

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND

Guidance note for applications

Applications to the fund are considered by panel members at dispersal meetings which are held once every three months

What can the Fund be used for?

The fund amounts to £5000 annually to be shared out amongst Service Users and Carers across East and West Kent. The intention of the Fund is to promote the personal development of individuals whose lives have been affected - directly or indirectly - by severe or persistent mental ill health. This includes users of Kent's specialist mental health services and their carers. The Panel meets four times a year so each meeting has roughly £1200 to £1500 to distribute.

Who can apply to the Fund?

Because the Fund is resourced by Kent County Council, all applicants to the Fund must meet eligibility criteria as determined by the Council under the government's Fair Access to Care Services (FACS) legislation.

Applicants should be:

- ✓ Aged 16 and over *and*
- ✓ Ordinarily resident in Kent *and*
- ✓ A service user of specialist mental health services, or a carer of one or more people who have significant mental health needs

How do I make an application?

Administration of the Fund is carried out by *Sevenoaks Area Mind*, a registered mental health charity, on behalf of Kent County Council. To request an application form, write to *The Administrator, Personal Development Fund, Sevenoaks Area Mind, 34 St John's Rd, Sevenoaks, TN13 3LW*. Alternatively, you can telephone on 01732 744950 or send an e-mail to: admin@sevenoaksareamind.org.uk. Completed application forms should be returned to the same address. Your application will be considered by panel members at the next quarterly dispersal meeting.

How much can I apply for?

PLEASE STATE THE TOTAL AMOUNT YOU ARE REQUESTING

Please state the amount you want at this time, do not ask for more than you will need as the panel will assume whatever sum you put down is the amount you are requesting and you are less likely to succeed if you ask for a high amount as there is around £5000 per year to be shared out.

Please give a description of the item you are requesting or training course/conference/seminar.

Applications can be made for awards of up to £500.

Applications will be made anonymous for the purposes of the meetings

What are typical uses of the Fund?

Panel members wish to keep 'open minds' as to how the Fund may be used and panel members will try to ensure that there is an equitable distribution between East and West Kent and between service users/carers. This approach allows scope for creativity and makes allowance for the complexity of the daily lives of mental health service users and their carers.

What happens to my approved application if the event is postponed?

Panel members realise that events are sometimes postponed or rescheduled and therefore an approved application would usually remain valid for the same purpose at a later date.

How can I improve my chances of being successful with my application?

- ✓ Remember that the Fund has to reach out to service users and carers across the whole of Kent. In general, an application for a small amount of money is more likely to be successful than one for a large amount.
- ✓ Be factual. Provide supporting evidence wherever possible. Give accurate costs if you can.
- ✓ Think ahead. Panel members meet quarterly and so there could be a significant time delay between submitting your application and receiving a response from the Panel.
- ✓ Put yourself in the 'shoes' of a panel member. How do you think your application will compare with other applications that panel members may be considering? How can you strengthen your application?
- ✓ Show that you are prepared and willing to feed back to members of the panel how you will benefit (and, if appropriate, how others may benefit) if your application were to be successful
- ✓ Make your case. It is up to you to convince Panel members of the worth of your application!

THIS FORM IS YOUR ONLY OPPORTUNITY TO TELL THE PANEL THE DETAILS; THEY DO NOT KNOW YOU AND YOUR NAME DOES NOT APPEAR ON THEIR COPY. IF YOU DO NOT PROVIDE SUPPORTING INFORMATION TO SHOW YOU HAVE EXPLORED OTHER AVENUES FOR FUNDING ALSO OR BEEN REJECTED OR ARE NOT ELIGIBLE EG FOR FREE COURSES YOU WILL LESSEN YOUR CHANCES OF BEING AWARDED AN AMOUNT. IF YOU APPLY FOR MORE THAN THE LIMIT FOR ANY ONE APPLICATION IT WILL BE SEEN BY THE PANEL THAT YOU HAVE NOT READ THE INFORMATION.

THE PROCESS IS SIMPLE AND SHORT. THE DECISION MAKING IS CAREFUL AND THOUGHTFUL AND BASED ONLY ON THE INFORMATION IN THE APPLICATION.

Finally please check or get someone else to check your application. Please ensure that you have clearly stated the amount you are requesting. The Panel prefers that the applicant completes the form themselves.

Personal Development Fund
Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form

Sevenoaks Area Mind has an equal opportunities policy and is committed to fair and consistent treatment of all those who apply for funds from the Personal Development Fund.

To help us monitor this policy we need to collect information, in confidence about the gender and ethnicity of all applicants and whether they consider themselves to have a disability. The information you provide will not be used in the application process. It will only be use to produce statistical analyses of those who have applied.

Please would you complete and return the following form with your application form

Gender (Please tick)

Male	
Female	
Other	

Ethnic origin (please tick the box which you consider best applies to you)

White	
Asian or Asian British	
Black or Black British	
Mixed	
Other	

Do you consider that you have a disability?

YES	
NO	

Date of Birth	
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Thank-you for your co-operation