-round and are typically reviewed within 3-4 weeks.

Grants over £5,000

Applicants must complete an Expression of Interest Form available on our website. Our Grants Team will review the information provided and if the request is considered eligible for charitable funding, they will be advised of suitable funding sources and invited to submit a full application.

Applications are reviewed by the Grants Investment Panel, which meets 4 times a year. Calendar dates are published on our website: [Panel Dates](#)

Application for research funding over £5,000 are reviewed by the Research Grants Advisory Board, which currently reviews applications when a minimum of 2 applications are received by the Charity.

Applications are normally reviewed and an outcome provided within 3 months.

Grants over £500,000

Reviewed by the Charity's Board of Trustees at their regular meetings (usually held in February, April, June, September and December). Ordinarily these applications are reviewed by the Grant Investment Panel before being submitted to our Board of Trustees for consideration.

Applications are normally reviewed and an outcome provided within 4 months.

Funding Calls

Funding Calls are a great opportunity for staff to apply for grants from our General Funds. Open to all staff-including areas without existing funds, these competitive calls allow us to support the most impactful projects. Visit our website for details of current opportunities and eligibility criteria.

Drawing Down Your Grant

Once you have your Grant Reference Number, you can access the funding SHC has awarded to you.

1. Grants over £5,000

- All invoices and correspondence regarding an SHC Grant must quote its unique Grant Reference Number.
- All orders must be managed and placed by your Finance Lead. Please remind your Finance Lead to use code **FPTFND** as this will ensure that the cost is not assigned to your Directorate's budget. Your Finance Lead must then raise a recharge and send it to the Charity for payment.
- With prior agreement, for services such as one-off room hire or catering, which are provided by suppliers that are not approved suppliers to STH/SHPU, the provider can address invoices directly to the Charity.

2. Grants ≤£5000

- If your Grant covers the cost of **purchasing item/furniture and equipment**, we will send you a Supplier Order Form to complete.

Once you have completed the Form, please return it to SHC (do not send directly to procurement). Please note:

- You must only order items that have been approved by SHC
 - If you intentionally try to purchase unapproved items or exceed the amount of funding, you have been awarded then the Grant will be revoked and further applications will not be considered.
- For all other types of grant expenditure, the processes mentioned in relation to Grants over £5,000 should be followed.

3. Purchase small-value items/services directly (up to £100)

- For low-cost items that are not electrical appliances, you may purchase the item(s) yourself and claim a reimbursement from SHC. Some people prefer this option as it allows them to source items at speed and often far more economically than via Procurement.
- We will inform you at the time of the Grant Award, if this option is available to you. Please note reimbursements can take up to 30 days to process. To use this process, you will need to:
 - Complete and return a Staff Expense Form (SHC provide this)
 - Provide copy of receipts

4. Study Leave

- To access Grant funding for a course/travel/accommodation, please complete a Staff Reimbursement Form and ensure receipts are submitted with the completed Form.



Contacts

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Grants over £5,000 and Funding Calls
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Grants under £5,000 (including study leave)
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