

# COVID-19 RESPONSE

Bank of Scotland Foundation recognises that coronavirus (Covid-19) will have a huge impact on charities throughout Scotland. In many instances, charities will be even more crucial than ever in providing practical and emotional support and tackling isolation.

The Foundation Trustees and team have met to decide how best to respond to the coronavirus pandemic and also consulted with key stakeholders including charities, other funders and Lloyds Banking Group.

Informed by our discussions, we know that many charities urgently require certainty about funding for the coming year and we have taken the decision to focus all of our efforts on Reach - our community grants programme for the remainder of 2020, which will replace all of our other grants programmes.

Our Reach programme is our most effective and efficient way to reach charities that are most in need at this time and we have broadened the eligibility criteria to enable more charities to apply. To ensure our funding reaches charities as quickly as possible, we have also changed Reach to a rolling monthly programme instead of quarterly, with awards made each month.

By doing so, we hope to bring some stability to charities over the challenging months ahead, to help them meet the immediate and longer term needs of some of Scotland's most vulnerable people.



## Reach Programme

To ensure Reach supports a greater number of charities over the coming months, for the remainder of 2020, Reach will be a **monthly** programme.

The eligibility criteria has also been broadened and charities with an **income of £1.5m or less can now apply for funding between £5,000 - £30,000** over one year.

The first three tranches of Reach are detailed below:

Open for applications	Deadline for applications	Awards made
12 noon Mon 11 May	12 noon Wed 20 May	Mid-June
12 noon Mon 8 June	12 noon Wed 17 June	Mid-July
12 noon Mon 6 July	12 noon Wed 15 July	Mid-August

## Current applications

We are conscious that the world has changed dramatically since charities applied for our March Invest and April Reach programmes. Both programmes are being assessed in the normal way and we will work with successful applicants, considering alternative options should they no longer be able to use the funding for their original grant purpose within the required timeframes.

## Contingency Awards

We contacted our current grantees (91 charities) on 17 March to reassure them that we would do whatever we can to support them in the coming weeks and months during these exceptional and difficult times, including flexibility with grant repurposing and reporting deadlines. Since then, the crisis has deepened and in response to the increasing financial challenges that charities are facing we established a Contingency Fund for our current grantees.

Through the Fund, all 91 charities have been offered a contingency award of 20% of their current grant value to enable them to continue to carry out the original purpose of their grant and if this is not possible, they may accept the Foundation's offer as a contribution to their general costs, as long as the charity can use the funding effectively and efficiently within 6 months.

The response from our charities to our Contingency Fund has been truly humbling. Many have indicated that our funding will enable them to continue to support the immediate needs of their service users whilst others have said it will allow them to plan for the key recovery and rebuild phases that will follow. We will continue to work closely with these charities throughout the duration of their grant.



News Flash

For the remainder of 2020, Reach will be a **monthly** programme

Advise and Change programmes for 2020 are **deferred until 2021**

## Enhance - Charity Mentoring Programme

Our Charity Mentoring Programme is continuing to operate, offering Foundation funded charities support, direction, advice and motivation through a colleague mentor from Banking Group.

We fully understand that this is a time of uncertainty for many charities, so it is important that we can continue to offer this extra strategic support and help them maintain or rebuild their services. All mentoring is currently taking place remotely, until restrictions are removed.

## Matched Giving

Our Matched Giving Programme encourages Lloyds Banking Group colleagues in Scotland to become involved in the voluntary sector by fundraising or volunteering for a charity that is close to their hearts.

We continue to match every pound Lloyds Banking Group colleagues raise, or donate £8 per hour of voluntary time given, to a maximum of £500 for eligible fundraising and/or £500 for eligible voluntary time given.

Lloyds Banking Group colleagues are finding innovative ways of fundraising and volunteering for charities during these difficult times and our Matched Giving Programme provides a valuable source of additional income.

## A word from our Chair



I would like to say a huge thank you to all the charities and volunteers who are endeavouring to support their communities during these exceptional and difficult times.

We're hearing of many charities finding wonderful ways of adapting their work and continuing to provide their critical support and services; from holding vital counselling sessions over the phone

instead of face to face, to delivering food packages to the vulnerable, instead of running weekly lunch clubs.

We also know from speaking to some of the charities we fund, that they are facing increased demands for their services at the same time as income is reduced and that many of these services are now threatened.

Through our revised Reach programme, we aim to help as many of Scotland's charities as possible through this unprecedented situation and for the first time, we will be making monthly Reach grants to ensure our funding reaches charities as quickly as possible.

I must take the opportunity to thank the Trustees and the Foundation team for their own resilience during these challenging times and for continuing to put the interests of Scotland's charities at the heart of our decision making - I am immensely proud of all that they are doing.

From everyone at Bank of Scotland Foundation, we hope that you stay safe and well.

**Philip Grant**, Chair

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