

Barts Charity – Summary of Changes to SPF Funding Guidelines

Executive Summary

Following our recent review of the Special Purpose Fund (SPF) funding guidelines, we have made several updates to simplify the process, clarify responsibilities, and ensure continued compliance with our charitable obligations.

Key changes we have made are

- Introduction of simplified format focusing on evidence and process in place of detailed categories.
- Removal of financial allowances and rates.
- Exclusion of undergraduate and masters degree courses.
- Exclusion of salary and staff remuneration costs.
- Exclusion of research related expenditure.
- Autonomy for fundholder discretion.

What has not changed

- Core principles for charitable funding.
- Requirement for expenditure to be within fund purpose.
- Requirement for claims to be approved by the relevant fundholder(s).
- Exclusion of all IT equipment and software.
- Requirement for supporting evidence (receipts or invoices) for all requests.
- Exclusion of claims below £20.
- Requirement of two fundholder approval for claims over £1,000.

Principles for Charity Funding

The core principles for how Barts Charity manages and approves funding have not changed. These principles continue to underpin all spending decisions and ensure that donor funds are used responsibly and for their intended purpose.

- **Alignment with donor intent:** As a charity, we have a legal obligation to ensure that all funds are spent in accordance with donors' wishes and have an impact in the area intended by the donor.

- Purpose-driven funding: Each fund has its own scope and restrictions. Whether a request can be supported depends on whether there is an appropriate fund whose purposes align with the request.
- Maximizing benefit to patients: We collaborate with managers and senior clinicians across the Trust and hospitals to review and endorse requests that deliver the greatest impact for patients.
- Charity ownership and discretion: All funds are the property of Barts Charity. Ultimate approval for spending lies with the Charity, whether or not prior approval has been given by the fundholder or Trust signatory.
- Case-by-case approval: Approval of a similar request in the past does not guarantee approval in future. Each request is considered on its own merits.
- Dynamic guidance: The Charity reserves the right to update its funding guidelines at any time. The most current version will always be available on our website.
- Information sharing: Details of funds and fundholders may be shared with Barts Health or QMUL to further facilitate the effective use of funds.
- Timely use of donated funds: Donors (and charity law) expect timely and efficient use of donated funds. Barts Charity reserves the right to monitor and take appropriate action on underutilized or dormant funds.

Key Updates to the SPF Guidelines

Old Guidelines

New Guidelines (2025)

1. Overall Structure and Scope

Detailed document outlining claims, evidence requirements, spending limits, allowances, and specific category restrictions.

Condensed to a concise summary format (1 page). Detailed allowances and expenditure tables removed. Guidance focuses on claim submission process and evidence requirements.

Included distinct sections for different request types (e.g., travel, courses, hospitality, staff benefits, equipment).

Detailed breakdowns for different expenditure types have been removed. Only high-level instructions remain – claims must be within fund purpose and have fundholder approval.

2. Claim Requirements

All claims had to be made in GBP and accompanied by conversion evidence where relevant.

FX conversion evidence is not required.

Supporting documentation is mandatory for all payments.

Still required – explicitly emphasizes clear evidence of expenditure and invoice details.

3. Request Categories and Thresholds

Separate processes for items <£5,000 and >£5,000, with detailed handling through grant schemes or departments.

£5,000 threshold remains but process simplified – claims over £5,000 require email submission to financeteamgrants@bartscharity.org.uk.

Included purchase order (PO) and pro-forma invoice instructions for equipment purchases.

PO instructions not required.

4. Spending Allowances and Restrictions

Provided detailed maximum allowances (e.g., hotel £150/night, dinner £35/day, etc.).

All specific spending caps removed

Required justification for taxis and excluded premium air/train travel.

Travel allowances and restrictions removed.

Supported professional courses and conferences with itemized rates.

Undergraduate and master's degree courses are now explicitly excluded.

5. Administrative Process

Step-by-step process for each spending type, with purchase order or pro-forma invoice procedures.

Process simplified – only requires invoices to be dated, numbered, and addressed correctly.

Included contact emails for both finance and funding queries.

Only one central contact point: financeteamgrants@bartscharity.org.uk.

6. Exclusions

Excluded: first/business class travel, personal subscriptions, UK taxis (except for exceptional cases). All IT equipment also excluded based on Trust advice.

Most exclusions removed. Exclusions now are limited to: all IT equipment and software, undergraduate/masters degree courses, staff salary/remuneration costs, and research related expenditure.