



ACFA HARDSHIP RELIEF FUND – GUIDELINES FOR JANUARY TO MARCH 2021

BACKGROUND:

The Army Cadet Force Association established an **ACFA Hardship Relief Fund** in April 2020 in response to the first national COVID-19 lockdown. The fund's purpose was to provide immediate short-term assistance to those ACF uniformed or non-uniformed volunteers, irrespective of rank, who were in a position of financial hardship as a result of the lockdown.

The ACFA recognises that since then 2020 has continued to be a difficult year for many and that some ACF adult volunteers are still struggling financially as a result of COVID-19's impact on the UK. The Trustees of the Association have therefore decided, in accordance with the Association's charitable objectives, to establish a second **ACFA Hardship Relief Fund**.

The fund's purpose is to help ACF uniformed or non-uniformed volunteers, irrespective of rank, get through this difficult time. We aim to aid you in continuing your volunteering once life is back on an even keel.

AIM:

Provide immediate short-term assistance to those ACF CFAVs who are in a position of financial hardship as a result of COVID-19 lockdown and further subsequent restrictions.

FUNDING:

Trustees have allocated £190,000 the second **ACFA Hardship Relief Fund**.

Those eligible will be able to apply for grants to replace lost income. We would typically look to give grants in the £250 to £750 range, but will consider grants up to a maximum of £2,000.

The funds available are limited and will be directed to those in the greatest need, assessed based on pre-set criteria.

APPLICATION PROCESS:

The fund is open immediately and ACFA's trustees will consider applications twice over the next three months. Given the urgent nature of this support, the application deadlines will be:

- First round: 23:59hrs – Sunday 24 January 2021
- Second round: 23:59hrs – Sunday 28 February 2021

Applications should be made confidentially and directly to the ACFA (**your application form should NOT go through your Chain of Command**).

The applications will be assessed by selection committees formed of ACFA regional trustees. The information presented to trustees will be anonymised by the ACFA Grants Team so that trustees are not able to identify applicants. Additionally, these selection committees will be organised in such a way that trustees will not review applications from their own regions.



Applications must be made using the **ACFA Hardship Relief Fund** application form and all parts of the application form **MUST** be completed in full. Please ensure that you are using the correct application form (VERSION 1 2021).

Applications should be submitted by email to grants@armycadets.com.

If you are unable to access the application form, it is also possible to complete your application by telephone interview. To do this please call 020 7426 8371.

ELIGIBILITY:

To be eligible for a grant you will need to be able to answer the following four questions positively:

- a. Have you been an ACF CFAV for at least 6 months?
- b. Have you attended an ACF activity in the six months before ACF activity was suspended on 17th March 2020?
- c. Have you been financially impacted by COVID-19?
- d. Do you consider you are in a position of financial hardship?

Please note:

CFAV means any uniformed or non-uniformed volunteer, irrespective of rank.

CFAVs that were awarded an ACFA Hardship Grant in the past are eligible to apply again.

Applicants will be asked to state that receipt of a grant would help them to return to service as an Army Cadet Force volunteer in the foreseeable future.

Applicants with family savings in excess of £3k will not normally be considered without strong justification.

The Association may require additional evidence of hardship, including, for example, further financial information to verify and substantiate applications.

CRITERIA:

For applications to be successful you must provide detailed financial information demonstrating that you are in a position of hardship, e.g. loss of personal and/or household income.

Financial support will be given to offset the following outgoings;

- Rent or Mortgage;
- Household Utilities (water, gas and electricity); and
- Groceries.

Applications for specific other costs (e.g. fuel, travel costs) may still be considered but you will be asked to provide further information to support your application.



Financial support will **NOT** be given to offset the following outgoings;

- Loss of Volunteer Allowance (VA);
- Existing debt (credit cards, loans etc);
- Council Tax (monthly bill, arrears etc);
- Monthly subscriptions (media platforms, memberships etc);
- Telephone (including mobile phones) and WIFI costs; and
- Insurance costs.

Applications for financial support must be in proportion to the loss of income e.g. if your current loss of household income is £300, a request of £350 would not normally be considered reasonable. If there is a very clear and compelling reason why costs have risen significantly in excess of normal or reduced income this must be very clearly explained. Grants for more than your loss of income will not normally be awarded.

Please note:

If a household contains more than one eligible CFAV a joint application can be submitted. If individual applications are submitted this **MUST** be clearly explained **EACH** application form.

Applications can be made to financially support each household for **up to three months**, the period of which must be clearly noted within the application form e.g. January to March 2021.

Individuals may apply to the ACFA Hardship Relief Fund once in each grant round, if a second application is submitted the time period of financial support **MUST** be different.

AWARD PROCESS:

When we receive your application, we will first check whether it is eligible. If your application is not eligible, this means that we cannot process it any further. We will write to you to let you know this and will explain our decision.

Applicants will be informed of the outcome of their application within one month of the application deadline. If you are awarded funding the payment will then be made as soon as possible into the bank account stated in your application.

If we decide not to award you a grant, we will write to you to let you know and will explain our decision. You will be able to apply again if there are further rounds, but any new application must address the reasons that the original application was not successful. We will not be able to consider any reapplications that have not addressed this.

PLEASE CONTACT US:

If you need any advice or support in making your application please contact: Faye Meakin, Grants Manager 075391 82224 or Lara Henwood, Grants Officer 020 7426 8371, or email grants@armycadets.com. Please note that the office will be closed for a period over Christmas. Leave a message with your telephone number and we will contact you once the office reopens.