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| **ABOUT THE RAF BENEVOLENT FUND** |
| The RAF Benevolent Fund (the Fund) is the RAF’s leading welfare charity. We provide support to individuals within the RAF Family to deal with a wide range of issues, from financial hardship and debt to injury and disability, through to relationships, family life and caring responsibilities as well as illness and bereavement. In addition to support provided directly to individuals, we are pleased to provide grants to RAF Units for projects and activities that enhance the morale and wellbeing of the Serving RAF community.  |
| **WELCOME TO OUR RAF STATION GRANTS PROGRAMME** |
| Please take time to read these guidance notes carefully. They explain who can apply, what we can fund, how to apply, what you need to send with your application form and what happens when we receive it. You should make direct contact with the Welfare Programmes Manager at the Fund: Irene.Greenwood@rafbf.org.uk if you have any questions at all relating to the eligibility of your project to apply for charitable grant funding or need advice about completing the Application Form (whether this is for Small or Large grants). Please note that applications **will not** be processed without all the required information (including the mandatory and relevant number of quotes or other evidences requested to support the request); incomplete applications may be returned or placed on hold until all relevant information has been received. If you have any queries, please contact the Fund at: rafstationgrants@rafbf.org.uk or Irene.Greenwood@rafbf.org.uk or telephone: 020 7307 3436. The Fund operates a number of grants schemes. Our two main streams include: * **Small Grants stream** – open - for requests of up to £5,000
* **Large Grants stream** – quarterly - for requests greater than £5,000 and not exceeding £35,000
* **Invitation only:**

**BenPlay/BenParenting – RAF Families Day – OpCHRISTMAS** – we will write to Stn Cdrs towards the end of the year to announce the availability of any of these streams and provide relevant application forms at that time.* The **Small Grants** funding stream is an open application process and we aim to release decisions within four weeks of submission.
* The **Large Grants** funding stream is managed by the Grants Committee which meets four times a year within the following months:
	+ - February
		- May
		- August
		- November

The cut off point for applications is three weeks prior to the start of the month in which the committee is being held. Applications received after this date will be considered at the next scheduled quarterly committee meeting. ***Depending on demand we reserve the right to delay an application to a later committee meeting.*** **The Fund may choose to visit the project as part of the grant monitoring process.** |
| **ELIGIBILITY AND CRITERIA** |
| In order to ensure that the Fund’s benevolence is being distributed appropriately, there are some criteria which you need to meet in order to be able to apply: 1. Units are eligible to apply where there is a permanent RAF presence (*including RAF Reserves and RAF family members*). Grant funding allocations will be made proportionately to the number of RAF personnel involved within the project.
2. You must be able to demonstrate a **direct measurable link** between the activities/project that the grant would fund, and **at least one** of the Fund’s Welfare Outcomes that make up our Impact Framework. (Please see p.5).
3. The activity / project must not be eligible for funding from the public purse.
4. Applications **must** be accompanied by:
* At least **two** quotations - for small grants
* At least **three** quotations - for large grants

 Or a signed statement by OC BSW (or equivalent level) to justify why these cannot be provided. The  only exceptions to this are where there is only one provider (ie. SSVC for CineLink projects), the  project relates to playparks where our current preferred supplier (Proludic) is being used, or it is being delivered by DIO/Amey in conjunction with its own preferred supplier.1. **Additionally,** the following criteria applies specifically to applications within the Larger Grants stream:
	1. The **need** for the funding has been documented on the most recent RAF Station/Unit’s Community Needs Analysis (CNA). The detail/s must be included within the Application Form.
	2. The application **must** be passed through **OC SSS** for provision of a Statement of Support and,

where applicable, details of the Citing Board and confirmation that the relevant landowner/DIOpermissions and future maintenance plans for the project are all in place.1. The RAF Chief Community Development Advisor (CCDA), the Fund’s Area Director (AD) and Regional Communications Manager (RCM) will normally be invited (by the Fund’s Welfare Programmes Manager) to comment on the application prior to its assessment and submission to Committee.
2. We ask for your station’s RAF strength figures and also for the numbers of RAF people who will actually benefit from the completed project. Why is this important? We must report to our Trustees and Board how much has been spent from the RAF Stn Grants budget and the numbers of people we have helped and how we have done this. This also helps us to understand where the welfare need is greatest and what has provided the better impact. We rely on your support and honesty.
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| **CHARITABLE OBJECTS AND WELFARE OUTCOMES** |
|  **The Fund’s main charitable objects are:** 1. To [provide assistance](https://www.rafbf.org/request-our-help) to the RAF Family, when they are in need.
2. To support the morale and wellbeing of the Serving RAF.

 **Welfare Outcomes:** We measure the impact of activities we fund through Station Grants against the  following five Welfare Outcomes:

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| **WELFARE OUTCOMES** | **EXAMPLE ACTIVITIES** |
| 1. Increased social engagement and cohesion | * Capital costs projects: construction of new welfare related facilities or refurbishment works including feasibility studies and tender costs.
* SSVC Cinelink movie service
* Time-limited activities which improve the welfare and wellbeing of the RAF Family, e.g. team building activities, educational training or courses (i.e. domestic financial management, awareness courses etc.)
* Station Events which actively promote social engagement and cohesion (i.e. Families Days)
* Portable electrical items (such as coffee machines, sewing machines), which would fit out a new community kitchen or allow for craft/teaching activities etc
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| 2.Improved mental wellbeing  | * Local wellbeing initiatives – e.g. yoga
* *MHFA Manuals – you should now engage with* ***SMARTT*** *for advice in this area*
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| 3.Increased financial means | * Time-limited activities which improve the welfare and wellbeing of the RAF Family, e.g. educational training or courses (i.e. domestic financial management, awareness courses etc.)
* Citizens Advice/Money management advice sessions
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| 4. Improved family relationships | * Parenting support initiatives, youth activities, capital grants for youth facilities
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| 5. Increased engagement in (on employment and vocational activity for RAF spouses/ partners on Stns | * Training or courses for groups of spouses/partners (e.g. vocational courses etc.)
* Group vocational activities – e.g. photography groups etc.
* Employment readiness training, CV or interview training.
* Co-Working Hub improvements/refurbishment
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* A copy of our **Impact Framework and its objectives** are available at the end of this document.
* Your application **must consider at least one of the above Welfare Outcomes and you should elaborate** as much as possible on the measurable link/s between your project activities. **The stronger the measurable link/s, the greater the chance your application will be successful.**
* The above list of example actives is NOT exhaustive.
* We will ask you **how you intend to monitor, measure and evaluate the impact** of the project on its completion and what positive changes you anticipate.
* We will ask you what (if any) **positive changes** have occurred in the Project Completion Report.
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| **EXAMPLES OF WHAT WE DO NOT FUND**  |
| * Projects where there is a public liability or an obligation to provide.
* Direct support to individuals – *Minor or Major Financial Assistance (MFA) schemes should be applied to through the Stn/Unit Chf Clk/ WO PMS.*
* Applications where not all of the funds required to complete the project have been identified.
* Memorials or visits to memorials/graves, graduations/ceremonies.
* Force Development (including Staff Rides/Battlefield tours) or Adventure Training.
* Sports related projects/equipment (including BowlingAlleys/E-sports/football/hockey/gaming machines).
* Projects where it is deemed that the works could be achieved on a self-help/volunteer basis.
* Wifi; computers; laptops; gaming equipment etc
* Station events which involve commercial gain, activities promoting/encouraging use of alcohol, or functions such as beer calls and similar social gatherings.
* Loans or payments to clear debt or interest payments.
* Contingency costs.
* Retrospective costs (for works or services which have already taken place before any grant has been awarded). Where the application can demonstrate that this was unavoidable the Fund may consider the extenuating circumstances.

 **Please note that this list is not exhaustive and may be subject to change depending upon the Fund’s** **criteria at that time.** |
| **WHAT OUR GRANTS COMMITTEE LOOK FOR IN AN APPLICATION** |
| Application are considered individually by our Grants Committee. In assessing applications, the following issues are taken into consideration: 1. The **NEED** for the activities/projects
* Is there clear evidence of the need for the proposed activities, what is this evidence, how strong is it and where has it come from (i.e. your Station’s CNA)?
* Is there evidence that your project is not the responsibility of the DIO/public purse, and what would happen if your application was unsuccessful
1. What will be the **IMPACT** of the proposed activities?
* Do the proposed activities have a direct, measurable link to at least one of the Fund’s Welfare Outcomes and is it easy to understand the positive change that these activities will bring about?
1. **ORGANISATIONAL CAPACITY**
* Does the RAF station have any experience in delivering the proposed activities and, where funds exceeding £5k been requested, has a clear project plan been provided?
* Is there a history of delivering positive outcomes that align with the Fund’s desired welfare outcomes?
* Has the application adequately considered the need to ensure the ongoing future maintenance of the project and is there evidence provided to support this (i.e. OC SSS signed confirmation from DIO and/or contractor guarantee/s).
1. Does the requested grant represent **VALUE** for money?
* Do the potential outcomes of the proposed activities outweigh the cost of the requested funds?
* If the RAF station/unit has had previous grant funding has it adequately recognised the Fund’s support, and how has it branded the Fund during and post project completion?
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| **TERMINOLOGY** |
| You may notice some terminology in our application, guidelines and outcome report that you are unfamiliar with. You may find the below definitions useful: * **Outputs** – The activities, services and products provided by an organisation, project or programme. *For example, in a programme to provide a Cinelink, outputs might include the number of film nights, or the number of people attending each film showing.*
* **Outcomes** – The changes, benefits or other effects that happen as a result of the activities provided by an organisation, project or programme. *For example, for the same Cinelink project, outcomes might be a measurable increase in the level of social engagement amongst single personnel on Station or a measurable increase in morale.*
* **Impact -** Consider the broader or longer-term effects of a project’s outputs, outcomes and activities. Overall desired impact of the Station Grants programme is to enhance the morale and wellbeing of the Serving RAF community, helping to increase the overall efficiency of the RAF.
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| **RECOGNITION AND BRANDING** |
| It is important to the Fund that as many RAF Serving personnel and their families as possible are aware of the types of support we can provide and, therefore, recognition of grant funding and publicity of the support to RAF station projects is key to this success. In order to assist you with the types of publicity/branding we would expect to see incorporated into the project please see the recommendations outlined below: **Small Grants scheme:**1. The Fund logo to be prominently displayed – all grants
2. Social media interaction – all grants
3. Station magazine feature – grants exceeding £500
4. Before and after photos – grants exceeding £500
5. Overt branding (including mounted plaque acknowledging the Fund’s support) to be displayed in prominent position at project site – the design **must** be agreed with the Fund’s RCM beforehand – grants exceeding £500
6. Invitation to opening/launch event (if applicable) through the Fund’s RCM (who will direct to appropriate representative/s) – grants exceeding £1,000.

**Large Grants scheme:**1. Project Officer to meet with the Fund’s Area Director (AD) and / or Regional Communications Manager (RCM) – **all grants**
2. Before and after photos – **all grants**
3. Overt branding (including mounted plaque acknowledging the Fund’s support) to be displayed in prominent position at project site – the design **must** be agreed with the Fund’s RCM beforehand – **all grants**
4. Social media interaction – **all grants**
5. Station magazine feature – **all grants**
6. Local press article – **grants exceeding £10k**
7. Invitation to opening/launch event (if applicable) through the Fund’s RCM (who will direct to appropriate representative/s) – **all grants**
8. Hosted tour/refreshments with the Station Commander present – **grants exceeding £25k**

**You must liaise with the Fund’s RCM (****Hemma.Gooljar@rafbf.org.uk****) to agree recognition/publicity BEFORE submitting your application. This will enable you to include the detail, as outlined above, including any associated costs to claim from us (which the RCM can advise on during discussion/s).**  |
| **POST GRANT REPORT**  |
| To measure the outcomes, rather than just the outputs resulting from the grants that the Fund has awarded, we ask that all organisations who have been awarded a Large Grant (>£5k) to complete our standardised Post Grant Report. This should be submitted within **12** months of the completion of the project. Please note that this must be received before any further applications can be considered. A copy of the post form can be downloaded from our website: <https://www.rafbf.org/how-we-help/serving-raf/raf-station-grants-programme> |
| **HOW TO APPLY** |
| There are two funding streams available under the RAF Station Grants Programme. To obtain the respective grant application form/s please download the relevant form from our website: <https://www.rafbf.org/how-we-help/serving-raf/raf-station-grants-programme> or request the relevant form from the Fund at: rafstationgrants@rafbf.org.uk * Small Grant Stream (requests up to £5k)
* Large Grant Stream (requests greater than £5k and not more than £35k)

If you are unsure which stream to apply under, please do contact the Fund before applying. **Important:**If you have previously received a grant from the Fund please ensure that you have returned **the Post Grant Completion Report and the mandatory quotations to support your latest application (2 x quotes for grants up to £5k and 3 x quotes for grants exceeding £5k).** You should also include any **supporting documentation** that will contribute to our understanding of your project, e.g. project sustainability plan (Stn Cinema Clubs etc); case studies, architectural plans, photographs of the existing facility, etc. **The Committee meets quarterly for RAF Station Grants under the large grants scheme. We aim to notify decisions within 4 weeks after the meeting.** |
| **TERMS AND CONDITIONS**  |
| **If you are successful in securing grant funding, you will receive a copy of terms and conditions specific to your grant, which must be signed and returned before the grant funding is released.**The Fund relies upon the awareness and strength of its brand to ensure that no member of the RAF Family (whether serving, veteran or dependant family member) will ever face adversity alone. As such, we ask that you promote the wider work of the Fund to members of the RAF Family who use the activities, projects or facilities funded by the Fund. |

