



Dear colleague,

This is the latest bulletin from the [Members' Policy Forum](#). The MPF is an initiative that aims to increase opportunities for all our members to engage directly with ACF's policy work, raise issues of interest and concern, and regularly engage with policymakers in government.

ACF began autumn at full speed with our Annual General Meeting. Carol Mack, ACF's CEO, delivered a report on our work supporting members to be ambitious and effective in the way they used their resources over the last few months. You can read the speech in full [here](#), which includes not only our collaborative work in response to Covid-19, but also Stronger Foundations engagement and the work we are doing internally to apply the Stronger Foundations principles to our own work, particularly through a DEI lens.

The [ACF Virtual Annual Conference](#), *Stronger Foundations: Reflect. Recover. Renew.*, is taking place on 25 and 26 November. The event will explore what impacts the Covid-19 crisis has had on us as a sector, what's been learnt and what our future considerations need to be. The conference is now open for booking and you can register [here](#).

We are pleased to have moved from development to the delivery phase of the Funders' Collaborative Hub, which you can read about in our [update marking the European Day of Foundations and Donors](#). The Hub also featured alongside other examples of collaboration in our recent webinar on 'Funder Collaboration in response to Covid-19', which you can read more about and watch the recording [here](#).

The ACF policy team are looking to put together some guidance and resources for foundations to help think about the wellbeing and resilience of their staff during Covid-19. If this is something you or your foundation have given thought to – whether that be in the form of wellbeing surveys, team meetings, or simply ideas and questions raised – please get in touch with us.

Here's a round-up of some recent policy developments since our last update:

- **Survey of Funders' Views of Accounts prepared under the Charities SORP** – Together with Scottish Grantmakers and with the support of Philanthropy Ireland, ACF has launched a survey regarding the use of charity accounts in grantmaking decisions. Most grantmakers will review accounts of applicants which were prepared in accordance with the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice (the SORP), but does this standard in its current use lead to accounts that are helpful for you in making grants decisions? Please [complete the survey here](#) by 1 November 2020.
- **SIIG event: The outlook for public finances and English local government** – The Social Impact Investors Group (SIIG) has organised an event with the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) based on their report on the financial risk and resilience of English local authorities in the coronavirus crisis. This session will provide a broad overview and a look at the potential impact on outcomes contracts and social property funds. The event will be held on 18 November, 10-11:30am, and is free to attend. [Book your place here](#).
- **ACF invited to act as a 'critical friend' to the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland** – In order to ensure its guidance and processes are accessible and user friendly, the Commission often invites stakeholders to act as a 'critical friend', providing their views on work it is developing. ACF is pleased to take on this role as part of our policy work, which will involve looking at drafts of guidance and processes relevant to ACF's area of expertise and providing feedback. We look forward to liaising with ACF members with an interest in Northern Ireland regulatory and operating matters.

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- **Updated Covid-19 guidance on online AGMs and meetings** – With the continuing impact of Covid-19, the Charity Commission for England and Wales has extended the provision allowing charities to hold AGMs and members' meetings online from 30 September to 30 December. This has been made possible by the Corporate Insolvency and Governance Act 2020. The provision allowing AGMs to be postponed ended on 30 September. [Find out more here.](#)
- **Danny Kruger on maximising the role of civil society** – Danny Kruger's [report](#) into how charities can continue supporting communities through the pandemic has been published. Its recommendations are grouped under three themes: power, focused on the use of data and procurement; people, focused on more volunteering and engagement; and places, focused on a place-based policy and encouraging more social investment. ACF's Director of External Affairs, Richard Hebditch, has written [about what this means for foundations.](#)
- **Amendments to the Indian Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA)** – A new law passed last month tightens regulations on how non-profits in India can receive international funding. The amendments make supporting Indian grantees more difficult by not permitting re-granting, creating a requirement for accounts to be made with the State Bank of India, and capping administrative expenses at 20%. [Find out more here.](#)
- **Civil Society and the end of the Transition Period** – The Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) have launched an online survey on how organisations are preparing for the end of the Transition Period. It is important for foundations and wider civil society to respond so that the Office for Civil Society (OCS) learns how best to support the sector in making these preparations. [Complete the survey here](#) by 22 October 2020.
- **Funder Safeguarding Focus Group Discussions** – The Funder Safeguarding Collaborative (FSC) and Elevate Children Funders Group have commissioned research examining how funders can promote organisational cultures and practices that keep people safe, and how FSC can support greater alignment between funders. They will be conducting online focus group discussions over the next few weeks around funder approaches to safeguarding. If you are interested to participate or find out more, please contact Karen Walker-Simpson <k.walker-simpson@outlook.com>

As always, please feel free to raise any issues you'd like to discuss with the Forum.

Best wishes,
The ACF policy team