

What you need to know about - Governing Documents

Who is this guidance document for:

- ❖ Applicants

This document may be useful for organisations who:

- Have a governing document and you wish to check it contains the information necessary to apply for a Veolia Environmental Trust grant.
- Do not have a governing document.

What is a governing document?

A governing document, also known as a constitution, is a written document that sets out the aims and rules that explain how your organisation is run. It is an important document as it shows the outside world, especially potential funders, that your organisation is well organised, democratic and accountable.

What information should my governing document contain?

- What your organisation is set up to do (known as its 'objects').
- How your organisation will do those things (known as 'powers').
- Who will run your organisation (the trustees, directors, the board or management committee).
- How your organisation is to be run and administrative arrangements for meetings, voting, looking after money, delegation to sub-committees etc.
- What will happen if administrative provisions need to be changed.
- What will happen if your organisation wishes or needs to wind up.

Why does my organisation need a governing document?

Your organisation is legally required to comply with its governing document, to ensure:

- Activities remain within the objects set out in the governing document.
- New activities are permitted within the objects.
- Your trustee body is properly and legally constituted.

Where can I find out more about what information should be included in my governing document?

There are many online resources available. Below are some suggested links you may like to follow to find out more.

<https://www.resourcecentre.org.uk/information/constitutions/>

<https://knowhow.ncvo.org.uk/setting-up/writing-a-constitution>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-write-your-charitys-governing-document>

Does my organisation need to provide a governing document to apply for a grant from the Veolia Environmental Trust?

Yes*

*There are exceptions:

- Places of worship. We ask that you provide your annual accounts in place of governing documents.
- Local authorities. We ask that you provide your standing orders in place of governing documents.

I am thinking of applying for a Veolia Environmental Trust grant, what information must my governing document include?

- A list of charitable aims.
- A clause stating that all money raised by or on behalf of the organisation is only to be used to further the charitable aims of the organisation. Alternatively, a clause stating that the organisation is not-for-profit.
- A dissolution clause stating that, if it is agreed to dissolve the organisation, all remaining money and other assets, once outstanding debts have been paid, will be donated to a charitable organisation with similar aims.
- The governing document must be adopted. It should be signed and dated by members of the management committee.

Can I contact you to discuss my governing document?

We hope you find this guidance useful but if you have any questions, please contact us and we will be happy to help.

Please note we cannot provide legal advice on your organisation's structure or advise on the details of what you should include in your governing document.