

Hardship Fund Policy

1. The Hardship Fund

The Tommy Flowers SCITT are delighted to be able to offer financial assistance to current tuition-fee trainees facing financial difficulties due to unforeseen circumstances which is impacting on their studies. The maximum award will be £500 (unless in special circumstances). The fund is intended to support trainees in maintaining their attendance and engagement with their studies during periods of financial hardship. The fund cannot be used to support payment of course fees or arrears in rent, but can help trainees who qualify, with travel and food expenses.

Trainees are not expected to re-pay the award.

1. Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for assistance from the Tommy Flowers SCITT Hardship Fund, applicants must confirm which of the following circumstances have arisen which have made financial circumstances difficult:

1. Unforeseen circumstances relating to course delivery, such as increased travel costs.
2. Exceptional life events, such as health, bereavement or family.

Applicants must be able to demonstrate that they:

- are registered as a tuition-fee trainee with the Tommy Flowers SCITT for the academic year in which the hardship application is made;
- have been in attendance on the course for at least two calendar months and have at least one calendar month left before the planned end of the course;
- have taken all support available to them via Student Finance England (SFE) or the Student Loans Company (SLC) where applicable;
- continue to adhere to the TFSCITT Code of Conduct;
- maintain good attendance and engagement with their training;

2. Ineligible Criteria

The Hardship Fund may not be used for:

- Tuition fees;
- Arrears of rent/mortgage;
- Non-essential expenses (e.g., leisure activities, non-essential travel);
- Debts unrelated to essential living or study-related costs.

3. Loan of Laptops

The Hardship Fund includes provisions for the loan of laptops to students who need them for their studies but are unable to afford one and are not loaned one by their placement school. Laptops are loaned on a temporary basis and must be returned at the end of the loan period or when the student completes their course, whichever comes first. To apply for a laptop loan, students do not need to complete the application process, but should speak to their Partnership Manager and complete the Laptop Loan form.

4. Application Process

The application process is as follows:

1. Applicants should complete the Hardship Fund Application (Appendix A) and email it to the Director of the Tommy Flowers SCITT, setting out their need and providing the required

evidence. To support the application, trainees must provide accurate, up-to-date and relevant evidence, including:

2. a Student Finance England Assessment Letter stating household income;
 3. Student Loans Company Confirmation of Support for fees and living costs;
 4. any additional evidence requested by the Hardship Fund Committee.
5. The trainee will be invited to discuss the application with the Director of the TFSCITT.
6. Applications will then be submitted for assessment by the Hardship Fund Committee (comprising members of the Executive Board).
7. Applicants will be notified of the decision within 14 working days of submitting a complete application. Decisions made by the Executive Board are final and the outcome will be communicated via email.

8. Allocation of Funds

Awards from the Hardship Fund are discretionary and subject to the availability of funds. The amount awarded will be based on individual needs and circumstances but will typically not exceed £500 per academic year. Funds will be paid directly to the applicant's bank account via BACS.

9. Confidentiality

All information provided in the application process will be treated confidentially and will only be shared with individuals directly involved in the assessment and administration of the Hardship Fund. Hardship Fund applications and supporting documents will be stored and maintained in line with the TFSCITT's GDPR and Data Protection policy.

10. Review Date

Approved By	Executive Board, Tommy Flowers SCITT
Date of acceptance by Executive Board:	27th June 2024
Review date:	June 2026

Appendix A – Hardship Fund Application Form

Trainee name:		
Trainee course (phase and subject):		
Date of application to the Hardship Fund:		
Amount of financial support requested:		
Highlight which of the two eligibility circumstances apply:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Unforeseen circumstances relating to course delivery, such as increased travel costs. 2. Exceptional life events, such as health, bereavement or family. 	
Have you attached the following documentation?	A Student Finance England Assessment Letter stating household income (required).	Yes/No
	A Student Loans Company Confirmation of Support for fees and living costs (required).	Yes/No
	Any additional supporting material (optional).	Yes/No

Please outline the reason for the hardship fund request, setting out the need, how it meets the eligibility circumstance highlighted above and how the support will enable you to continue to engage with your studies and complete the course.

I confirm that the information given here is accurate, that financial support from the Hardship Fund would enable me to continue with my studies and complete the course and that any financial support received would not be spent on the ineligible criteria listed in the Hardship Fund policy.

Signature:			
Full Name:		Date:	

For TFSCITT to complete:

Notes from meeting between Director of TFSCITT and trainee:

Director of TFSCITT: Recommend application to Executive Board Hardship Fund Committee?	Yes / No
Final Outcome:	Decline Award of _____