

# The Cameron Fund

## Complaints Policy and Procedure

The procedure set out below is intended for all external users of the Cameron Fund, principally new applicants, existing beneficiaries, referees, referral organisations and individual and corporate donors. Areas covered by this procedure include, but are not limited to, standards of service, decisions on the provision of grants and loans, the provision of information and breaches of confidentiality.

### General Principles:

- Complaints of a minor nature should be resolved informally between the Fund and the individual or organisation concerned wherever possible and the formal procedure set out in this document shall not be invoked. Minor complaints include: failure to respond to a telephone message or e-mail within two working days; a single incident of perceived impolite behaviour and failure to fulfil a task as agreed.
- When there is a minor complaint, as defined above, specifically about a Trustee, an informal process will be initiated by the Chief Executive to seek an early resolution of the complaint if possible. If this fails then the formal procedure will take place as set out below.
- No anonymous complaint will be investigated.
- To allow for a proper investigation, complaints should be brought to the attention of the Chief Executive or the Chairman of the Trustees as soon as possible. Save in exceptional circumstances, a complaint lodged more than three months after the event to which it relates will not be considered.
- Where an individual is unable to lodge their complaint in writing, a submission will be accepted by another person on their behalf and with their permission, e.g. family member, social worker. Complaints submitted by a solicitor or accountant or by a family member in their capacity as a solicitor or accountant will not be accepted. The Cameron Fund will not pay the fees of any person providing the submission on behalf of a complainant.
- In the absence of the Chairman of the Trustees, or when it would be inappropriate for the Chairman to act, one of the Officers of the Fund shall undertake the tasks allotted to the Chairman in the procedure below, providing that Officer has not already participated in the consideration of the complaint as a panel member.
- Where appropriate, the Chief Executive shall facilitate the procedure.

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- Time periods set out in the procedure may be extended where visits and meetings are required. In such instances the complainant shall be informed.

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1. The individual or officer of an organisation should lodge the complaint by writing to the Chief Executive at the Fund's registered office: Tavistock House North, Tavistock Place London WC1H 9HR. The letter should set out in full the circumstances or event(s), which have generated the complaint with details which will assist investigation: names of individuals involved; dates and times of relevant events. A contact telephone number should be provided.
2. Complaints relating specifically to the Chief Executive should be sent in an envelope addressed to the Chairman of the Trustees and marked "Private and Confidential – to be opened by addressee only". It is the responsibility of the Chief Executive to forward such correspondence unopened to the Chairman, or another Officer of the Fund if the Chairman is unavailable. The Chairman or another Officer shall then administer the complaint instead of the Chief Executive as set out in points 3, 5, 6, 7, and 8 below.
3. The Chief Executive will write to the complainant to acknowledge receipt and will inform the Chairman of the Trustees. Where the complaint relates to the Chief Executive, the Chairman or another Officer will write to acknowledge receipt.
4. When the complaint involves a Trustee, there will be an initial opportunity for the matter to be resolved informally. The Chief Executive will write to the complainant to explain the process and will inform the Trustee concerned. The Trustee will then seek to resolve the complaint by telephone or letter, including, where appropriate, an apology. Copies of all correspondence should be sent to the Chief Executive; in the event that there is no correspondence, i.e. the matter has been considered orally, the Trustee should write to the Chief Executive to inform him of the outcome. If the matter is resolved then no further action will take place. However, the complainant will be informed that if this informal resolution fails they may request that the Chief Executive initiates the formal procedure as described in the following paragraphs.
5. Within ten working days of such a request, the Chief Executive will convene a panel of three trustees to investigate it, one being designated the lead Trustee. The Chairman shall not be a member of

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the panel. The Chief Executive will set a date with the lead Trustee for the conclusion of the investigation and informing the complainant of the outcome. This date will usually be three weeks from the date the panel is convened.

6. The Chief Executive shall ensure that all printed and digital documentation is held and stored separately from documentation relating to the complainant in their primary capacity, i.e applicant, beneficiary, Local Medical Committee, referee, member, donor.
7. The Chairman will write to the complainant advising the name of the lead Trustee who will be undertaking the investigation and the date that a decision may be expected.
8. The Chief Executive will supply the panel with all available written evidence and the panel will collect whatever evidence they deem is necessary and interview staff, speak to the complainant and any other party as needed. The investigation may require a visit to the complainant or the complaining organisation which may extend the investigation period.
9. The lead trustee will inform the Chief Executive of the outcome of the panel's investigation, the decision whether or not to uphold the complaint and any remedial action to be taken.
10. The lead trustee will write to the complainant by the date advised in (4) above, reporting the decision of the panel and the remedial action.  
*Note: In some instances, it may not be possible to provide full details of the remedial action where confidentiality would be breached.*
11. If the complainant considers that the decision of the panel does not fully address their complaint, they should write to the Chairman within fifteen working days of the date of the letter in (8) stating that they would like a review of the decision by the Chairman because they do not consider the complaint has been fully addressed.
12. In requesting such a review, the complainant should provide in writing a statement setting out the perceived failures in the decision.
13. In the event that a review is requested and a statement provided as in (10) above, the Chairman will write to the complainant confirming that he will undertake the review and advise the date by which they may expect a response, usually within fifteen working days.

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14. If the Chairman considers there is not sufficient reason to warrant a review, he may write to the complainant stating that he declines to do so and giving his reasons.
15. If the Chairman undertakes a review, he will consider the process, documentation and other collected evidence of the panel's investigation to reach his decision. If he wishes, he may require the full panel or the lead trustee to meet with him.
16. The Chairman may make further investigations or seek additional evidence.
17. By the date specified in (11) above, the Chairman will write to the complainant stating whether or not he upholds the decision of the panel. He will also inform the complainant of any remedial action he intends to take or has taken, subject to confidentiality.
18. The Chairman's review decision is final and there is no further appeal.

**Approved by the Council of Management on 24 October 2013**