

## Terms of Reference for Grant Programme Panel members

### Purpose of the Grant Panel

- The primary role of the Grant Panel is to ensure that the aims of this grants programme will be delivered. The panel will consider the eligible applications and decide who to fund. They should award grants that meet the criteria of the grant programme, address the greatest need and will make the greatest impact.
- The grant panel has been put together to offer objective assessment on applications submitted to a specific grants programme in an open and transparent manner. All the application forms will have been assessed by Quartet staff prior to grant panel meetings, and the panel's expertise and recommendations will be sought to help get the best outcomes.
- Panel membership has been designed to bring key knowledge and expertise (including needs, gaps and existing provision) to bear on grant decisions as well as representation from specific areas dependent on the grants programme. Panel members will be expected to make recommendations in a transparent and fair manner.
- Quartet's trustees are ultimately responsible for decisions regarding funding, but they will be guided by the advice and recommendations of the grant programme panel.

### Grant panel responsibilities:

- Prepare for each panel meeting by reading and considering the application assessments provided by Quartet
- Attend and participate in all scheduled panel meetings, or send apologies on occasions where this is not possible
- Ensure that comments, opinions and decisions are made on the basis of objective assessment and respect for all groups and individuals.
- To determine priorities for the grants programme, as well as identifying local needs and gaps in existing or planned provision
- To keep the priorities of the programme under review
- To ensure that both the grant application process and decision making are open, fair and transparent
- To provide constructive feedback on applications that are not successful
- To treat all information always received as a panel member as confidential. Panel members must not disclose any sensitive information relating to panel discussions, donors or grant recipients, to anyone outside the panel.
- To not disclose the outcomes of funding meetings prior to applicants being informed of the funding decision
- To declare any potential conflicts of interest – see conflict of interest policy below. The Chair will ask panel members to declare conflicts of interest before any discussions take place. This information will be recorded and kept with the notes of the meeting
- The panel will review its own performance, membership, terms of reference and processes at least once per year.

## **Declaration of Interests Policy**

- A conflict of interest arises in circumstances where the panel member, close friends or family members, have a direct financial or personal interest in the outcome of a funding decision, or where the panel member has been closely involved in preparing the application. Such conflicts may create problems as they can:
  - Inhibit free discussion
  - Result in decisions or actions that are not in the interests of the panel
  - Risk the impression that the group has acted improperly
  - Result in a biased recommendation
- The aim of this policy is to protect both the organisation and the individuals involved from any appearance of impropriety. Each member of the panel should declare any interests they or family members have that might impact on the work of the panel. This would include their employment, directorships, membership of organisations or appointments on governing bodies.
- It is the responsibility of each panel member to declare an interest at the beginning of each meeting. In the event of a declaration being made, the chair will decide on the appropriate action i.e. the panel member be removed from discussion about the application/s. Failure to declare a relevant interest may result in the member being removed from the panel.

## **Complaints and appeals**

- The panel will not hear appeals.
- Complaints are directed to Quartet Community Foundation. An acknowledgement of the complaint is made within 2 working days and an appropriate response is issued within 21 working days.