

Maddy's Mark Grant Assessment Policy

Approved by Trustees & Advisory Board: [DD Month YYYY]

Review date: [DD Month YYYY]

This policy sets out how Maddy's Mark ("the Charity") will award grants to organisations and/or individuals in furtherance of the Charity's objects. It is intended to ensure that grant-making is consistent, transparent, fair, and compliant with charity law in England and Wales.

1. Purpose

- To define how the Charity awards grants and how decisions are made.
- To protect the Charity's funds and reputation through proportionate due diligence and monitoring.
- To ensure grants further the Charity's objects and provide public benefit.
- To ensure the Charity meets relevant legal and regulatory requirements (including Charity Commission guidance, safeguarding expectations, and anti-fraud measures).

2. Scope

This policy applies to all grants made by the Charity, regardless of size, including restricted and unrestricted grants, and whether awarded to organisations or individuals. It applies to trustees, staff, and volunteers involved in promoting, assessing, approving, administering, or monitoring grants.

3. Definitions

- **Grant:** A transfer of money (or goods/services in kind) to support a defined charitable purpose, without expecting material benefit in return.
- **Grantee:** The organisation or individual receiving a grant.
- **Restricted grant:** Funding that must be used for a specified purpose.

- **Unrestricted grant:** Funding that may be used at the grantee's discretion for its charitable purposes (subject to any agreed conditions).
- **Conflict of interest:** A situation where a person's personal interests, loyalties, or duties could influence, or be perceived to influence, their decision-making for the Charity.

4. Grant-making principles

- **Alignment:** Grants must further the Charity's objects and be consistent with its strategy.
- **Public benefit:** Grants must deliver clear charitable benefit to the intended beneficiaries.
- **Fairness and transparency:** Criteria and processes will be applied consistently, with clear records kept.
- **Proportionality:** The level of due diligence, conditions, and monitoring will be proportionate to the size, risk, and complexity of the grant.
- **Independence:** Funding decisions are made independently and free from undue influence.
- **Conflict of interest:** No conflict of interest identified.
- **Safeguarding and safety:** The Charity will prioritise safeguarding and safe delivery for beneficiaries.
- **Value for money:** The Charity will consider cost effectiveness and the likely impact of the grant.

5. Roles and responsibilities

- **Directors:** Have overall responsibility for grant-making, ensuring decisions are in the Charity's best interests, compliant with the governing document and law, and properly recorded.
- **Chair:** Supports timely decision-making and ensures conflicts are managed.
- **Grants Lead (staff/volunteer, if appointed):** Manages the application process, coordinates assessments and due diligence, maintains records, and oversees grant agreements and monitoring.

- **Assessors/Panel (if used):** Review applications against the published criteria and provide recommendations to trustees.
- **Treasurer/Finance role:** Oversees financial controls, payment approvals, and ensures funds are available and correctly accounted for

6. Funding priorities, eligibility and exclusions

6.1 Funding priorities

The Charity will publish its current grant priorities (including any geographic focus, beneficiary groups, and preferred types of activity) and may update them from time to time. Where priorities are not published, trustees will record how each grant aligns with the Charity's objects and current strategy.

6.2 Who can apply

- **Organisations:** Charities, community groups, schools, statutory bodies, or social enterprises may be eligible where the proposed activity delivers charitable benefit and appropriate controls are in place.
- **Individuals:** Individuals may be eligible where the Charity's objects permit and where the Charity can apply appropriate safeguards (e.g., payments to suppliers, evidence of need, and clear conditions).
- Applicants must be able to demonstrate the need for funding, capacity to deliver, and an ability to provide monitoring information.

6.3 Exclusions (not normally funded)

- Activities that do not further the Charity's objects or provide clear public benefit.
- Party political activity or support for political parties/candidates.
- Activities that promote discrimination, hatred, or unlawful behaviour.

- Retrospective funding for costs already incurred, unless trustees explicitly agree and record reasons.
- Personal gifts, loans, or benefits to trustees, staff, volunteers, or connected persons (unless expressly permitted by the Charity's governing document and managed under a robust conflict of interest process).
- General fundraising appeals where the Charity cannot identify the intended charitable use and monitoring.

7. Application and assessment process

7.1 Applications

Applications should be made using the Charity's application form (or an agreed written format) and must include: the purpose and amount requested; a budget; delivery plan and timescales; intended beneficiaries; risks and safeguarding considerations; and how the applicant will report on progress and outcomes.

7.2 Assessment Criteria

Applications will be assessed using the *Maddy's Mark Grant Scored Assessment Framework*. Funding decisions will be based on the extent to which a proposal demonstrates:

- Alignment with the Charity's mission, objects and priorities.
- Potential impact on beneficiaries, including the scale and significance of the expected outcomes.
 - Evidence of need, demonstrating a clear understanding of the issue being addressed and why the proposed intervention is required.
 - Deliverability and governance, including the applicant's capacity, experience, safeguarding arrangements, and ability to successfully manage and deliver the project.
 - Value for money, with a realistic budget that demonstrates effective use of grant funds to achieve meaningful outcomes.
- In addition to the scored assessment, the Trustees will apply "The Maddy Test" when considering applications:

"If Maddy were hearing this story, would she be proud that this is where her fund is making a difference?"

Trustees may also take into account the applicant's approach to monitoring and reporting outcomes, management of risks, and, where relevant, evidence of sustainability or additional funding secured beyond the grant period.

8. Due diligence and safeguarding.

8.1 Proportionate checks

Before awarding a grant, the Charity will carry out proportionate checks based on the amount and risk. This may include verifying the applicant's legal status; reviewing accounts/bank statements; confirming the bank account name matches the applicant; reviewing relevant policies (e.g., safeguarding, health and safety, data protection); and seeking references where appropriate.

8.2 Safeguarding

Where a grant supports activities involving children or adults at risk, the Charity will ensure the applicant has appropriate safeguarding policies and practices in place. The Charity may require named safeguarding leads, confirmation of relevant training, and clarity on how concerns will be reported and managed. The Charity may decline funding where safeguarding arrangements are inadequate or unclear.

9. Decision-making and delegated authority

All grant decisions must be properly recorded (including rationale, any conditions, and any conflicts of interest). Decisions will normally be made at a quorate trustees' meeting, unless delegated under section 9.1.

9.1 Delegated authority

To enable timely decisions, trustees may delegate authority within agreed limits. Unless trustees adopt different limits, the following applies

Value / type	Who can approve	Conditions
Up to £5,000	Any two Directors (one to be Chair or Treasurer)	Must meet published criteria; decision recorded and reported to next trustees' meeting.
£5,000+ to £15,000	Minimum 2 Directors and 3 members of Advisory Board	Quorum and conflicts rules apply; recommendation/decision recorded.

Over £15,000 and/or novel/high-risk grants	Minimum 2 Directors and Full meeting of Advisory Board	Decision at quorate meeting (or written resolution if permitted by the governing document). recommendation/decision recorded.
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10. Conflicts of interest

All trustees and anyone involved in grant assessment must declare actual or potential conflicts of interest as soon as they arise. Conflicted individuals must not participate in assessment or decision-making for the relevant application, and they must not be counted towards quorum. The Charity will follow its Conflicts of Interest Policy (or, if none exists, Charity Commission guidance) and keep an up-to-date register of interests.

11. Grant agreements and payments

11.1 Grant agreement

For all grants, the Charity will set out the agreed terms in writing (email may be sufficient for small, low-risk grants). For grants over £5,000, a formal Service Level Agreement (SLA) will be used. Agreements will typically cover purpose; amount; payment schedule; reporting requirements; permitted and non-permitted use; safeguarding requirements; data handling; publicity/recognition; and suspension/repayment rights.

11.2 Payments

- Payments will be made only to an account in the grantee's name (or, for individual grants, as agreed with appropriate safeguards such as paying suppliers directly).
- The Charity may pay grants in instalments, linked to delivery and reporting.
- At least two authorised people should approve grant payments in line with the Charity's financial controls.

12. Monitoring, evaluation and reporting

The Charity will monitor grants in a manner proportionate to value and risk. Monitoring may include written updates, copies of receipts/invoices, outcome reports, or meetings/visits. The Charity will set reporting milestones in the grant

agreement and may withhold or suspend payments where reporting is overdue or concerns arise.

13. Fraud, misuse of funds, suspension and repayment

The Charity may suspend a grant, stop payments, or seek repayment where funds are not used for the agreed purpose, where there is material breach of conditions, fraud, significant safeguarding concerns, or where continuing the grant would expose the Charity to undue risk. Any decision to seek repayment will be recorded with reasons and, where appropriate, legal advice will be considered.

14. Data protection and confidentiality

The Charity will handle personal data in accordance with UK data protection law. The Charity will only collect information needed to assess and administer grants, will keep it secure, and will retain it only as long as necessary. Applicants should not share unnecessary sensitive personal data; where it is needed (e.g., for individual grants), additional safeguards will be applied.

15. Equality, diversity and inclusion

The Charity aims to make grant-making accessible and fair. Decisions will be based on the published criteria and the merits of each application. The Charity will consider reasonable adjustments to enable access to the application process where needed.

16. Communications, publicity and recognition

The Charity may publicise grants awarded (for example, on its website or annual report), unless there are confidentiality or safeguarding reasons not to do so. Grantees must obtain the Charity's consent before using the Charity's name or logo in publicity.

17. Record-keeping and retention

The Charity will keep sufficient records to evidence: application details; assessment; due diligence; decision and rationale; grant agreement; payments; and monitoring. Records will be retained in line with the Charity's retention practices and any statutory requirements.

18. Review and approval

This policy is approved by the Trustees and the Maddy's Mark Advisory Board and will be reviewed at least every 12 months, or sooner if there are material changes to the Charity's activities, risks, or relevant guidance.

Approved by the Board of Trustees of Maddys Mark

Name: _____ (Chair)

Signed: _____ (Chair)

Date: _____