



A3: The grantmaking process

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The role of branches

We guarantee to all people affected by MS that whichever branch they approach, they will get the information and support they need. We can say this because we have eight essential standards in place for MS Society branches.

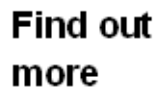
All branches must meet the eight requirements listed below for supporting people affected by MS. You are all responsible as a management committee for providing the eight essentials, with the chair having overall responsibility.

The eight essentials for MS Society branches

You must:

1. be easy to contact by phone and email
2. send out a regular newsletter
3. offer support to everyone affected by MS
4. make our publications available to all
5. keep an up-to-date list of local contacts to signpost people to
6. be contactable for newly diagnosed people
7. supply appropriate information to new contacts
8. provide necessary financial support

Top tip: Each essential activity has a list of agreed standards. These break down each requirement into smaller steps. We've developed a range of **how to guides** and other resources to help you to achieve the essentials and offer quality support to people affected by MS.

**Find out
more**

Find out more about our **essential requirements**:

- on our **volunteer website**,
<http://volunteers.mssociety.org.uk/branch-and-group-basics/eight-essential-requirements>
- by requesting support from your **Local Networks Officer**

The branch grantmaking role is to:

- provide information and support on MS Society grants to people with MS and their families and carers
- provide information on MS Society grants to health and social care professionals
- assess and award grants for individuals from the Individual Support Grants Fund and forward applications to the **Grants Team** for further funding where needed
- provide information on the Short Breaks and Activities Fund and Carers Grants Fund
- signpost applicants to other sources of funding, including statutory and other charitable funders, such as local trusts and charities
- monitor, evaluate and report on grantmaking activity and impact for individuals within the branch, to support local campaigning and fundraising activities and future grantmaking

Top tip: Providing grants can be an important first contact with branches for people affected by MS, which can lead to wider forms of support or branch involvement.

The role of the Grants Team

The **Grants Team** works closely with people affected by MS, branch volunteers, health professionals, local and national staff and other charities, to support people affected by MS.

The Grants Team role is to:

- develop grantmaking policy, establish national guidelines and procedures and support branches to adapt these guidelines for local circumstances
- provide guidance on MS Society grants to people affected by MS and their families and carers

- provide assisted information to help people affected by MS to secure funding from statutory providers - we give active information and support that goes beyond signposting, but is short of casework representation
- provide information on our grants to health and social care professionals
- assess and award grants for individuals from our Individual Support Grant Fund, the Short Breaks and Activities Fund and the Carers Grant Fund
- help to develop and update the MS Support programme
- provide bespoke grants training and workshops to branch volunteers and local staff
- offer guidance to support volunteers on grantmaking
- provide information to branches and applicants on accessing funding from other sources (statutory and charitable)
- submit grant applications on behalf of people with MS to other funders, to access further funding on their behalf
- monitor, evaluate and report on grantmaking activity and impact for individuals across the MS Society, to support campaigning and fundraising activities and future grantmaking

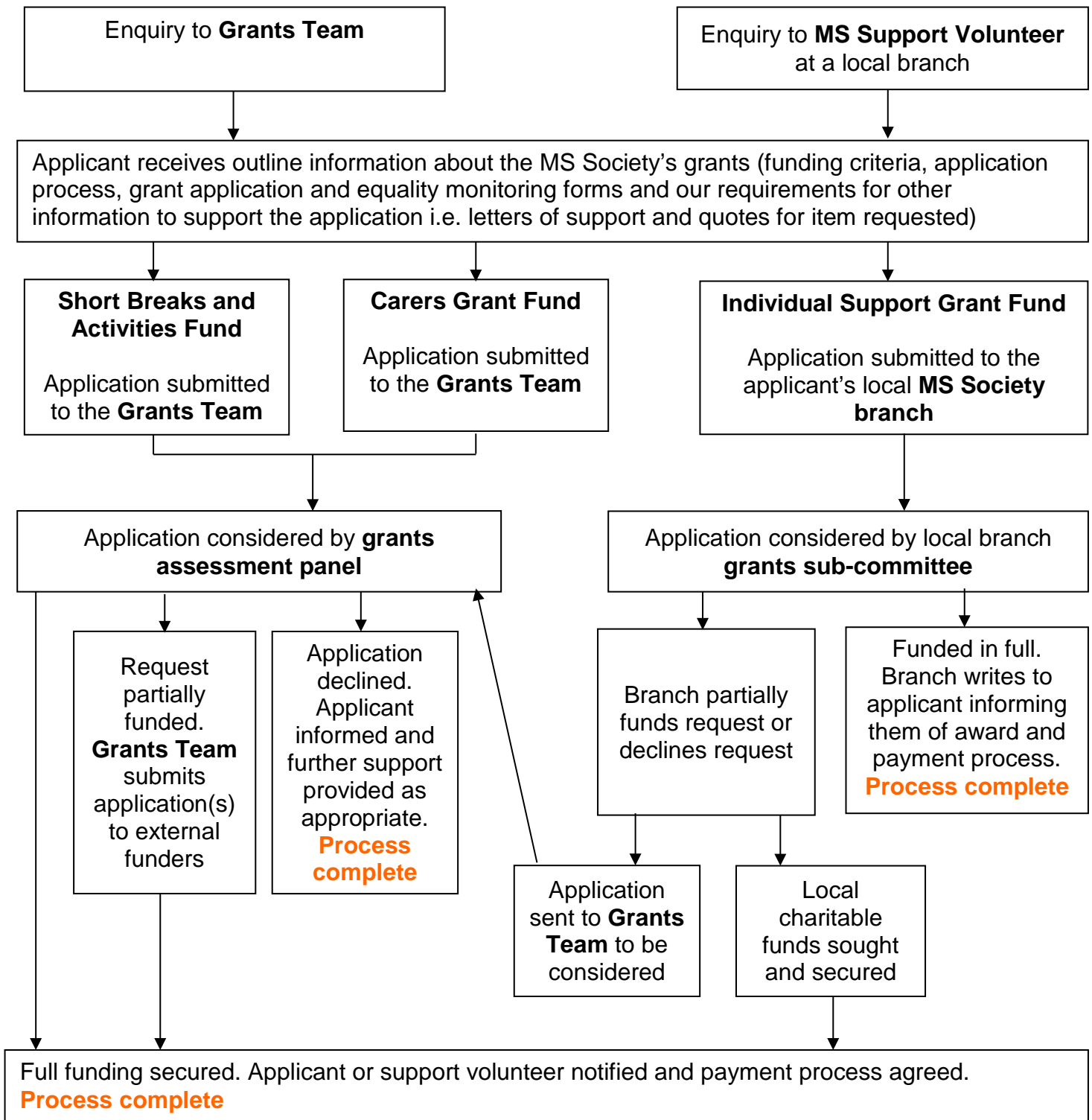
The role of local staff

Your **Local Networks Officer** is there to work alongside you, supporting the development of your branch. This includes supporting you to develop your grantmaking policy and grants sub-committee, to help people affected by MS through the provision of branch grants, and local information about grantmaking.

Your **Area Fundraiser** can support you to apply to local charitable trusts to raise funds to help you offer more support grants to local people.

Top tip: Contact details for staff referred to can be found in [Appendix 1: Sources of support](#). Job titles rather than names are used so that this publication doesn't date when somebody leaves their post.

The grantmaking process



NB: Your branch may also consider grants for short breaks and carers, but this is not a compulsory requirement. You will need to follow the same process as for **Individual Support Grants**, using **Short Breaks and Activities** and **Carers Grant Fund** application forms.

Support Grants Handbook A3: The grantmaking process	
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