

Concerns and Complaints Policy

July 2023

Our concerns and complaints policy exists to:

- provide a fair complaints procedure which is clear and easy to use for anyone making a complaint
- make sure we investigate all complaints fairly and in a timely way
- make sure we resolve complaints where possible, and that we repair relationships
- gather information which helps us to learn and improve what we do

Concerns and Complaints Policy 2023

Where might complaints about the AHF come from?

Complaints may come from applicants, grant and loan holders, strategic partners, suppliers or contractors.

This policy does not cover complaints by AHF employees, which are handled in accordance with the AHF's comprehensive Staff Handbook.

Confidentiality

We handle all complaints sensitively and in confidence. We only share information with those who need to know and by following relevant data protection requirements.

Responsibility

Responsibility for this policy and its implementation lies with the AHF's CEO, and ultimately with the Trustees.

Resolving complaints

Our complaints process aims to resolve complaints as soon as possible. The three-stage process allows for escalation, if your complaint is not resolved to your satisfaction:

Stage 1. Contact the person in question

In the first instance, please let the person in question know of any concerns you have, and they will do their best to resolve this swiftly. If this is not resolved to your satisfaction, or if your complaint is in relation to the person concerned, please do the following:

Stage 2. Submit your complaint to our CEO

Please submit your concern in writing via email to ahf@ahfund.org.uk for the attention of our CEO. Please include any relevant documents or correspondence. Please do so as swiftly as possible so we can address concerns promptly for you.

We also accept postal communications via:

The Architectural Heritage Fund
3 Spital Yard
London E1 6AQ

Our CEO will investigate the case themselves or instruct a suitable person to do so. We will be in touch directly to introduce ourselves to you and let you know when you can expect a response. The person handling your complaint will discuss the matter with all those involved, where appropriate.

We expect to provide a definitive response within four weeks. If this is not possible for any reason (if, for example, an investigation has not concluded), we will send a progress report. This will indicate when a full reply will be given.

The final reply to the complaint will describe:

- Action taken to investigate the complaint;
- Conclusions from the investigation;

Stage 3. Escalation to the Chair of Trustees

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your complaint, you can ask that it is reviewed at Board level. The Chair may investigate the case themselves or instruct a suitable person to do so. This may involve reviewing the case's paperwork. It may also involve speaking with the person who dealt with the complaint in previous stages.

We aim to respond to stage three complaints within six weeks. If this is not possible (for example if an investigation has not concluded), we will send a progress report. This will indicate when a full reply will be given.

Whether or not the complaint is upheld, our final response will describe:

- Action taken to investigate the complaint
- Conclusions from the investigation

The decision at this stage is final.

Monitoring and learning from complaints

Our Trustees meet formally five times a year. This provides regular opportunities to review and reflect on any concerns or complaints received, and to take any action required. This could include reflecting on lessons learnt and implementing improvements, where applicable.

What to do if you have a concern or complaint about a grant or loan holder

The AHF does not deal with concerns or complaints about individual grant or loan holders. We would expect any issues you may have with a particular organisation to be addressed directly with them, either through their management team or trustees. If you have concerns about a charity that the AHF may be funding, please follow the relevant Charity Commission, executive agency (e.g. Companies House) or appropriate regulator's advice (e.g. OFSTED).



If any of our current grant or loan holders are reported to their relevant charity commission (or similar regulatory body), they are obliged to report this to us as part of the terms and conditions of accepting our funding. We will then keep matters under review.