

**Covid-19 response**

We are a small funder working with and for young people, operating primarily across 4 counties in the South of England, with a national footprint via our work on policy, the Listening Fund and youth-led campaigning. Excluding the Listening Fund which is run jointly with other funders, we support about 60 charity partners a year with about £2million in grant funding.

Our immediate (0-3 mths) response to Covid-19 is as follows:

1. **Honour our commitments to existing partners** including those scheduled for repeat funding (years 2 or 3 of our grants) later this year, assuming that they are still going concerns.
2. **Reassure and remind all our partners on the flexibility of our existing grants** and associated conditions. The majority of our funding is already unrestricted, but with very few exceptions any grants that were not *can become so* in order that our partners can use those funds in the best way possible, that meets their current needs. If you are unsure, then please pick up the phone or drop us an email.

Our reporting requirements are already highly flexible and partners can report in the way they see best, but given the current situation we are more than willing to stretch time-lines.

Finally, we are happy to discuss bringing forward scheduled grants to ease cash flow.

1. **Listen to our partners and offer additional support** if helpful in the form of convening around topics where there is particular value in sharing with other charity partners in our region working with young people, sharing resources, or anything else they let us know is useful. At the time of writing 30 of our partners joined a Zoom call yesterday to share knowledge and support strategies for some of the most vulnerable young people. We will feed in what we learn wherever possible to other funders and coordination forums to ensure that the specific concerns of the youth sector at this time are not lost where appropriate as well as making sure what we hear from our partners informs our own strategy and response.
2. **Make new funding available specifically in response to Covid-19**. Unfortunately, we are not big enough to make a significant contribution to any of the pooled funds currently established or in development or to provide additional funding to all our partners. We will however, provide some additional unrestricted funding to existing partners that we believe play a unique and important role in the sector; are providing vital support to some of the most vulnerable young people right now and where it’s clear our funding can make a difference.

We are also exploring **new funding** for policy related issues. We believe that the long-term implications of Covid-19 will be enormous and that the sooner policy makers can start to consider the changes that will be required across society and in particular for young people, the better. The costs of inequality for a younger generation already facing job insecurity and lack of affordable housing pre-Covid-19, now with their education interrupted and a global recession looking likely, means that we cannot afford to fail to support them after the immediate crisis is over and speak clearly to the burdens they face. We will look to support existing partners to expand crucial work in this area, and/or research and think-tanks that can inform analysis as and when appropriate. As always we will look to work with others on this.

N.B. In both the above areas, we are not soliciting applications but will be proactively seeking out partners from amongst those we are already in contact with or directly working with.

1. Finally, **we will put new grants on hold** that don’t fit into the above categories, for at least the next 3 months. If you are a service delivery or other charity that does not already have a relationship with us and that was considering applying to us for your ‘normal’ service delivery or policy influencing work pre-Covid19, then please hold off until later in the year, when the situation will be more certain about your specific delivery plan.
2. **Investment strategy**. Covid-19 struck just as the Blagrave Trust was in the process of implementing its Responsible Investment strategy. This has included our participation in an initiative called the ESG Olympics alongside Friends Provident Foundation and Joffe Charitable Trust to find the best in class ESG fund managers. We are clear that this work is more important than ever and we are committed to continuing to investing all our assets into funds that support a fair and sustainable world, as well as freeing up capital to respond to need where necessary and appropriate.