

Wates Family Enterprise Trust (WFET) Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)

WFET has several grants programmes that can support Wates employees and Trustees who are involved in contributing to local communities through charities or other organisations. We have compiled our most frequently asked questions below.

If you have a query about any aspect of our grant giving that is not answered here, please do contact one of the WFET Team.

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Employee Campaigns

Why have employee campaigns?

The Wates Family Enterprise Trust (WFET) helps you help others. From match funding to community awards, Employee Giving Schemes from The Wates Family Enterprise Trust can boost your own fundraising efforts and support local causes you care about.

WFET forms a crucial part of the Wates Family's approach to being responsible business owners, supporting the communities where our people live and work.

What campaigns are there?

- **Match funding:** Each year* you can apply for any money raised through fundraising. This can be up to £750 for your Business Unit charity and up to £750 for a charity of your choice. The match funding is open to everyone from day one of employment. (*calendar year is January to December)
- **Community awards:** If you volunteer for an organisation that's close to your heart for more than two hours a week, you may be able to apply for WFET funding. WFET can award up to £1k towards kit (i.e. uniform) or £2k towards equipment (i.e. footballs/rackets).
- **Sports Sponsorship:** if you, your child (dependant up to the age of 21 years old), or spouse compete at a 'National level' in a recognised sport or activity, WFET can award up to £3k per year to help with costs such as travel, training fees and equipment.
- **100for500:** This is held once a year if approved by the Trustees. A small window is open for the first 100 applicants who nominate a small and local organisation to receive an award of £500. This campaign is usually open each September.

How do I find out more?

Head to the WFET Edi site for details of all the Employee Schemes and relevant policies. Alternatively, drop [Katherine Maskell](#) a line with any questions.

I have a query about Payroll Giving (Give as you Earn). Who do I ask about this?

This scheme enables you to donate to a charity close to your heart. You can choose to give anything from £4 and top up in increments of £1 to support the charities of your choice. Once you have selected this benefit, you will receive a membership pack from Charities Aid Foundation (CAF) containing all the information you need. Your funds will be deposited into a Charity Account to use at your discretion. Your donations will be matched by the WFET, up to £250 a year. Although WFET pays the cost of the Give as you Earn programme, it is not involved in any part of its administration. All queries should be directed at the **Human Resources team** via the HR portal.

Strategic Themed Awards

Applications for the WFET theme grants are closed and by invitation only. We do not take unsolicited applications.

What are the WFET themes?

- **Homes:** WFET supports thought leadership to tackle the critical challenges of quality and quantity of homes in the UK and understand some of the triggers leading to homelessness. The funding focuses on some of the most vulnerable people seeking homes at a point of crisis – families living in temporary accommodation and young people at a point of mental health crisis looking for an alternative to residential hospital care. Together, the funded research and practical work is being used to influence housing policy.
- **Sustainability:** through its Nature Based Neighbourhoods scheme, WFET supports programmes that promote access to nature in urban spaces, helping more people connect to the natural environment and engage in the climate movement. The Trust is currently funding projects in Manchester, Derby, Grimsby, Swansea and Basildon. *For specific lines to take on the Lund Partnership Programme please refer to these FAQs - [NBN – Place-Based Programme FAQs.docx](#)*
- **Life Opportunities for Young People** aims to expand opportunities for young people whose education is affected by structural barriers, disadvantage, or unmet needs. It focuses on creating more inclusive environments, supporting practical interventions and addressing the systemic factors that reduce opportunity. By fostering collaboration between education settings, charities, specialist organisations and funders, our work builds approaches that enable all young people to participate, progress and thrive.

How were the three themes decided?

These were chosen by the WFET Trustees, after consulting with external experts, as areas that they feel a personal commitment to and in which it was felt a real impact could be made.

How much funding do the themes have?

Between 2021-2025 (our last strategic period), £2,592,418 has been awarded to our strategic areas for investment. In 2025, £660,000 was allocated between the Themes (47% of the WFET budget).

Who is involved in deciding what is funded?

A lead Trustee takes responsibility for each theme. Working with each thematic lead, they can work with an advisory group to shape the activities and research being carried out. This group may include Wates Group representation, statutory organisations, external experts, advisory agencies and the charitable sector. Each grant is presented to the Trustees and needs to be approved by all before an award can be granted.

How is the impact of themed awards being measured?

They are being measured in two ways. Each funded organisation submits monitoring forms showing how the grant was spent and the impact. This reporting is guided by the WFET's evaluation framework which has identified specific indicators of long-term impact for the WFET's grant making.

General Questions

Where do the Wates Family Enterprise Trust funds come from?

The Wates Family Enterprise Trust receives funds from the annual profits of the Wates Group. The Wates Family give a percentage of their owner's profits to the Wates Family Enterprise Trust to enable staff and Trustees to fulfil their philanthropic aspirations and commitments. From time to time, the Wates Family Enterprise Trust receives income from other funders in joint support of our approach and thematic funding focus.

What is the Wates Foundation?

Founded by brothers, Allan, Norman and Ronald Wates, [the Wates Foundation](#) is an independent grant-making Family Trust, which has been supporting the charitable and voluntary sector for 60 years. The Foundation is an entirely separate entity to the Wates Group and WFET.

As a proactive grant-maker which primarily funds small organisations identified by, and local to, Wates family members **nominations to the Foundation are by invitation only.**

Family Awards

Can employees apply for a Family Award?

No – a small amount of funding is set aside for Wates Family Enterprise Trust Trustees to support charities and organisations with which they have developed a relationship.

Am I able to recommend organisations to Trustees that they might consider supporting?

No – Each Trustee awards grants to the organisations in which they have a personal interest. Sometimes Trustees will jointly fund projects where they believe the wider public benefit is strong and that the grant can have a significant impact on beneficiaries or communities.

How are the benefits of Family Awards measured?

Family award recipients have to report back on how the funds were spent and the impact of their funding.

How can I find out what projects are being supported by Family members?

The Wates Family Enterprise Trust lists all the projects funded by WFET by category, including those identified by family members in its Annual Report and accounts.

Group Grants and Thinking Differently

What are Group Grants?

Until October 2025 the Wates Family Enterprise Trust offered small grants to community organisations that are working in the areas where the Wates Group is active. These were called 'Group Grants'. These grants were awarded to organisations which were nominated to us by colleagues from across the Wates Group. The grants were awarded by a panel made up of staff from the different divisions of the Group and two of WFET's Trustees.

What did Group Grants support?

The programme's funding themes were broad and supported community organisations that were engaging people who are not well connected to services or support, or that were building the resilience of people, or helping local people to create solutions to local issues. We awarded grants of up to £10,000.

Throughout the life of the programme, we have supported a wide range of groups and activities across England and Wales - including gardening groups, food banks, community counselling, clubs for older people, charities supporting training & employment, disability groups, projects for young people living through tough lives, homelessness initiatives, and schemes supporting refugees. Grants totalling £646k were awarded in in the strategic period 2021-2025.

How do I apply for a Group Grant?

The Group Grants programme has now come to an end. **The Trustees and Secretariat of WFET continue to engage in conversations across Group.**

Thinking Differently

What is the Thinking Differently programme?

The Wates Family Enterprise Trust's Thinking Differently programme has provided funding to help charitable organisations make a significant change to the way they work. Each year we have selected two charitable organisations, nominated by colleagues within Wates Group, which each received a grant of up to £80,000 over 2 years. The funding helps the organisation to try new ways of tackling problems or supporting communities, or to make changes so that it can do its work more efficiently or effectively, or to help scale up its work to reach even more people.

An important factor in the effectiveness of Thinking Differently grants is the three-way relationship between the WFET, Wates Group and the funded organisations – with the engagement of Group employees being pivotal.

Since the Thinking Differently programme began in 2021 to 2025, it has awarded grants totalling £647,500.

How do I be part of this programme?

We are currently reviewing the Thinking Differently programme, and we will publish an update on the future of the programme in 2026.

The WFET Team

We would love to hear from you.

