

STRATEGIC LEGAL FUND FOR VULNERABLE YOUNG MIGRANTS

Funding Guidelines 2015 - 2016



Amended October 2015

Contents

- 1 About the Strategic Legal Fund
- 2 About the SLF Partners
- 3 What the SLF will fund
- 5 Funding available
- 6 Application Criteria & Exclusions
- 7 How to apply
- 9 What happens next?
- 10 Complaints

About the Strategic Legal Fund

The Strategic Legal Fund for Vulnerable Young Migrants (SLF) is a fund to support legal work that goes beyond securing justice for an individual and makes a significant contribution to law, practice and procedures to uphold and promote the rights of vulnerable migrant children and young people more generally.

The SLF aims to tackle injustices and inconsistencies in law and practice that disadvantage or discriminate against vulnerable young migrants as a result of their migration status.

The SLF uses the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) as a framework for its work with both children and young people.

It aims to advance the general principles of the UNCRC as follows:

- The right to life, survival and development.
- The right to non-discrimination.
- Respect for the views of children.
- The requirement to give primary consideration to the child's best interests in all matters affecting them.

About the SLF Partners

Trust for London is an independent charitable foundation tackling poverty and inequality in London. It has a long history of funding work to overcome the additional barriers faced by migrants living in poverty. It provides part-funding for the SLF, contracts with MigrationWork, and makes decisions about the SLF's strategic direction and individual grant applications. www.trustforlondon.org.uk

Esmée Fairbairn Foundation is one of the largest independent grant-makers in the UK. It makes grants towards a wide range of work within the arts, education and learning, the environment, and social change. It provides part-funding for the SLF, and is part of the management group overseeing the delivery and strategic direction of the SLF. www.esmeefairbairn.org.uk

Unbound Philanthropy is a private grant-making foundation dedicated to ensuring that migrants, refugees, and their families are treated with respect and dignity and are able to contribute fully in their new communities. It provides part-funding for the running costs of the SLF and is part of the management group. www.unboundphilanthropy.org

MigrationWork is a Community Interest Company set up to help communities, practitioners and policy-makers to respond to migration in ways that ensure both migrant and 'host' communities can benefit and move towards integration. It undertakes the day-to-day delivery of the SLF, including grants management, publicity, servicing the expert panel, and provides strategic advice. www.migrationwork.org

Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust is a Quaker trust which seeks to transform the world by supporting people who address the root causes of conflict and injustice. It funds work to promote human rights, racial justice, democratic and corporate accountability and challenges militarism as well as developing sustainable alternatives to climate change. It provides part-funding for the SLF and is part of the management group. www.jrct.org.uk

Paul Hamlyn Foundation is one of the larger independent grant-making foundations in the UK. Its mission is to help people overcome disadvantage and lack of opportunity, so that they can realise their potential and enjoy fulfilling and creative lives. It has a particular interest in supporting young people and a strong belief in the importance of the arts. It provides part-funding for the SLF and is part of the management group. www.phf.org.uk

The **Expert Panel** comprises legal practitioners and policy specialists with expertise in areas of law relevant to vulnerable young migrants. It makes recommendations to the funders about individual grant applications and advises on the strategic direction of the SLF. A list of current Panel members is at www.strategiclegalfund.org.uk

What the SLF will fund

Beneficiaries

The SLF supports strategic legal work which benefits vulnerable young migrants living in the UK. We define this as:

- Migrants or the children of migrants,
- Who are under 25,
- Who are living in poverty, and
- Who face significant disadvantage or discrimination in connection with their (or their parents') migration status.

Areas of Law

The SLF funds strategic legal work in any area of law where vulnerable young migrants experience disadvantage or discrimination as a result of migration status.

This includes (but is not restricted to) potential cases in the areas of:

- Immigration
- Asylum and asylum support
- Human rights
- Education
- Housing
- Welfare benefits
- Discrimination
- Access to justice
- Community care

We do not usually fund work involving issues of criminal or family law unless they also involve one of the above issues.

The SLF may from time to time issue calls for applications in certain areas of law, or on particular points of law, which will then be given priority. Information about calls will be publicised on the SLF website.

Types of activity

The SLF only supports strategic legal work. We define this as work where the impact is likely to go beyond an individual case, and to result in changes to law, policy and practice that will benefit a wider group of people.

Applications must be to fund one of two kinds of strategic legal work:

- the research and development of cases pre-litigation including: gathering evidence to test a hypothesis or research to establish authorities' policy and practice, identifying potential plaintiffs/applicants/appellants; researching whether to proceed; translating relevant material; and evaluating a litigation strategy. The SLF cannot be used to fund the costs of conducting litigation, it is limited to pre-litigation work only. A small proportion of an application may be used for advice, and for representation in the First Tier and Upper Tribunals where no other funding is available and where this is necessary to develop a strategic legal challenge.

- third party interventions in existing cases, which allow a non-party intervener to assist the court in arriving in its decision in a case, acting as an *amicus curiae*, a friend of the court.

Please note that the SLF only funds research that is tied to the possible future taking of legal cases. It does not fund general research or campaigning work. See page 7 for application criteria and exclusions.

We recognise that some research and interventions may not lead to the desired legal outcome, but we will only make a grant where we believe that those undertaking the work have sufficient expertise and experience to maximise the chances of success.

We fund research and interventions that are likely to benefit migrants who fit the definition above. Some research and interventions may have a wider or even different focus, and we do consider funding these, but only if we are convinced that the outcome will substantially benefit vulnerable young migrants.

Who we will fund

Those eligible to apply to the SLF are organisations based in the UK which are:

- **Not-for-profit (NFP) organisations** that provide specialist level legal advice to vulnerable young migrants. If you work for a NFP organisation regulated by the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC) and are applying to undertake work in the asylum or immigration field, you must confirm that staff leading on the proposed work are accredited at Level 3, Advocacy and Representation, in the relevant category of law.
- **Firms of solicitors** that provide specialist level legal advice to vulnerable young migrants. Solicitors' firms need to demonstrate that the funded work does not include any element of profit and, as for all applicants, that there is a pro bono element included.

All applicants must demonstrate that staff have appropriate skills, experience and expertise to undertake the strategic legal work proposed. All applicants are asked to provide supporting documents with their application, for example annual accounts, governing documents, or other financial information.

The SLF welcomes applications from specialist legal representatives working in partnership with voluntary and community groups, who may be able to assist with research, gathering evidence and identifying clients. This type of application should be made by the legal representative with the other organisation(s) being sub-contracted to do the work at an appropriate rate, including any pro bono element.

Funding available

Size of grants

The total amount available for SLF grants from January 2015 to December 2016 is £360,000. Maximum funding for any one application will be £30,000 but, in view of the limited funding available, lower applications are encouraged. The average grant size is around £12,000. You need to demonstrate that your application represents value for money. Grants may be approved for a lesser amount than requested.

Length of grants

The SLF aims to complement longer-term funding with short-term grants to respond to legal opportunities. The maximum grant length is 12 months, and most grants are for around six months.

Eligible costs

The SLF will cover any reasonable revenue costs that you will incur to undertake the proposed pre-litigation research or to prepare a third party intervention. This includes temporary staffing, freeing up or extending existing staff hours, volunteer expenses, travel and subcontracting with other voluntary and community organisations.

The SLF is intended to generate new resources for strategic legal work. We therefore fund new or additional costs and capacity, rather than contributing to an organisation's existing expenditure and workload. However, a contribution to overheads may be included.

Staffing costs should reflect their real costs to your organisation and be no higher than appropriate legal aid rates. If work is costed above legal aid rates, then please explain why.

We want to maximise resources by using pro bono input where possible. Please describe and cost any pro bono input to the application, estimating how much pro bono time will be spent on the project and by whom (for example, solicitor, legal representative, or researcher).

If your organisation is already in receipt of a grant from one of the SLF funders to do strategic legal work, you will need to explain how the new activity is additional to your existing work.

Application criteria

In making recommendations about funding, the Expert Panel will take into account:

- That the legal issue has the potential for significant impact on vulnerable young migrants.
- The potential to advance the general principles of the UNCRC.
- Whether alternative funding may be available for the proposed work; and whether the applicant has applied for such funding.
- Whether the applicant has had previous funding from the SLF.
- Whether they consider there to be a real prospect of success if and when a claim is brought before a Court.
- Any priority areas of law or points of law which they have decided, in agreement with the funders, to prioritise and which have been publicised as such.
- Where applications that raise the same or similar legal issues are considered at the same Panel meeting, and the Panel decide the criteria for funding are met, then funding will be awarded considering the following:
 - (i) where the work outlined is most likely to have the desired outcome.
 - (ii) the staff who would work on the project are deemed to have the most relevant experience and skill.
 - (iii) where the application is for an intervention, which case is strongest on the facts and which case is or is likely to be listed in court first.

Exclusions

In general, the SLF will not make grants where:

- Funding is sought for pre-litigation research on an issue where work is already in progress by other legal representatives.
- There is an unreasonably low prospect of a positive outcome for vulnerable migrant children and young people.
- The funding will not produce any significant positive change to the rights of vulnerable young migrants in the UK.
- It is judged that the goals of the application may be more successfully achieved through an alternative route e.g. policy work.
- Organisations have already received two grants from the SLF since January 2015 except in exceptional circumstances.
- Organisations are in serious financial deficit.
- Not-for-profit organisations have significant unrestricted reserves (including designated funds). Generally reserves up to the equivalent of six months' expenditure is acceptable.

How to apply

1. Read the funding guidelines

Please read these funding guidelines carefully to check whether your proposed work fits with what the SLF is able to fund. Please check on our website to see if you are reading the latest version of our guidelines.

2. Any questions?

If, after reading these funding guidelines, you are in doubt as to whether your work fits or would like to discuss an idea for an application then please telephone or email the Project Manager on SLF@migrationwork.org. We welcome such contact as it can save you and us time and resources.

3. Complete our on-line application form

To apply to us you need to complete our online application form. The form contains contextual help on a number of questions which will help you to complete it. You can also download a document containing all of the questions in the application form. You will need to upload various supporting documents as part of the application, for example your annual accounts, governing documents, and other financial information. You do not need to complete the form in one sitting, as you can save and close it and return to it at a later stage. You will receive an automatic acknowledgement once you have submitted your on-line application form.

We only accept applications online. If you have any problems, please contact us.

To access the online application form, follow the link from:

www.strategiclegalfund.org.uk

4. Closing dates

There are closing dates for applications roughly every two months. The list of dates is on the SLF website.

Applications must be received by 5pm on the closing date. Applications received after the deadline will not be considered until the next closing date.

5. Processing your application

The Project Manager will check all applications to ensure they are complete, valid and meet the eligibility criteria. The Project Manager will contact applicants if further information is needed and, where possible, to discuss and check the details of the application.

6. Expert Panel

All eligible applications received by the deadline will normally be considered at the Expert Panel meeting. A minimum of three Expert Panel members will consider the applications and meet to agree recommendations for funding. Where there are conflicts of interest, Expert Panel members will not be involved in assessing the relevant applications.

7. Application decision

Following the recommendation from the Expert Panel, the funders will make the final decision on whether to award a grant. You will normally hear within three weeks of the closing date whether or not the SLF has offered a grant to your organisation.

8. Contact details

Gerry Hickey
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Trust for London
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London
EC1A 7PH

t 020 7254 7272

e SLF@migrationwork.org

www.strategiclegalfund.org.uk

What happens next?

If your application is successful...

- You will receive an offer letter, with details of the conditions attached to the grant.
- If you wish to accept the grant offer, you will need to return a signed copy of the conditions form within two weeks.
- A short description of the purpose of the grant awarded will be listed on the SLF website. The Project Manager will agree this wording with you.
- With your offer letter, you will also receive instructions on how to claim your grant. If the grant is for up to £10,000 or no more than three months' duration, it will be paid in one instalment. If it is for more than £10,000 and for more than three months, the grant will be paid in two instalments.
- If your grant is for longer than three months, we will ask you to answer some short monitoring questions at the half-way point. At the end of the grant, you will be expected to complete a short report about what you have been able to achieve with the funding. Full details of the monitoring and evaluation requirements will be sent with your offer letter and are also available on the SLF website.
- As part of the conditions of your grant, you will be asked to share the evidence arising from your work, where this will not prejudice future legal action. The Project Manager will discuss with you the best way of presenting and storing this evidence in the SLF Archive, hosted by Coram Children's Legal Centre, with due regard to confidentiality.

The SLF may accept extension applications for work that forms a progression to a previously funded piece of work. Please discuss this possibility with the Project Manager.

If your application is not successful...

- You will receive detailed, individual feedback on your application by letter.
- If you wish to apply to the SLF again, you will usually need to miss a funding round.
- If you would like to re-apply for the same piece of work, re-applications must demonstrate that account has been taken of the reasons for the previous refusal.

Complaints

We sometimes get things wrong. If you have any complaints about how we've handled your application, you should in the first instance contact the SLF Project Manager. We'll try to rectify any problem or misunderstanding.

If you're not satisfied you should write to our Chief Executive who is responsible for the management of the Trust. If the complaint is regarding our Chief Executive, you should write to the Chair of our Trustees. However, please note that you cannot appeal any decision made by our Trustees about whether or not we fund your organisation.

Any complaint you make will not jeopardise your funding application or any future application to us.



Trust for London

Tackling poverty and inequality

Registered Charity No. 205629