



Media Brief 2023/24

What is the Garfield Weston Foundation?

Established in 1958, the Garfield Weston Foundation is a family founded grant-maker. Each year the Foundation gives away its income and its donations have continued to grow. It has donated over £1.4 billion in total, with half of that amount donated in the past 10 years alone. In the most recent financial year, the Foundation gave away over £91 million to over 2,100 charities.

- The Foundation is one of the most respected charitable institutions in the UK. The Weston Family Trustees remain highly active and hands-on, as they have for 65 years. The Foundation's funding started with an endowment of shares in the family business. This successful model continues today – as the business grows, so do the Foundation's donations.
- Around 2,000 charities of all sizes across the UK benefit each year. The majority of grants are for local community projects and volunteer organisations. The Foundation is proud to be a friend to the country's small but mighty charities!
- The Foundation is well known for its flexibility. Its strategy is to be deliberately responsive and to adapt to need. The Trustees back talented people with practical ideas. They do not impose direction but trust that charities are experts in their own work.
- The Foundation's overarching theme is supporting quality and excellence. The Trustees support work or projects that demonstrate clear outcomes and benefits. Support for core costs is one of the Foundation's strengths and is especially valuable for charities. It is often a difficult type of funding for charities to secure. Core cost grants enable charities to deliver their work with minimal restrictions on how the grant can be used.
- The Foundation benefits from highly active and engaged Weston Family Trustees. All Trustees are related to the founder, as set out in the Foundation's Trust Deed. The Trustees volunteer significant amounts of their personal time to review applications. They also meet charities and individuals across the voluntary sector. The Trustees ensure their knowledge is up to date and relevant to inform their decisions.
- Diversity is a vibrant and important feature of the Foundation's work. It is highlighted in the breadth and range of our grants and the way we bring many perspectives into decision-making. As an accessible funder, our applications and grants reflect the diversity of the UK.
- The Foundation is a responsible and transparent funder. It is mindful of important things that shape our society and publishes its response to these on its website. This includes key issues such as modern slavery, safeguarding and the environment.
- We exist to ensure charities can deliver their vital work across the UK but cannot do this alone. We need charities to apply to us and we make this as straightforward as possible. We trust our charity partners and avoid complicated grant reporting. That way charities can devote more time to their important work rather than filling in forms.
- The Foundation is a transparent funder and strives to learn from its charity partners. We ask their opinion and adapt our approach and processes accordingly.

Where does the Foundation's income come from?

- The Foundation was created in 1958 with an endowment of shares in the Weston family business, Wittington Investments. Garfield Weston gave away 80% of his wealth for the benefit of the nation. This legacy has continued to grow over time and is still structured the same way for long-term growth.
- The Foundation holds a majority stake (79.2%) in Wittington Investments. Wittington has a diverse portfolio. Its largest investment is a 54.5% stake in Associated British Foods (ABF), a publicly quoted company. Other investments include hotels (such as Richmond Hill Hotel), property and retail interests (such as Fortnum & Mason).
- The growth of donations is a direct result of the success of the underlying investments such as ABF. ABF owns businesses such as Primark, Twinings and Ryvita and employs over 130,000 people. These businesses plan for the long-term, which creates the sustainable income that the Foundation donates.

Examples of recent donations

The Foundation supports a wide variety of causes but it has a consistent ethos. It supports charities that have talented people and effective ways to meet a clear need. The Trustees empower charities to create their own solutions, rather than imposing their own views. It is this flexibility that enables the Foundation to respond and adapt to changes in need. The Foundation embraces the most effective solutions and ideas and supports tried and tested work in addition to innovative approaches.

Examples of grants made in the past year are below. More in-depth case studies and a full list of last year's grants can be found on our website at [garfieldweston.org/what-we-fund/organisations-we-have-funded/](https://www.garfieldweston.org/what-we-fund/organisations-we-have-funded/).

Community

This year, 395 grants were made to grassroots charities supporting their local communities across the UK. Of these, 165 grants helped improvements to local facilities, which are becoming increasingly important as gathering spaces in response to the cost-of-living crisis. Grants included £26,000 for Trevone Village Hall in Cornwall, £15,000 to Kilburn Village Institute in Yorkshire and £10,000 to Bouth Village Hall in Ulverston. A further 196 grants supported important community work, including volunteering schemes and local advice and practical support. Examples include £30,000 to Kent Coast Volunteering, £25,000 to Mid Ulster Volunteer Centre and £30,000 over three years to Abergavenny Community Trust.

Youth

We made over 290 grants to Youth organisations in 2022/23. Local activity and support groups across the UK continued to struggle with the impact of the pandemic and cost-of-living crisis on young people's mental health. The Trustees continued to invest in local groups that provide somewhere to go, something to do and someone to talk to. Grants included £30,000 to Boys and Girls Clubs of Wales, £10,000 Shalom Youth Project in Grimsby, £60,000 over two years to Kidz Klub Leeds, £75,000 over three years to LGBT Youth Scotland and £60,000 over two years to Youth Action Northern Ireland. The Trustees also made several grants to support the sector's facilities. Examples include £200,000 to One YMCA for a new hostel in Watford, £98,000 to Barnardo's to provide homes for young people leaving care in Glasgow and

£50,000 to South Marches Scouts Council for a new building to serve 1,250 scouts and local community groups in Hereford.

Welfare

Similar to our Youth and Community categories, Welfare grants feature numerous grassroots organisations that are facing increasing need alongside reduced statutory funding and an increase in their own costs. In total, the Trustees granted over £15.4 million to Welfare charities in 2022/23. Organisations supporting families received 142 grants. These included £30,000 to Parenting Special Children, £15,000 to More than Grandparents in Sunderland, £45,000 to Children First Derby and £743,000 to 36 Home-Starts across the UK. Grants totalling £1.8 million were made to organisations supporting survivors of domestic and sexual violence. Examples include core cost grants of £90,000 to Cardiff Women's Aid, £40,000 to Fylde Coast Women's Aid, £45,000 to Street Teams in Walsall and £30,000 to Reducing the Risk of Domestic Abuse in Oxford.

Health

In total, £10.4 million was granted to organisations supporting our nation's health in 2022/23. The Trustees awarded a total of £2.7 million to charities working in mental health. Examples include three-year grants of £300,000 to Mental Health Innovations for expansion of its Shout app to support 14–17-year-olds and £500,000 to Place2Be towards its parenting support programme in partnership with schools. The Foundation has a strong history of investing in strategic, impactful projects and this year granted capital funding totalling £4.7 million. Grants included £2 million to Addenbrooke's for a new children's hospital in Cambridge, £1 million to the Evelina London Children's Hospital for its research facilities, £300,000 to Alder Hey Children's Charity for a dedicated surgical neonatal intensive care unit and £250,000 to the University of Sheffield towards its new gene therapy innovation & manufacturing centre.

Environment

The Trustees' ongoing commitment to supporting organisations tackling the world's environmental challenges resulted in another record year for donations which exceeded £12.2 million. The Trustees continued their support of the Garfield Weston Global Tree Seed Bank at the Royal Botanic Garden, Kew with a significant investment of £5 million. This grant will support the organisation to build on its progress to date, conserving over 5,500 tree species in total, restore forests in countries facing significant deforestation and building the capacity and skills of conservation partners in countries around the world. Other major grants included £1 million over three years to Oceana to support its science-based policy campaigns; £355,000 to Birdlife International to create a unique conservation knowledge hub, providing unprecedented access to data on biodiversity information on birds around the world; and a total of £1.7 million to 18 Rivers Trusts around the UK.