

HEROES RETURN 2 -Questions and Answers

1.1 What changes are you making to the Heroes Return 2 programme?

We are making a number of changes to the programme from Monday 25 February 2013.

The most important of these is that we are now offering veterans an opportunity to apply for funding for one more trip, if they have already been funded through Heroes Return 2. We have also increased the amounts of funding available that veterans can claim for their trips.

We are also offering the option of funding a carer for a spouse or partner in addition to the carer we will currently fund for the veteran. The Heroes Return 2 programme will also be closing in December 2015.

1.2 Why have you changed the one visit only rule?

We have had requests from Veterans for us to pay for additional trips in the past and funding is now available for us to be able to fund these trips. We also recognise that many veterans will want to look to attend commemorative events, including those in 2014 that will mark the 70th anniversary of D-Day, and events in 2015 that will mark the 70th Anniversary of the end of WW2.

1.3 I have already paid for an additional trip myself - can I claim the money back?

We will only fund additional trips that have been booked to take place in 2013 onwards.

If you have already paid for your trip in 2013 onwards we will reimburse you at the revised rate of funding.

Unfortunately we are unable to fund additional trips retrospectively if they took place before 2013. However, you will be able to apply for funding to undertake another trip if you meet the programme criteria and wish to do so.

1.4 I think I might be eligible for a grant from the Heroes Return Programme but I have not applied before. Can I still apply?

Yes, we would still welcome applications from veterans who have not applied before.

1.5 Why is the programme closing in December 2015?

Our investment in veterans' funding stands at over £50m. Since 2009 we have been able to help over 15,000 veterans and their spouses and carers to take trips. Given the importance of the anniversaries in 2014 and 2015 we feel that December 2015 is an appropriate moment in time to bring the programme to a close. By then veterans will have had 7 years to have applied for a grant through the programme.

1.6 Have the amounts we can apply for gone up?

The rates have been revised to reflect increases in travelling and insurance costs. These are set out at 3.1.

1.7 So will you fund two carers for me now?

No, we can only fund one carer for a veteran and one for their spouse if required (so four people in total). If you travel alone we will only be able to fund one carer.

1.8 When is the programme closing?

The programme will close in December 2015. Further details of closing dates for applications will be provided nearer the time (in late 2014).

1.9 Can I revisit where I went for my first trip?

Yes, you can, it does not have to be a trip to a new destination. For example you might like to re-visit annual commemorations such as El Alamein, Market Garden and D-Day

1.10 I want to go to a place other than where I served for my second commemorative event - are there are restrictions on where I can go?

The intention of the scheme is to fund visits to the areas where the individuals (or their spouses/widows) saw active service themselves. There might be instances where an individual would wish to visit another area (for example to visit their brother's grave if he also served in the Armed Forces overseas during the war). Or they may wish to visit a commemorative event in the UK instead. We would need to consider such applications individually on their relevance to the scheme's criteria; you should submit your form and supply additional details to explain the circumstances.

1.12 Can we go on cruises or undertake trips to holiday destinations which are not connected to commemoration events?

It's unlikely. The purpose of our funding is to allow veterans to commemorate their wartime experiences by returning to the areas where they saw active service, such as battlefields, or that have another powerful association with the war, such as war graves and POW camps. Normally, cruises would not be eligible because they would not be focused on commemorating the events or areas where the veterans saw active service. For example, we would not fund the costs of a cruise across the Atlantic to the USA because there would be no link to commemorative activities. It is feasible that if the purpose of the cruise is to return to a specific active service destination, such as Crete or Sicily, such visits could be funded.

1.13 What is the Heroes Return 2 scheme?

The Heroes Return 2 scheme gives Lottery funding to help World War II veterans who saw active service. They must be resident in the UK or the Republic of Ireland to be able to take part in commemorative visits (within the UK and overseas) that mark the anniversary of events leading to the end of WWII.

1.14 When was the scheme launched?

The scheme was launched on 1 April 2009.

1.15 How much funding is available?

WWII veterans that saw active service overseas can apply for a fixed amount grant of between £165 and £8,140 depending on the number of people taking part and the destination.

1.16 What are the grants for?

We will make grants towards the costs of commemorative visits. A fixed amount of money will be available for each veteran and their spouse and/or carer towards the cost of their visit. There will be five levels of funding according to the destination. These fixed amounts have been set so that there is enough money to cover the cost of travel and insurance.

1.17 Who is providing the funding?

The funding is being provided by the Big Lottery Fund - the National Lottery distribution body that gives grants to voluntary and community organisations and to education, health and environment projects.

1.18 Who will be assessing the grants?

Applications will be assessed by the Big Lottery Fund team in our Newcastle centre, who have long-standing expertise in assessing Lottery applications.

1.19 Who can I contact for more information?

If you have any general questions about the scheme and whether you are eligible, please ring the application helpline on 0845 0000 121.

2. Eligibility

2.1 Who can get a grant?

WWII veterans resident in the UK or Republic of Ireland who saw active service overseas with or alongside the British and Allied Armed Forces in the Second World War. WWII veterans may be accompanied by a spouse and/or a carer. Widows and widowers of WWII veterans are also eligible, in most cases.

2.2 Are former prisoners of war eligible?

Yes.

2.3 Will Merchant Navy veterans of WWII be eligible?

Yes. We recognise that the Merchant Navy played a vital role in supplying the country and in supporting the war effort. Merchant service veterans who served alongside British and Allied Armed Forces will be eligible to apply for funding to allow them to visit destinations overseas directly associated with their wartime experiences involving the armed forces.

2.4 Are veterans from other conflicts (Suez, Malaya, Aden etc) eligible?

No - this is special Lottery funding for WWII veterans to commemorate the anniversary of the events leading up to the end of the Second World War and can only be used for these purposes.

2.5 Who can act as a carer?

A carer may be a spouse, relative or friend who supports and looks after you because of age, disability or illness.

2.6 Can my spouse be my carer?

Yes - this will be considered as a grant to two people (the middle column of the table in section 3).

2.7 Can I be accompanied by another relative such as a daughter, son or sibling?

Yes, in the role of carer. A carer must be over 18 years of age and be willing to undertake the responsibilities of the role.

2.8 Does it matter if I married my spouse after the war?

No - but it must be your current spouse or long-term partner.

2.9 Both my spouse and I require carers - can we apply for an award for four people?

Yes - the maximum award we can give for any one veteran on a visit is for four people: the individual veteran, their carer, their spouse and carer if required.

2.10 Will you fund two carers for each person?

No, we can only fund one carer per person

2.11 Will widows or widowers of veterans be eligible?

Normally yes, widows or widowers of veterans can apply in place of the veteran. Please see the exceptions set out in section 2.11 below.

2.12 Are war widows who have received a Government grant to visit their husband's grave eligible for Heroes Return 2 funding?

The Government-sponsored War Widows Grant-in-aid scheme has been running for 20 years. It gives financial support to war widows to enable them to visit their husband's grave or memorial overseas when they have not had the opportunity to do this before. If a widow received a grant for a visit made before 2009, she can apply for a Heroes Return 2 grant to go on another visit through the programme. If she is getting a grant for a visit to be made, she can only apply for Heroes Return 2 funding for a different destination associated with her husband's service.

2.13 Will widows or widowers of veterans who married after the war ended be eligible?

Yes.

2.14 If a widow(er) of a veteran has remarried, are both the widow(er) and their new spouse eligible for funding?

Yes. The new spouse can act as a carer.

2.15 Will the children or siblings of veterans (either deceased or living) be eligible for funding?

Yes. However, relatives of surviving veterans are eligible for funding if they act as the veteran's carer on the Heroes Return 2 visit. If the veteran has passed away, it may be

possible for a veteran's child or sibling to accompany a widow as a carer, or to accompany another surviving veteran as a carer.

2.16 Why won't you fund relatives such as children or siblings to travel without veterans?

The scheme is entitled Heroes Return 2 and is intended to allow surviving veterans to return to the places where they served during the Second World War.

2.17 Are foreign nationals who served alongside British Armed Forces (for example, Poles who fought in the Polish Airborne Brigade at Arnhem) eligible?

If they are currently resident in the UK or the Republic of Ireland, yes. We cannot, however, make Lottery grants from this scheme to veterans who are resident outside the UK or Eire.

2.18 Are residents of the UK's Crown Dependencies (the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man) eligible?

Yes -as long as they meet the standard eligibility criteria for the programme.

2.19 Are expatriate veterans who still hold British passports eligible?

No. Veterans resident outside the UK, Republic of Ireland are not eligible for funding.

2.20 Are veterans who are residents of the Republic of Ireland eligible for funding?

Yes. We are working with the Royal British Legion to allow veterans resident in the Republic of Ireland to benefit from this scheme.

2.21 Is the programme different for veterans resident in the Republic of Ireland (ROI)?

The programme is essentially the same. It operates with the same eligibility criteria in the ROI as in the UK. Veterans, spouses, widow(er)s and present-day carers will be eligible, as they are in the UK. There will be minor differences in the application process that reflect the fact that we are working with the Royal British Legion to run the Heroes Return 2 scheme in the Republic of Ireland.

2.22 Are veterans who supported actions overseas but who were based in the UK eligible?

We will consider such applications based on their relevance to the Heroes Return 2 scheme.

Although such veterans will not have served overseas, they may have been very closely involved with groups of veterans who did indeed serve overseas. For example, if a former member of RAF ground crew wished to visit the graves in Germany or elsewhere of an RAF aircrew with whom he worked, we would deem him eligible if he went on a group visit arranged by a recognised veterans organisation. However, a former army pay clerk based in the UK, would not normally be eligible because there is not the same clear link with groups of veterans who served overseas.

2.23 How will you confirm that I am a veteran of the Second World War?

You will need to include details of your wartime service in the application form. If there are any doubts, we shall check your eligibility.

2.24 Will applicants have to provide documentary proof of eligibility?

This is unlikely. The application form asks for details of wartime service and our staff will carry out whatever checks may be appropriate. If a recognised veterans' organisation is arranging the visit and all members of the visiting party are associated with that organisation, we will probably be able to accept the application as bona fide.

2.25 Are Royal Navy or Merchant Navy veterans who did not see land action eligible?

Yes, they are, provided their application is for a visit to an appropriate destination. Our funding is intended to fund commemorative visits to overseas destinations where veterans saw active service. We recognise that it is more difficult for many Navy veterans to identify an appropriate destination, given that much of their active service was at sea. We have provided additional advice on suitable destinations in section 2.26 below.

2.26 What destinations can Royal Navy or Merchant Navy veterans visit?

Where Navy veterans supported active engagements on land, they would be eligible for funding for commemorative visits to these destinations. Murmansk, Malta, the fall of Singapore, the landings in Crete and Sicily, the landings in Italy, the evacuations from Dunkirk and the Normandy landings are some examples. In these instances, there is no need to provide any additional information other than that requested on the application form. However we recognise that some destinations that were in unoccupied, allied countries were major bases for active service and were directly affected by hostilities. We will consider applications from veterans to such destinations provided they include a short covering note showing that the destination has a strong link with their active service and that the purpose of the visit is commemorative. Please note that we may set funding allocations for these visits that differ from the table published in the application materials, in line with their actual cost.

2.27 Can veterans from other forces (RAF, Army etc) also visit destinations that were affected by hostilities but where there was no active land engagement?

Yes. The information in the second paragraph of section 2.25 also applies to other services, not just the Navy. Again, we will consider applications from veterans to such destinations provided they include a short covering note showing that the destination has a strong link with their active service and that the purpose of the visit is commemorative.

2.28 How will you assess applications to destinations that were affected by hostilities but there was no active land engagement?

The main criteria we will assess are: - is there a strong link with their active service and was the destination directly affected by hostilities? And is the visit commemorative?

2.29 Can cruises be funded (particularly for Navy veterans)?

It's unlikely. The purpose of our funding is to allow veterans to commemorate their wartime experiences by returning to the areas where they saw active service, such as battlefields, or that have another powerful association with the war, such as war graves and POW camps. Normally, cruises would not be eligible because they would not be focused on commemorating the events or areas where the veterans saw active service. For example, we would not fund the costs of a cruise across the Atlantic to the USA because there would be no link to commemorative activities. It is feasible that if the purpose of the cruise is to return to a specific active service destination, such as Crete or Sicily, such visits could be funded.

2.30 Are eligible veterans (or their spouses widows) able to visit areas where they themselves did not see active service?

The intention of the scheme is to fund visits to the areas where the individuals (or their spouses/widows) saw active service themselves. There might be instances where an individual would wish to visit another area (for example to visit their brother's grave if he also served in the Armed Forces overseas during the war). Or they may wish to visit a commemorative event in the UK instead. We would need to consider such applications individually on their relevance to the scheme's criteria; you should submit your form and supply additional details to explain the circumstances.

2.31 During which years must a veteran have served with or alongside the British Armed Forces to be eligible?

The funding is designed to allow veterans to return to the areas where they saw active service overseas. If a veteran did not join the armed forces until after VE Day in Europe in May 1945 or VJ Day in the Far East in August 1945, they may not be eligible because they will not have seen active service. We will consider applications from such veterans on their relevance to the scheme's criteria.

2.32 Is there an upper or lower age restriction on carers?

A carer may be a spouse, relative or friend who supports and looks after you because of age, disability or illness. We do not have an upper or lower age limit restriction; we leave this to the discretion of those travelling.

2.33 Am I eligible to apply for funding from the Big Lottery Fund's Heroes Return 2 programme, if I have previously applied and received funding from the Big Lottery Fund's original Heroes Return programme?

Yes, a previous award from the first round of Heroes Return funding would not prevent a WWII Veteran from being considered for funding from Heroes Return 2.

3. Level of funding

3.1 How much grant will be offered by the Heroes Return 2 scheme?

That depends on where you are going. We have grouped potential destinations into five zones, and the grant varies according to who is accompanying each veteran (or their widow/widower). Amounts range from £165 for one person visiting a destination within the UK up to £8,140 for a veteran, their spouse and their carers visiting the Far East.

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Destination	Amount Individual (One person)	Individual plus spouse or carer (Two people)	Individual plus spouse and carer (Three people)	<i>Individual plus spouse and two carers</i> (Four people)
UK	£165	£250	£365	£500
Northern and Western Europe	£550	£965	£1,430	£1,930
Mediterranean and North Africa	£880	£1,570	£2,420	£3,140
Egypt/Libya and Middle East	£1,650	£3,110	£4,675	£6,220
Far East and Rest of World	£2,200	£4,070	£6,050	£8,140

3.2 How did you determine the grant allowances for different destinations?

The original grant allowances were decided after initial consultation with Poppy Travel, the trading arm travel company of the Royal British Legion, about what would be considered to be reasonable costs. They were also agreed to ensure that the programme could operate simply and fairly: we believe that they have been set at a level that will allow the total funding available in the Heroes Return 2 scheme to meet the demand for travel up to December 2015 and, by having fixed levels, it means that grant applications can be swiftly assessed to avoid undue delays in grant awards to veterans.

3.3 Can grant awards be increased if the travel costs of our trip exceed the allowances you have set?

We normally cannot increase grant awards if the cost of travel exceeds the figures we have determined. We would also encourage all veterans to look to take part in an organised group visit that will often be able to agree more competitive prices. If you still feel that you have strong case for your travel costs to be increased, please set this out in a covering note to your application. The only instance where we are likely to increase costs is discussed below.

3.4 What about visits to destinations that are particularly costly to reach? Is it possible to increase allowances for destinations that are more costly than your guidance suggests?

Yes, we recognise that each of our five zones cover a very wide range of destinations. We will consider increasing allowances for travellers if they can clearly set out why costs are higher than our guidelines allow.

For example, in the past we have awarded grants for travel to Murmansk, parts of Iceland and locations off the coast of Norway where the costs of travel are higher than the allowances for Northern and Western Europe, If you feel that costs to travel to your destination are substantially higher than normal within a particular travel zone, please set this out in a covering note to your application.

3.5 Will you increase awards for travel from remoter parts of the UK?

We cannot vary the grant awards in this instance. However, specialist travel operators have already made significant progress towards them operating fixed costs for veterans funded by the Heroes Return 2 scheme travelling from any part of the UK. Please note that, however, that travel operators are unlikely retrospectively to agree such fixed costs to bookings that have already been made.

3.6 In which circumstances will you fund a carer's travel costs?

We will fund travel costs of a carer when an eligible individual (a veteran, their spouse or a widow/widower) would otherwise be unable to travel without their care or support.

3.7 Will there be any grants to cover the costs of organising a visit?

If there are more than 10 people travelling, we can make an additional grant of £275 to secretaries of associations (but not tour operators) arranging the trip to cover administrative costs associated with the visit.

3.8 What happens if I overspend?

The grant you will be given is for a fixed amount. It will not be increased.

3.9 What happens if I underspend?

This is very unlikely to happen. However, if members of your group drop out after you have received the grant, you will have to repay their element (but not any costs, such as non-refundable deposits, that have already been incurred). You will be required to sign an undertaking to this effect on the application form.

3.10 What if someone passes away after funding is received?

As noted in the previous question, you will not have to pay for any costs that you have already incurred. Please contact us at the address given on your acknowledgement letter to inform us of the change.

If the application has been made on behalf of a group visit, and you are able to arrange for a suitable, eligible substitute to travel in place of the deceased veteran, please notify us and you will not have to repay any of the grant.

3.11 Are Italy and the Mediterranean coast of France considered to be in the Mediterranean and North Africa destination zone?

Yes, they are.

3.12 Do the allowances take into account the higher levels of travel insurance for old age pensioners?

The grant allowances were decided after consultation with veterans. Organisations and specialist travel companies, such as Poppy Travel, about what would be considered to be reasonable costs. We were well aware of the high insurance costs required for those travelling through the Heroes Return 2 scheme and took these costs into account when calculating the appropriate travel allowances. The allowances are designed to make a significant contribution to cover travel costs including insurance.

3.13 How much funding is given to cover administrative costs of group visits?

Secretaries of associations that are applying as a large group (more than 10 travellers funded through the scheme including spouses, widows, carers) will be entitled to receive a flat rate administration award of £275. This will be paid automatically as part of the overall grant award to the group; there is no need to apply for it separately.

3.14 Can the travel allowance for carers be increased to cover the additional fees required for nurses or doctors to join the visit?

No, the allowance for carers is designed to cover their travel costs and not any additional fees that these carers might charge. We expect that carers will normally be a spouse, relative or friend, rather than a medical professional. Please note that often medical professionals may volunteer to travel with a group of veterans and not charge for their services - in this case they would certainly be eligible to receive funding as a carer. Also, some of the specialist operators will already have medical staff as part of their organised tour group, and, clearly, there is then no need to arrange for separate medical staff to be funded as carers.

4. Application process and completing application form

4.1 Do I need to register by telephone in order to receive a grant?

No, you don't. If you want to find out more about the Heroes Return 2 scheme, you can receive further details on eligibility by ringing our helpline and we will arrange to send you an application form if you want one. However, we expect the majority of people travelling to take part in group visits arranged by veterans' organisations. For such group visits, only one application form is required for the whole of the group.

4.2 Does every individual travelling need to complete a form?

No. We expect the majority of people travelling through the Heroes Return 2 scheme will take part in group visits arranged by veterans' organisations. For such group visits, only one application form is required for the whole of the group. The organiser of the group visit will provide details of each member of the travel party on the application form.

4.3 Who can apply?

We will normally award grants to veterans, organisations and individuals veterans to enable them to arrange visits on behalf of groups of veterans. We can help match individual veterans with an appropriate group visit. We will also consider applications from small groups or individuals.

4.4 How do I apply?

We will send you a short application form for you to complete.

4.5 Can I apply for funding for trips that have already been booked?

Yes, if you have booked a trip for 2013 and beyond.

4.6 Must the visits be linked to events that took place in 1944 and 1945?

Not necessarily. We expect the focus to be on these events, but, if veterans want to return to overseas areas where they served during other years of the Second World War, we are able to fund them, too.

4.7 What happens after application form has been filled in?

We will let you know as soon as we receive your application. Then we will:

1. Check that all travellers are eligible for the grant requested.
2. Confirm the grant amount
3. Pay the grant into the specified bank account once we see the travel documents

4.8 Do I have to be a member of the Royal British Legion or another veterans' organisation?

No. However, you may wish to consider arranging your visit with fellow Second World War veterans.

4.9 I am a former member of a veterans' organisation - can I still apply?

Yes you can.

4.10 Do I have to answer question 2 if I am travelling alone?

Yes - even if you are travelling alone, or just with a carer, we need the contact details of one person in case we need to speak to someone about the grant. These could be your own contact details or details of the carer who may be helping you fill in your application.

4.11 What is a Theatre of Operation?

Theatre of Operation is the broad geographic location where British Forces were involved in the Second World War. British Forces saw action across the world and you are asked to provide us with this information so we can find out which wartime experience is being commemorated.

4.12 What do I do if there is not enough space in boxes "action in which involved"

We do not need details of all the different actions in which different members of the travel party were involved. This box is intended just to give brief information on the action that is being commemorated by this particular visit. For example, if a visit to Sicily is being organised by 8th Army veterans, there is no need to provide information on the actions in which they were involved in North Africa.

4.13 Which details do I complete if I am a widow/widower?

On page 2 of the application form, please complete as much information as you can about your spouse in the section headed veteran. We appreciate that it might be difficult to obtain or recall some of this information, so do not worry if you find you cannot complete every box. Clearly the box marked postcodes not applicable. Then, underneath your spouse's information, please add the information about yourself in the section headed 'Spouse or widow(er)'.

4.14 What do I do for group applications if there is not enough space on page 2 of the form to complete the details of all the people who are travelling?

You can call our helpline number on 0845 0000 121 or download more sheets from our website.

4.15 Some of the information on page 2 will be very hard to collate for every member of the travel party, can some of it be omitted?

The more information we have on the veterans who are travelling, the easier it will be to confirm their eligibility. We explain on the form that the applicant is encouraged to submit as much information as they are able and we recognise that, in some instances, it might not be possible or practical to complete every section.

4.16 What do you require as confirmation of booking?

We need a copy of something from your travel agent confirming the visit. This could be the letter or form confirming your travel details or a receipt for your payment.

4.17 Can I get a grant before I book, as I cannot afford to book?

You can apply for a grant before you book, although you should have a clear idea of where you intend to travel to in order to complete the application form. Please note that, to ensure that you are making a valid application for funding, we need a booking confirmation from your travel agent before we can actually pay your grant. Please note that this does not mean that you have to pay for your visit in full before receiving a grant - most travel agents can provide booking confirmation well in advance of full payment.

4.18 What do you mean by "contacts or links" with schools etc?

It means any school or other body that you or your veterans. organisation currently has links with. These links could take many forms - from the very informal (one of the veterans in your organisation may have given a talk to the school or there may be links with a particular school through relatives such as grandchildren) through to the more formal (cadet groups sometimes have close and long-standing links with a particular veteran's group). Don't worry if you have no links at all. We just want to build on any existing ones and your response will help us to establish new ones.

4.19 Can I still apply if I do not have a bank account?

We can make arrangements to ensure that you can still receive payment. Please explain on your application form that you are unable to access a bank or building society account and we will contact you to explain how we can make payment. This will not affect your eligibility for a grant.

4.20 Can money be paid into different bank accounts for a single award?

No. We can only pay money into a single bank account for each application. If you are not happy for your grant to be paid into the account nominated by the group leader, you will need to submit a separate application individually and ensure that you are not included on the group application.

4.21 Why do you need a bank statement?

We may need proof that payment will be made to an appropriate group or individual and the bank statement will help confirm this.

4.22 The agreement print is too small to read, is it possible to get a large print version of the form?

Yes it is - we can send you a large print form if you ring our Application helpline on 0845 0000 121.

4.23 Why is it necessary to sign the grant agreement section?

There are some basic requirements that we need to check to ensure that this public funding is spent properly.

4.24 Who do I inform of change of circumstances?

Within two weeks of submitting your application, you will receive an application acknowledgement letter with details of who you can contact regarding any changes.

4.25 How long will it take for you to acknowledge my application?

We aim to acknowledge all applications within two weeks of receipt.

4.26 I have filled in my application form incorrectly and sent it in by mistake - what can I do?

You will be sent an acknowledgement letter within two weeks with details of who you can contact regarding any changes you need to make to your application form. Please wait until you have received this and then contact us using the details provided in this letter.

4.27 How long will it take to assess my application?

We cannot tell you a precise date. However, all application forms will be prioritised according to date of travel so that those applications with early travel dates are dealt with first. One of the major causes of delays is incomplete or incorrectly completed forms; we would strongly encourage you to check all the information in your form thoroughly before you send it to us.

4.28 Who can help me with completing my application form?

If you are having difficulties, you may wish to ask someone from your veterans' association or a friend or relative to help you complete your application form. If this is not possible, you can contact our helpline on 0845 0000121 to answer specific questions about the form.

4.29 I have not yet found a trip to go on / organisation to go with / travel agent / decided where to go. Do I have to wait for these details to apply?

At the very least, you should have decided where you wish to visit before you apply. Without this very basic information, we cannot assess the eligibility of your application. You should then make your travel arrangements as soon as possible. Before we pay your grant, we must receive confirmation of your travel details, for example, a letter from your travel agent confirming your travel arrangements or a receipt for payment, so you should send these in as soon as possible.

4.30 What happens if the veteran requires the money to go to his own bank account - even if he is travelling as part of a larger group with a different lead person?

Unfortunately, we can only pay money into a single bank account for each application. If you are not happy for your grant to be paid into the account nominated by the group leader, you will need to submit a separate application individually and ensure that you are not included on the group application.

4.31 If I need to send documents to support my application, do they need to be originals rather than copies?

Yes.

4.32 How can veterans resident in the Republic of Ireland apply for funding?

The first step will be to contact us and we will send you an application form.

4.33 For veterans resident in the Republic of Ireland, does it need to be a group visit or can I apply as an individual?

We would strongly encourage you to take part in group visits organised by veterans' organisations or regimental associations. However, we also recognise that there is a need to fund small informal groups or individuals so we will accept applications from veterans who are resident in the republic of Ireland, provided these are routed through the Royal British Legion.

4.34 Can veterans resident in the Republic of Ireland take part in a group visit being planned by/leaving from a part of the UK?

Yes, we expect many of the Second World War veterans living in the Republic of Ireland to link up with group visits organised/leaving from somewhere in the UK. For example, many of the veterans' organisations that represent service personnel from a particular theatre or engagement - Italy Star Association, Normandy Veterans Association, etc. will be planning visits that veterans from the Republic of Ireland will be able to participate in.

4.35 Will grants for veterans resident in the Republic of Ireland be increased to cover the additional costs involved in travelling from the Republic of Ireland?

No. The levels of financial support being provided have been set at a programme level and apply regardless of where in the UK the individual is travelling from, and this principle applies equally to travel from the Republic of Ireland. The funding available is designed to make a significant contribution towards the costs involved. Depending on the location or duration of your visit or your mode of travel or standard of accommodation, there may be a need for the individual to contribute to the costs incurred.

Please note that awards to Republic of Ireland resident veterans will be made in euros (unless the veterans want the award to be in pounds sterling).

5. Arranging a visit

5.1 Will you be making the travel and accommodation arrangements?

No. These will be entirely your responsibility. It will also be up to you to arrange appropriate insurance and medical cover. Specialist travel companies, such as Poppy Travel, will certainly be able to help and advise you.

5.2 Can you give us any information about specialist travel companies?

We have compiled information on a range of specialist travel companies, which is available on request. The Big Lottery Fund would like to emphasise that it is a 'suggested' list and the inclusion of any names on this list does not indicate either approval or endorsement of any tour operator. As such, veterans are free to use any operator whether they appear on this list or not, as they see fit.

5.3 Can you give us any advice on how to organise a trip?

Making travel arrangements is your responsibility and choice.

If you have applied as an individual, typically you may choose to either arrange your visit with a tour operator or travel agent as a package, or you may choose to arrange travel and accommodation independently.

Tour Operators

In choosing a suitable tour operator, you may want to consider the following issues, and make relevant enquiries to the tour operator as appropriate:

- Does the tour operator go to the destination I require?
- Can the tour operator accommodate my disabilities/dietary needs as appropriate? For example, wheelchair accessibility or any other particular requirements?
- Will there be a lot of walking involved?
- Will there be full medical support (for example, doctor/nurse) if required?
- How flexible is the itinerary? Could a diversion be arranged to a particular site (for example, war grave)?
- What costs are included in the price, for example, - insurance, visas, travel from home to point of departure, transfers at destination?
- Can two copies of the travel confirmation be requested, as one is need as proof of booking by Heroes Return?
- Where the grant does not cover the whole cost of the trip, do you have sufficient money to cover the balance of the cost yourself?

Arranging trips Independently

Our grant is a contribution towards all costs of your commemorative visit, for example travel, accommodation, insurance, meals, incidentals, spending money.

Particularly with trips within the United Kingdom and Europe, people sometimes choose to arrange their travel, accommodation and insurance independently and as separate elements,

shopping around for the best deals. If separate arrangements are made for travel, accommodation and insurance, it is unlikely that this will account for the full amount of your grant. It is likely that there would be remaining money which is yours to use towards other expenses. If someone (for example a friend, a family member or someone you trust) is making these arrangements on your behalf and you are reimbursing them, we would strongly recommend that you ask for receipts and invoices that show the amounts paid.

Please do not feel uncomfortable asking for these. We require you to send us your travel documents before we pay the grant to you, and we may ask for receipts from your visit after you have returned.

5.4 Do I have to use Poppy Travel or other similar specialist companies?

No, but you may wish to consider the experience and knowledge it has in arranging visits of this nature: they may have a plan that would suit you or they may be able to include you in visits that have already been arranged.

5.5 Can I go alone?

Yes, if there is no alternative but, in your own interests, we would prefer that you go in an organised group, however small.

5.6 Do I need to be insured in order to travel?

Yes - you must be insured when you travel and travel agents can often arrange this for you.

5.7 Will the Big Lottery Fund arrange insurance? Are insurance costs covered?

No, trip organisers will be responsible for arranging insurance cover for the travelling party, although the grant tariffs do include an allowance for insurance premiums.

5.8 Do we need to provide doctor's certificates of fitness to travel as part of our application?

These do not need to be submitted with your application to us. However, many travel companies will require a doctor's certificate of fitness to travel and we would encourage you to see your GP for advice at an early stage of planning the visit.

5.9 Will you fund the cost of such certificates?

No, this would be a requirement for any overseas travel, and not just a WWII commemorative visit. However, the fee for such a certificate is left to the doctor's discretion and, if you explain the reason for your visit, you may not be charged.

5.10 Some countries in the Far East in particular are difficult to visit for political reasons - can we use Heroes Return 2 funding to go there?

We can provide funding to any destination connected to areas where British Armed Forces saw active service in the Second World War. However, there are some areas where it might be difficult to arrange a visit, because of the political relations of those countries with the UK. We would advise you to contact a specialist travel agent, such as the Royal British Legion's Poppy Travel, to see if visits to these destinations are possible.

5.11 Can more than one place be visited on a single trip?

Yes. The destinations should be based around areas (battlefields, cemeteries, POW camps and so forth) connected to the events being commemorated, but it is certainly possible that more than one locality could be visited. Please note (as above) that our grant allocations are fixed - if a lengthy (and costly) itinerary is arranged, we cannot increase our grants to cover all the costs and our funding would need to be supplemented by other sources.

6. Educational links

6.1 How can other generations benefit from this programme?

We expect the scheme to generate 'living' memories. Such as written and verbal accounts of wartime experiences; photographs of the commemorative visit or of wartime subjects; memorabilia, personal effects, documents and so on. We will be providing information that we will send to every veteran going on a Heroes Return 2 visit which will set out ways that these sort of materials can be used by others to learn about your experiences.

6.2 Do young people need to be involved in our visits?

We want there to be educational benefits from each trip we fund, but this does not mean that young people or schools must be directly involved in the visits. We certainly do not require Heroes Return 2 visits to incorporate parallel visits by groups of young people. However, many veterans' groups already involve schools and young people in their work and we would certainly encourage veterans' groups to involve school children and young people before, during and after their visits. Again, the information that we will send to every veteran going on a trip will give more advice on how to link up with local schools or museums.

6.3 Do you require me to write down my wartime experiences or write a report about my visit?

We are keen to ensure this Lottery-funded scheme leaves a lasting legacy and hope that grant recipients will cooperate to help us achieve this aim. We will provide further details of how your visit can help provide 'living' memories from which new generations, especially school children and young people, can learn. One of the ways could be to provide a written report. But this is not the only way and we certainly do not need separate reports from each person going on the same visit. Our intention is that any information we get from you is easy to provide, and it will not in any way delay or impede your receipt of funding, nor do we wish to overburden you. We acknowledge that some people will feel more comfortable sharing their experiences than others and will bear this in mind when seeking feedback from your trip.