



ACO MEMBERSHIP GUIDE 2020-21



**Supporting 21st century
benevolence**



SUPPORTING 21ST CENTURY BENEVOLENCE

The Association of Charitable Organisations (ACO) is the UK umbrella body for benevolent funds and charities that give grants and welfare support to individuals in need.

We encourage collaboration and best practice in the charity sector through the sharing of knowledge and resources to meet shared challenges.

Whilst the Covid-19 pandemic has created numerous difficulties for benevolent funds and grant-makers, ACO members have continued to benefit from our commitment to the sector – through campaigning, resource sharing and ensuring that our colleagues have a common platform to come together and leverage the collective expertise of our extensive network of charities.

WHO WE ARE

ACO comprises a broad range of over 100 grant-giving charities, providing our members with a wide and diverse range of charities to benchmark against and share knowledge between.

Members include:

- Occupational charities
- Armed Forces charities
- Illness and disability charities
- Children's charities
- Women's charities
- Older people's charities
- Regional charities
- Livery companies
- General grant-giving charities

"ACO membership provides excellent value for money because resources, networking, learning and sharing are available to everyone in our organisation"



CHAMPIONING BENEVOLENT AND GRANT-MAKING CHARITIES

The benevolent charity sector encompasses a wide range of organisations focused on delivering financial and wellbeing support to individuals in need. Whilst the emphasis of these charities may vary (in terms of beneficiary groups, eligibility criteria, geographic coverage and types of grants) they often face common challenges. These can include issues ranging from meeting wider demand on services, increasing levels of income (fundraising and investments), building awareness amongst beneficiary groups and measuring impact.

ACO provides an invaluable environment to bring together charities from throughout the sector to leverage their expertise, experience and resources to address these common issues and develop shared solutions. We achieve this through:



Knowledge sharing

Providing a platform to share best practice and benchmarking through member-only events, research and publications. Managing special interest groups around CEOs, Small Charities, Marcomms, International Beneficiaries and Income Generation. Access to monthly sectoral e-newsletter *Charity News Review*.



Building peer-to-peer relations

Developing working relationships with others throughout the sector brings significant benefits for both personal and professional development.



Lobbying and advocacy

Being the voice of the benevolence sector and working in conjunction with other charity sector infrastructure bodies to influence Government, regulators and industry bodies.



Support and assistance

Aiding members on specific issues and signposting appropriate advice/support within the sector.



OUR RESPONSE DURING COVID-19

“Despite adverse circumstances, you very rapidly adapted and provided exceptional services to your members during the whole of last year. I personally felt very supported and it helped enormously during a very difficult and busy time”

Like many charities, we've had to re-shape how we operate as a result of the pandemic – remote working and digitalisation being two obvious aspects – however, as we have come out of this period, we've been able to continue to provide a relevant offering by engaging with a wider and more diversified audience of colleagues across the U.K.

In particular, our two 2020 campaigns – *Here to Help* and *One Day Changes Lives* – alongside our collaboration with other national charity infrastructure bodies to press the case to Government for charity sector support – evidenced our commitment to acting as a real voice for grant-making and benevolent charities

At the same time, we were able to put in place a range of practical measures to support benevolent and grant-making charities, including:

- introducing a central hub on the ACO website to share/signpost key resources and information for charities
- running weekly drop-in video calls with our smaller charities
- providing peer-to-peer support to share challenges and learnings
- promoting member charities' emergency appeals and campaigns across social media
- maintaining a wide programme of virtual events to ensure continuing collaboration and engagement between members.



NEXT STEPS

If your organisation is a registered charity providing grants, welfare support and/or advice to individuals and families in need then membership of ACO could provide a strong platform to enhance your activities through collaboration, peer connection and knowledge sharing with other charities in the sector.

By joining us, your organisation will benefit from a range of tools and resources specifically tailored to the grant-making sector.

MEMBERSHIP FEES

Basic Subscription: £770

For organisations with less than £1m annual turnover

Band A: £900

An annual turnover £1m - £3m

Band B: £1,010

An annual turnover £3m-£5m

Band C: £1,300

An annual turnover over £5m

Low Income Subscription: £405

Subject to approval by ACO CEO

CONTACT

For further information on how membership of ACO could benefit your charity, please contact:

Donal Watkin
(Chief Executive)

t: 020 725 4475

e: donal@aco.uk.net

w: www.aco.uk.net

Follow us on social media:
[@ACOBenevolence](#)

