

# **Grant Appeals and Complaints Policy and Procedures**



## Content

1.	Policy Statement	2
2.	Appeals and Complaints Policy	2
3.	Policy on Rights	2
4.	Data Protection	2
5.	What is and is not considered a complaint	2
6.	What is and is not considered an appeal	3
7.	The circumstances when an application appeal can be made	3
8.	The circumstances when a complaint can be made	4
9.	How to make an appeal or complaint	4
10.	Content of the complaint	4
11.	How the appeal and/or complaint will be completed and monitored	4
12.	Expected initial response and resolution times	4
13.	Complaints	5
14.	Appeals	5
15.	If you are unsatisfied with the response	5

1. Policy Statement

We aim to always provide a fair and effective grants process. However, we understand that sometimes our beneficiaries and other parties may wish to raise issues about our service provision. We want to resolve matters quickly and to the satisfaction of the complainant. We welcome your complaints and comments, as feedback is essential in helping us to continuously review and improve our grant making services.

2. Appeals and complaints policy

We are committed to ensuring that everyone who makes an application for a grant or receives a grant upon successful application, receives professional, courteous and timely support. This includes those that apply to us for the first time or those that return for support having been previously considered for grant support in the past, whether successful or unsuccessful. All assessments of eligibility should be made irrespective of the outcome of any previous assessment and be assessed against current eligibility criteria.

Under this policy, we commit to deal with a complaint or appeal as quickly as possible. We will ensure that our process for reviewing and responding is fair, courteous and helpful. We will also treat all complaints and appeals seriously, confidentially and in line with our equal opportunities policy. We will ensure that all complainants are kept informed, and we will also keep written records of all complaints and appeals.

We recognise any expression of dissatisfaction as a potential complaint. If you are dissatisfied with the conduct of a Teesside Airport Foundation representative, the grant application process, or outcome of your application, please formally tell us. We will then follow our complaints processes outlined within the relevant sections of this guidance.

All complaints and appeals will be kept confidential and will only involve those who are required to know in order to resolve the complaint. All complaints and appeals will be treated with equal respect, and we expect that any Teesside Airport Foundation representative involved in any complaint or appeal procedures will be provided the same courtesy.

3. Policy on rights

By making a complaint or appeal you do not give up your right or access to receive future grant support from Teesside Airport Foundation. Nor will any complaints or appeals submitted affect any future grants services you receive from us. It is important to stress that your future prospects of receiving grant support from Teesside Airport Foundation will not be affected or diminished.

4. Data Protection

By using our complaints procedure, you agree that we can use any personal information that you send us as part of your complaint for the purposes of reviewing and investigating your complaint and or appeal.

5. What is and is not considered a complaint

Teesside Airport Foundation defines a complaint as an expression of dissatisfaction about the standard of grant support service provided by the charity to a group and or individual. Most (but not all) complaints will generally fall into one or more of the following categories:

- Complaints about the grant service(s) or support that Teesside Airport Foundation provide or do not provide.
- Complaints about the way Teesside Airport Foundation have provided grant support service(s).
- Complaints about a Teesside Airport Foundation representatives' interaction, attitude(s) or competency
- Complaints that procedure has not been followed in the grant application review and outcome dissemination process.
- Complaints that Teesside Airport Foundation have failed to give you incorrect advice or information that has adversely affected your application submission.
- You feel that discrimination or unequal treatment has taken place.
- You believe an act of fraud has taken place by an individual in regard to grant application.

The distinction between a formal complaint and informal feedback/complaints is considered in light of the medium by which they are provided. We do not consider enquiries about support or initial requests for grants, or information about our grant policy as a complaint. We also do not consider social media commentary/feedback or open forum commentary as a complaint under this formal policy. Our general position is not to engage in discussion on an open forum under the Data Protection Act. However, social media and open forum feedback and complaints may be captured, and relevant parties invited to submit a formal direct complaint for review.

#### 6. What is and is not considered an appeal

Teesside Airport Foundation defines an appeal as an expression of concern and or belief that an application submitted to Teesside Airport Foundation has not been assessed correctly according to our eligibility criteria. Most (but not all) appeals will generally fall into one or more of the following categories:

- An appeal that Teesside Airport Foundation decision on your application is not justified or evidenced.
- An appeal that key information within your application has been misinterpreted.
- An appeal about the process that Teesside Airport Foundation has or has not followed to assess your application.

#### 7. The circumstances when an application appeal can be made

In all instances the successful applicant will have been written to with the outcome of their application, providing details of the amount of grant awarded, how the grant will be paid to them and how frequently it will be paid, and what will occur when the grant term is approaching completion that will enable them to reapply for ongoing support (if applicable).

In all instances the unsuccessful applicant will have been written to with the outcome of their application, providing details of why they have been unsuccessful, specifically what elements of the eligibility criteria their application failed on.

For those that believe that their application has been incorrectly assessed against our eligibility criteria as explained in their grant outcome letter or feel that a reduced award has been unfairly awarded, a formal appeal against the outcome of the application can be submitted.

You will ideally need to demonstrate that one or more of the following has occurred:

- We have interpreted a significant part of your application incorrectly.

- We did not consider a relevant part of the application fully.
- You believe that the decision taken is unjustified, for example any shortcomings we mention.

Please note that there is a deadline of 14 working days from the date you have been formally informed of the application outcome, in which to make an appeal.

8. The circumstances when a complaint can be made

A formal complaint can be submitted by those that wish to make a complaint regarding.

- the conduct of a Teesside Airport Foundation employee(s) or volunteer(s).
- the grant support service you have or feel you should have received.

Please note that there is no deadline in which to formally lodge a complaint following your experiences of the Teesside Airport Foundation grants service. However, the longer you leave before submitting a complaint may result in it being more difficult for us to resolve your complaint satisfactorily.

9. How to make an appeal or complaint

An application appeal or general complaint should be made formally in writing by email to [foundation@teessideinternational.com](mailto:foundation@teessideinternational.com) or by post to Teesside Airport Foundation, Teesside Airport Business Suite, Tees Valley, Darlington DL2 1NJ.

10. Content of the complaint

When formally making your complaint, you should include:

- Dates of contact
- Who you have previously dealt with.
- What communications you have received regarding your complaint, if any.
- Important details outlining the nature and reasons for your complaint.
- The resolution you are seeking.

11. How the appeal and/or complaint will be reviewed and monitored

If you are dissatisfied with any aspect of the service received, or outcome of your application, you should initially speak with the member of staff concerned. We hope that most complaints or informal appeals enquiries can be settled quickly via any relevantly linked staff member.

Complaints will be reviewed by the board of Trustees in liaison with any affected staff members.

Appeals will be initially reviewed by an appointed Trustee with any review and decision signed off by a second Trustee.

12. Expected initial response and resolution times

We will try our best to resolve your complaint or appeal as soon as possible. Your appeal will be acknowledged within 7 working days of receipt. The appointed Trustee with any relevant assistance will then investigate and send a written reply within 14 working days.

13. Complaints

If a complaint, once internally investigated and reviewed, indicates fault on behalf of Teesside Airport Foundation we will look to offer:

- An explanation and apology.
- A direct list of actions (with a timeline) in order to rectify things and reassure that the issue has been dealt with and will not happen again.
- In no instances will financial compensation be considered for any complaint.

14. Appeals

If an appeal, once internally investigated and reviewed, is denied, we will look to offer:

- An explanation as to why your request has been denied.
- Re-assurance that procedure has been followed.
- Feedback to ensure that any future applications meet our criteria.

If an appeal is upheld, then your funding application will be re-assessed by a new assessor and a new decision will be made by Teesside Airport Foundation on the outcome of your application, considering any new information provided in your appeal. If your appeal is upheld and your application is re-assessed, this does not mean that an award will be offered automatically. It will still be assessed purely on its merits in regard to our published eligibility criteria and any new information provided in your appeal.

Where an appeal is upheld and it is felt that you would have been financially supported had your original application been successful, consideration will be given to backdating your grant to the point of your original application to a maximum of three months of support, if applicable.

15. If you are unsatisfied with the response

If you are not satisfied with the response, a telephone call between both parties will be arranged as the next stage, to further review the case and discuss the reasons for disagreement.

If you feel your complaint is still not satisfactorily resolved following this call, you can apply in writing to the Chair of Trustees, Teesside Airport Foundation, Teesside Airport Business Suite, Tees Valley, Darlington DL2 1LU. who will review the case and respond within 28 days. The response following this review by the Chair of Trustees shall be considered final.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Corporate Policies sub-committee.

Version	Date	Changed by	Comments