



Garfield Weston
FOUNDATION

Media Brief





What is the Garfield Weston Foundation?

Established in 1958, the Garfield Weston Foundation is a family-founded charitable grant-making trust which now gives away approximately £80 million a year to charities across the UK.

Having established one of the most respected charitable institutions in the UK, the Weston Family Trustees today remain highly active and hands-on. The Foundation's funding comes from an endowment of shares in the family business – a successful model that still endures today and as the businesses have grown so too have the charitable donations.

- Each year the Foundation gives away its income and donations have continued to grow. Since it was established it has donated over £1 billion, of which over half has been given away in the past ten years alone. In the most recent financial year the Foundation gave away over £79 million to over 2,100 charities across the UK.
- Typically, around 1,900 charities of all sizes across the UK benefit each year and a significant majority of grants are for projects and organisations across the UK's local communities and volunteer organisations.
- The Foundation has a particular reputation for flexibility as its strategy is deliberately responsive and adapts to need. Those at the front line of providing services generally create the most effective solutions – the Trustees back talented people with practical ideas and do not impose direction.
- The common theme is an approach to quality and excellence, with work or projects demonstrating clear outcomes and benefits. Support for core costs is a particular Foundation strength as unrestricted income is especially valuable for charities and is often difficult to secure.
- The Foundation benefits from having highly active and engaged Weston Family Trustees – all Trustees are related to the Founder and they volunteer a significant amount of their personal time to review applications, visit charities, conduct referencing and meet with individuals across the charity sector to ensure they remain well-informed.
- The Foundation has developed a reputation for the pivotal timing of its support, often making grants at a critical point in a charity's project or activity. It is also known for its open and straightforward approach – charities don't have to know anyone at the Foundation or have 'contacts', just an effective solution to meet a real social need. Applications are open and are assessed on their merits.
- The Foundation innovates where the role it plays can make a particular difference – whether through convening, making introductions, building partnerships or co-creating new approaches to strengthen the charity sector. Examples include the Weston Charity Awards in partnership with Pilotlight which brings senior volunteers from business to mentor charities through a structured and highly effective programme; and the Weston Loan Programme with The Art Fund.
- Currently particular emphasis is being placed on Welfare, Youth and Community organisations as these are facing particular financial challenges at present. This emphasis is also supported by a range of measures focused on specific regions which have also been especially adversely impacted such as Wales, Northern Ireland and the North East. We are particularly keen to see applications from these regions.
- Emphasis is also being placed on Environment projects in response to the increasing challenges that our environment faces, both on a global and local scale.



Where does the Foundation's income come from?

- When the Foundation was established in 1958 it was endowed with shares in the Weston family business – Wittington Investments – Garfield Weston effectively gave away 80% of his wealth for the benefit of the nation and this legacy has grown over time.
- The Foundation holds a majority stake (79.2%) in the family-owned holding company called Wittington Investments. Wittington has a diverse portfolio, of which the largest investment is a 54.5% stake in Associated British Foods (ABF), a publicly quoted company. Other investments include hotels (such as The Grand Hotel in Brighton), property and retail interests (such as Fortnum & Mason).
- The fact that donations have grown year on year is a direct result of the success of the underlying investments such as ABF (which owns businesses such as Primark, Twinings and Ryvita, and which provides employment for over 130,000 people). The fact that these businesses are predominantly owned by a charity enables the business to plan for the long-term which in turn creates sustainable income for the Foundation to give away.

Examples of recent donations

While the Foundation funds across a broad range of categories, the underlying ethos remains consistent – to support charities with talented people and effective ways to meet a clear need. The Trustees adopt a deliberate strategy to empower people and charities to create their own solutions rather than to impose a particular model or viewpoint – it is this flexibility that enables the Foundation to respond and adapt to changes in need while embracing the most effective solutions and ideas.

This practical way of working has characterised the Foundation since its inception in 1958 and has also enabled the Trustees to introduce new and innovative projects in recent years such as the Weston Charity Awards and to develop partnerships with other grant-makers where working together increases impact, such as the Weston Jerwood Bursaries. Recent examples of grants are below and further case studies with images can be found on the Foundation's website www.garfieldweston.org

Welfare The Foundation has been supporting organisations for the disadvantaged, disabled, vulnerable and elderly since it began in 1958 and particular focus is being placed on this category due to the current economic challenges. Examples include £5 million to Social Sustainable Capital for its Housing Fund, designed to address the significant unmet need for safe, quality housing for charities working with the homeless; £750,000 over three years to Frontline to help them increase the number of talented graduates they recruit into social work; and £300,000 over three years to mental health charity MIND to develop peer support groups across the UK.

Youth A wide range of grants have been made for projects involving children and young people across the UK – these organisations include Scouts and Guides, along with play schemes, sports clubs, youth groups and charities committed to children's wellbeing. Grants include £100,000 to The Proud Trust towards the refurbishment of their LGBT+ Centre in Manchester and a multi-year grant of £90,000 to the Construction Youth Trust to help them extend their education and construction industry work experience programme.



Community This category is characterised by grants across all areas of the country. Organisations in the Community category are often for small to medium sized charities and have been a consistent focus of the Foundation since its inception. Examples of recent grants include £225,000 over three years to support Northern Ireland Opera's outreach and community activities in rural areas and a multi-year grant of £60,000 to Localgiving Foundation to support its regional development programme in Wales, helping small charities to build their fundraising capacity. Local community support organisations across the UK continue to be funded by the Trustees, with recent examples including Oasis Chelmsford, Shiney Advice & Resource Project in Tyne and Wear and Accrington Stanley Community Trust.

Education Grants in the education category encompass formal learning institutions such as schools and universities as well as charities such as Villiers Park Educational Trust which received a multi-year grant of £225,000 to help bright, disadvantaged pupils to achieve academic success and gain access to university. A grant of £300,000 over three years was made to the Sutton Trust for their summer school programme, enabling students from low income families to attend residential courses in universities to get a taste of university life.

Arts, Museums & Heritage Grants include capital support for large institutions such as the Yorkshire Sculpture Park and Glasgow Science Centre along with revenue grants such as £75,000 over three years to Ballet Cymru whilst they diversify their funding base and £80,000 over two years to Artistic Directors of the Future, to increase the number of culturally diverse artistic directors of theatres across the UK. The Foundation's partnership with the Natural History Museum for 'Dippy on Tour' continues, taking the iconic diplodocus across the country, aiming to inspire learning about the natural world and engage new audiences in unusual locations such as Norwich Cathedral. To date, over 1 million people have seen Dippy on his epic journey.

Health In this category the Foundation focuses on translational work with direct patient benefit, on capital grants and on core costs for organisations caring for people with specific illnesses. In the past year grants include a multi-year grant of £337,000 to fund the MS Society's priority research project into rebuilding and repairing myelin (the protective coating of nerve cells) and a capital grant of £500,000 to the Royal College of Obstetricians & Gynaecologists towards its new home, enabling it to work in partnership with organisations such as the Royal College of Midwives.

Environment The Foundation is a committed supporter of environmental work – grants in this category span a range of activity from conservation projects to education and research. Many conservation projects take years to achieve their goals so the Trustees were pleased to make a number of significant multi-year grants including £3 million to Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew to support its Global Tree Seed Bank; £100,000 to the Blue Marine Foundation in their work to tackle global overfishing; and £100,000 to Rewilding Britain's core costs, supporting its large-scale restoration of ecosystems. This is a priority area and the Trustees are keen to see more excellent projects with an environmental focus.