

A guide to UK charitable trusts and foundations

Key facts and figures

In 2023, the largest 300 foundations collectively gave **£6.4bn** the highest level ever.

In 2023, the largest 300 foundations collectively held assets of nearly **£87bn**

There are over **10,000** trusts and foundations operating in the UK.

They excel at getting money to where it is needed and quickly: being nimble in a crisis, funding overlooked causes, backing brilliant ideas, with an ability to take risks for long-term impact.

Their income may come from historic endowments, living donors, businesses, funds from government or raised from the public. Foundations use their assets to further their mission: particularly through grant-making and investments.

They are regulated by the Charity Commission for England and Wales, The Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator and Charity Commission for Northern Ireland.

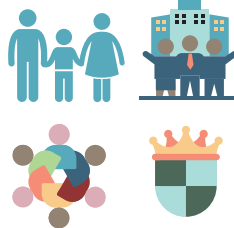
What are charitable trusts and foundations?



They are charities with an independent and sustainable income source.



They use their assets in pursuit of their mission: primarily through grant-making, as well as investments and sometimes advocacy and campaigning.



They may be family foundations, corporate foundations, community foundations or livery companies.

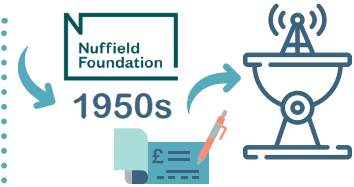
Big achievements



The Robertson Trust has provided funding to 34 Citizens Advice centres, covering the breadth of Scotland, enabling free and confidential advice for everyone on their rights and responsibilities.



Every year, new foundations are established. The Firebird Foundation launched in 2022. Working on gender justice and child rights, it is supporting coalitions for change, and working across enterprise, investments and grant-making.



In the 1950s Nuffield Foundation grants enabled construction of world-renowned astronomical observatory Jodrell Bank, still in use. Today, the Foundation funds research to improve education, welfare, and justice.



Essex Community Foundation distributed grants to local groups to support vulnerable Ukrainian refugee families.



During the global pandemic UK foundations contributed over £400 million to various causes addressing issues amplified by the crisis.



In addition to GiveOut's own grant-making, their research influenced a £40 million fund for grassroots LGBT+ organisations in the global south.

Who is ACF?



- ▶ The leading membership association for foundations and independent grant-makers in the UK.
- ▶ We strengthen trusts and foundations so they can rise to the challenges of our time.
- ▶ ACF has around 450 foundation members.