

COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE



Introduction

1. The Football Foundation and the Premier League Stadium Fund are committed to working in an open and accountable way to provide a high quality and professional service. Despite this commitment, we recognise that there are occasions where an individual, applicant or club may not be completely happy with their interaction with us, or our operational partners. If you are dissatisfied in any way, we want to know about it. We aim to respond positively and courteously to any complaint, and by putting right our mistakes, improve our processes.
2. In this Policy, the abbreviation “Foundation” will refer to both the Football Foundation and the Premier League Stadium Fund, as will all references to “we” and “us”.
3. Complaints are managed by our Director of Business Services, but this responsibility will be taken on by another Director in their absence.

Guiding principles

4. This is our Policy and Procedure for dealing with complaints against the Foundation, its team members, and its operational partners. We are committed to ensuring all complaints are fully investigated and dealt with in the appropriate manner.
5. If you raise a complaint, you will always be treated fairly, and we will ensure that you are not disadvantaged in any future dealings with us.
6. If we've got something wrong, we will be open and acknowledge this. If we can resolve your complaint by clarifying our position or explaining our decision-making process, we will try to do so.
7. We will respect your privacy and ensure that your complaint is treated confidentially; however, there may be circumstances where we need to seek support from a County FA, League or Local Authority to help us address your concerns, or we may need to consult with our Funding Partners.
8. A separate Appeals Policy and Procedure set out how to appeal against a Foundation funding decision.

Type of complaint

9. You can ask us to consider a complaint:
 - if you feel we have provided poor customer service, or you are disappointed with your interaction with the Foundation;
 - if you feel we have not followed our own procedures or guidelines; or
 - if you feel you have been treated unfairly.
10. There may be other reasons for making a complaint, but generally speaking, if your complaint is about a club or organisation that we have funded, we may not be able

to help unless it calls into question their adherence to their funding agreement with us.

11. In some instances, we might advise that the matter be referred to the club or organisation directly or another organisation, such as a Local Authority. We can, however, only discuss or share the details of a grant award with those individuals authorised to act on the club or organisation's behalf.

Attempts to resolve the matter informally

12. If you are not happy with your interaction with the Foundation, you should initially contact the member of our team that you have been dealing with and ask them to help you to resolve the matter. Our team member will work with you to understand why you are dissatisfied and, if possible, take action to resolve the matter quickly and informally.
13. **Please note that all attempts should be made to resolve matters informally, before moving to our formal procedure.**

Making a formal complaint

14. If attempts to resolve the matter informally have not been successful and you remain dissatisfied, a formal complaint can be made. To do this, you should write to the Director of Business Services setting out your complaint in writing, and stating clearly that you are making a formal complaint. This will help to clarify the issue and to avoid any possibility of misunderstanding or misinterpretation. The complaint should be sent to enquiries@footballfoundation.org.uk or sent to Football Foundation, Wembley Stadium, London, HA9 0WS, addressed to the Director of Business Services.

Consideration of your complaint

15. Within three working days of receiving your complaint, we will write to you to confirm that we have received it. We will then aim to respond within ten working days. In considering your complaint, the Director of Business Services will look into your complaint and the attempts taken to resolve the matter informally, as well as investigating your concerns.
16. The facts will be reviewed and any information you have provided us with will be considered. Where further details are needed, you might be asked to provide the necessary information or to participate in a call to talk through the details. In these circumstances, additional time may be needed to respond to your concerns.
17. Within ten working days, or an extended period where further details have been requested, the Director of Business Services will respond to tell you the outcome and explain any action we propose to take.

Making an appeal

18. If you are not satisfied with our response to your formal complaint, you should write to the Director of Business Services within five working days requesting a further review of your concerns.
19. Within three working days of receiving your appeal, we will write to you to confirm that we have received it.

20. A member of the Foundation's Senior Management Team not previously involved will review the facts, consider any information you have provided to us, and review our prior handling of your complaint. The Director of Business Services may be asked to assist in this process.
21. Within 10 working days of receiving your appeal, a member of the Foundation's Senior Management Team will write to inform you of the outcome and outline any proposed actions. Their decision will be final.

Our records

22. At all stages of the process, written records will be kept showing:
- the nature of the concerns raised;
 - any communication between you and the Foundation and any supporting documents;
 - any action that is proposed or taken.
23. Along with the above information, any personal information you provide to us when making a complaint will be handled in line with our Privacy Statement.
24. The case information will be shared internally as required to manage your complaint. It may also be shared with external organisations when they are helping us to deal with a complaint, for example, the relevant County FA, League, the related construction partner or supplier, or our funding partners.
25. There may also be certain circumstances where we would need to share your information or the case information, for example, where we are required to do so by law, for safeguarding purposes or in emergency situations.

Additional information

26. The timescales referred to in this Policy and Procedure will be met wherever possible. If it is not possible for the Foundation to respond within those timescales, we will let you know the reasons for the delay, and when you can expect to receive our response.
27. The Foundation reserves the right to seek assistance from external facilitators at any stage in the procedure, in the interest of seeking a satisfactory outcome for all concerned.

Policy and Procedure review

28. The Foundation is committed to keeping this document current and relevant. It will be monitored and reviewed annually and may also be amended from time to time to reflect any changes in legislation, regulatory guidance, or internal policy decisions.
29. This Policy and Procedure is approved by the Foundation Board of Trustees annually and in between times if significant revision is required.