



Grants to Charities and Organisations

# Wheelchair Sector Grant Programme

Guidance for Applicants

## Introduction to the Motability Foundation

At the Motability Foundation we fund, support, research and innovate to help all disabled people make the journeys they choose.

In 2022 we launched six new grant programmes to provide even more support to other charities and organisations in areas where our research and insight has shown opportunities to have the greatest impact for disabled people.

We are using £50million of the donation we received in 2021 to expand our support for charities and other organisations during the next financial years ending March 2025.

Our grant programmes have been designed to provide even more support to other charities and organisations that provide different types of transport, or work towards making transport accessible.

They help to address the challenges that disabled people face accessing transport right now, while we continue our own research and innovation work into longer-term solutions to make all transport accessible.

For more information about our grant programmes, visit our [website](#).

## About this programme

Through this grant programme we hope to help charities and organisations to make an immediate impact for disabled people by awarding funding to improve and expand their access to good quality, affordable wheelchairs.

Through an extensive programme of research and engagement the Motability Foundation has identified three Routes to Impact in the Wheelchair sector which we are seeking to support with grant funding. The framework on page 3 identifies these **Routes to Impact**, and outlines how improvements in these areas can benefit disabled people.

# Wheelchair Sector Grant Programme Routes to Impact

| Problem statement            | Insufficient funding, supply and varying standards across NHS services has meant that supplying an appropriate wheelchair to suit the needs of the user is delayed, limited or often not possible leading to limited access and opportunities for wheelchair users. |   |  |
|------------------------------|---|---|--|
| Routes to Impact             | Meeting needs of beneficiaries  | New or improved solutions   | Improved services for disabled people  |
| <b>Challenges</b>            | Allowance for suitable equipment and maintenance are not sufficient or wheelchair users are not eligible but require financial support. Assessments of needs take too long.   | Suitable equipment does not exist or is difficult to source at an affordable cost and reasonable timeframe.   | Limited understanding among those providing wheelchair services of the challenges for users to obtain suitable equipment.          |
| <b>Inputs</b>                | Grant funding towards organisations providing financial assistance and support to grantees to assess needs, source and maintain good quality equipment.   | Funding organisations to scale up and share best practice interventions or to develop new initiatives.  | Funding initiatives to influence wheelchair service provision and research challenges/issues further.                              |
| <b>Example outputs</b>       | Increased funding is available for wheelchair users to ensure they can source and maintain good quality and affordable equipment that meets their disability needs and has the potential to improve their quality of life.  | Partnerships/collaborations facilitated. Organisations share and scale up best practice and continue to develop/innovate.                                   | Organisations raise awareness of the challenges facing wheelchair users to obtain suitable, affordable and good quality equipment. |
| <b>Intermediate outcomes</b> | Wheelchair users are able to use a wheelchair that meets their disability needs.  | Knowledge sharing products/platforms created. Improved standards and quality assurance system in place. New services/products developed or scaled up.       | Increased awareness of challenges facing wheelchair users among various actors/sectors.  |
| <b>Outcome</b>               | Improved quality of life, reduced disadvantage resulting from access barriers.  | Organisations replicate best practice and standards to improve their services and interventions. More intervention and innovation in the wheelchair market. | Government and NHS are influenced to better design services for wheelchair provision.  |

## Impact



The above diagram explains the Motability Foundation's key outcomes of the Wheelchair Sector Grant Programme. For further details about the impact we want to achieve for disabled people please see below.

We believe that targeted support in these areas has the greatest chance of delivering meaningful change for disabled people, and supporting the Motability Foundation's key outcomes of:

- **Access** – Increased ability to access people and places using transport.
- **Choice and Control** – Improved independence and control to make decisions.
- **Connect** – Increased social connections and relationships.
- **Education** – Increased ability to access education and training.
- **Work** – Increased ability to work and pursue a career.
- **Wellbeing** – Improved sense of health and wellbeing.

These Routes to Impact have been developed following an extensive programme of research and stakeholder engagement across the sector. Grant-funding available through this programme will focus on these areas. If you are considering submitting an application for funding that seeks to deliver impact in other ways then it is unlikely to be supported.

If you have any questions then please contact a member of the team by emailing [GrantsToOrganisations@motabilityfoundation.org.uk](mailto:GrantsToOrganisations@motabilityfoundation.org.uk)



# What funding is available?



The Motability Foundation is awarding £50 million in Grants to Charities and Organisations during the next financial years ending March 2025. A portion of this has been allocated to the Wheelchair Sector Grant Programme.

## Grant Value

- Minimum - £100,000
- Maximum - £4,000,000

## Grant length

- You can apply for one, two or three years' funding in any year of the programme. For example, you could apply for £102,000 in total over three years, which would be £34,000 per annum.

We are pleased to say that the final payment date can be beyond 31 March 2025 this can be split over one, two or three years and can be applied for in any year of the programme.

## What can be funded?

- Continuation funding for schemes, programmes and initiatives that already exist, and who provide best practice solutions, but need further support to remain operational or scale up the service they can provide to help more disabled people.
- Staff or volunteer training and costs.
- Funding to increase the number of vehicles available in the community to help organisations support disabled people.
- Full cost recovery grants which includes indirect costs.
- Local, regional, or national initiatives to increase awareness of wheelchair service provision and research challenges/issues further.

## Priority will be given to organisations who:

- Are meeting the second route to impact listed on page 3; new and improved solutions.
- Have well-established ways of working that make a demonstrable difference to the lives of disabled people.
- Are making both an immediate and longer term impact on the lives of disabled people.
- Can demonstrate that their application takes into account the views and needs of their beneficiaries and that they will continue to be involved during the delivery of the work.

# Who can apply?



The Motability Foundation wants to support medium or large charities and organisations with well-established ways of working.

## We ask that Applicant organisations meet the following criteria:

- You are a registered charity or an incorporated not-for-profit organisation identified as being able to deliver impact for disabled people and their transportation needs. This includes incorporated charities, companies limited by guarantee, community benefit societies, or CICs. If your organisation is a different structure outside of those listed here then please contact us before applying.
- You have been active for at least three years.
- You have had an annual income of at least £150,000 per annum over the last three years.
- You hold free reserves equivalent to at least three months of operating costs. Please contact us before applying if you do not hold three months of free reserves. The Motability Foundation will not generally award a Grant to Charities or Organisations holding more than 12 months of operating expenditure in reserves.



# What cannot be funded?



While we aim to support as wide a range of applications as possible within this space, there are some things we are not able to award grant-funding for. These include:

- Grants to statutory bodies, hospitals, or health authorities. Grants are also not available to charities and organisations based, or solely working outside of the UK.
- Grants to political pressure groups, or organisations primarily engaged in political activity.
- Grants to projects or services that proselytise a specific ethical or religious belief, and/or charities and organisations that exclude individuals that do not hold a specific ethical or religious belief.
- Construction projects and/or building works.
- Social investment or venture philanthropy.
- Retrospective funding of services or activities.
- Sponsorship for any individual, group, or company.
- Overseas travel.
- Medical care or medical research.
- Applications for activities or services unrelated to transport for disabled people cannot be supported by the Motability Foundation.



# How do we assess applications?



The Motability Foundation has a two-stage application process for all Grants to Charities and Organisations.

Our application process is designed to minimise the effort of applying for grant-funding as much as possible, while ensuring that we gather the information we need to make an informed decision.

Once Stage 1 applications are submitted we carry out a number of checks on your application. Further information on this process can be found as part of the **Checks We Carry Out on your application** guidance document published on our Grant Programme website page.

## Decision Timeframe



We aim to respond to all Stage One applications within eight weeks.

A member of our Grants to Charities and Organisations Grant Team will be in touch to inform you about the outcome, and if appropriate issue you with the Stage Two Application form. These will ask you to expand on the information provided as part of Stage One, and include requests for additional documentation.

Depending on the size and nature of your application, we may contact you to gather further information, or even to request a visit to your premises. We are keen to work closely with grant applicants to work out how we can best support their needs.

The time taken to assess an application will vary depending on the amount of funding requested. All decisions to award grant-funding are made by dedicated sub-committees, and your application will be tabled at the next available opportunity once checks have been completed. Applications for grant-funding of less than £1 million are assessed by a panel that meets on a monthly basis. Applications for grant-funding of more than £1 million are assessed by a panel that meets quarterly.

Once your Stage Two application is received, a member of our Grants to Charities and Organisations Team will be in touch to let you know when your application is likely to be assessed.



# How to apply



Our Stage One Application form can be found on the Motability Foundation Wheelchair Sector Grants Programme website page. The form includes a checklist of our qualification criteria, please ensure that you meet these before submitting your application.

All applications to this programme must be for funding that relates to Wheelchair Sector and supporting the transport needs of disabled people.

Please send all completed applications, accompanied by the requested supporting documentation, to [GrantsToOrganisations@motabilityfoundation.org.uk](mailto:GrantsToOrganisations@motabilityfoundation.org.uk)

If you have any questions about the application process, or about the programme more widely, please get in touch using our online form on the Motability Foundation Wheelchair Sector Grant Programme website page.

## If you receive a grant

When the Motability Foundation contacts you to let you know that your application has been successful, we will also include a copy of our Standard Grant Agreement for signature. The terms of this agreement can be found on the Motability Foundation Wheelchair Sector Grant Programme website page. Please consider whether you are able to comply with these general terms before applying for a grant, as the Motability Foundation is unable to vary them on a per-grant basis.

As part of your Stage Two application, we will have worked with you to establish a standard set of measures against which we can monitor the grant, and a schedule for reporting back. We want to make the monitoring process as straightforward as possible for all grantees, while also ensuring we collect enough information about the difference you are making for disabled people.

## Reapplication

We ask charities and organisations that have not been successful with their applications to not reapply for a period of three months from the date of our decision. This is to provide you with an opportunity to consider our feedback, and to minimise the potential for wasted resource on all sides.

When thinking about reapplying, you should carefully consider the feedback we provided about why you were not successful this time. It is very unlikely that our decision will be different if you have not made any changes to your application, your charity or organisation.

The Motability Foundation will not generally award concurrent grants to a single organisation. If you are already in receipt of a grant, and believe you can further support the transport needs of disabled people, then please contact the Grant Manager that handled your initial application.



## GrantsToOrganisations @motabilityfoundation.org.uk

More information on Wheelchair Sector Grants  
can be found [here](#)

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[motabilityfoundation.org.uk](https://www.motabilityfoundation.org.uk)

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