

Tynedale U3A – Group Finance Policy

1. INTRODUCTION

The following guidelines for Group finances are set out so that Tynedale U3A complies with the requirements of the Charity Commission and the national U3A movement. Many Groups do not incur any cost but where they do the cost should be kept to a minimum so that the Groups are inclusive and do not prohibit participation.

2. GENERAL GROUP FINANCIAL PRINCIPLES

There are several General Financial Principles that all Tynedale U3A Groups should adhere to. These are as follows:

- a) Groups should be self-financing
- b) No Group member or U3A member can benefit financially from their involvement with the U3A or any of its Groups
- c) All funds raised by Tynedale U3A Groups belong to Tynedale U3A, and not to the Group itself
- d) Should a Group cease to exist, any funds held against the Group will be taken into Tynedale U3A general accounts
- e) No Group money is to be banked into any private bank account
- f) No Group is to hold a bank account in its or in its Convenors name
- g) Group Convenors should never enter into any financial arrangement with any third-party person or organisation on behalf of the Group
- h) All Group financial arrangements must be between Tynedale U3A and the third-party person or organisation
- i) The Group Convenor should agree with the other members of the Group what costs the Group will incur and how much each member will contribute to cover these costs. This is to include contributions from members who join after any financial contribution has been agreed. Contribution should be reviewed annually
- j) Members' Group payments can be made by **cheque**, made payable to Tynedale U3A with the relevant Group Reference Code (see Tynedale U3A website for the relevant Group Reference Code) written on the back or by **cash**. These payments should be handed over to the Group Convenor who should offer a receipt either from a receipt book or by email
- k) Members can make Group payments using BACS (**on-line bank payment**). These should be made to Tynedale U3A; Sort Code 20-40-09; account number 60601209 with the Group Reference Code used in the payment reference field. The member should inform the Group Convenor that the payment has been made and the Group Convenor should confirm this with the Tynedale U3A Treasurer via email. Once acknowledged by email from the Treasurer, the Group Convenor should offer a receipt or email acknowledgement to the Group member
- l) Group Convenors must keep their own record of all receipts and payments made on behalf of the Group for perusal by Group members. This should also

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- be communicated via email on at least an annual basis (or as requested) to the Tynedale U3A Treasurer
- m) Group Convenors should not hold Petty Cash unless deemed necessary by Group members. If Petty Cash is held, the amount should not exceed £20. Any requirement to hold more than this amount must be communicated to the Tynedale U3A Treasurer via email. The Tynedale U3A Committee will have final say on whether any Petty Cash can be held
 - n) All moneys collected by Group Convenors from Group members toward the operation of the Group must be paid over to the Treasurer for banking in the Tynedale U3A Bank Account. A receipt will be issued where requested.
 - o) Surplus Group funds should be avoided, where possible. Should any Group have a surplus in the Tynedale U3A Accounts as a result of prior year activities, then the Tynedale U3A Trustees will allow such money to be spent either on furthering the goals of that Group (such as the purchase of specialist equipment) or in complying with the general principles of the U3A (such as reducing Group member costs). Any proposed spend must be agreed with Group members and with the Tynedale U3A Committee via the Treasurer **in advance of** the spend being incurred

3. MEETING IN MEMBERS' HOMES

If a Group meets in members' homes, it is suggested that each attendee makes a small contribution to the host to cover the cost of providing refreshments. There is no need to keep a record of such payments.

4. MEETING IN HIRED VENUES

If a new Group, or an existing Group moving from a members' home, wants to meet in a hired venue, then the Group Convenor should find an appropriate venue that will suit the requirements of the Group and its members, and that can be afforded by the Group members. The procedure for setting up an agreement to use that hired venue is as follows:

- a) The Group Convenor should not enter into any financial arrangement with the venue
- b) The Group Convenor should contact the Tynedale U3A Treasurer to advise of the details of the venue: address, contact name, required rent, frequency of use
- c) The Treasurer will then contact the venue to agree payment method and frequency
- d) Once the arrangement is in place the Treasurer will advise the Group Convenor via email
- e) The Treasurer will allocate a Group Code to the Group Convenor for use by Group members making payments by cheque or BACS (on-line bank payment).

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- f) The Treasurer will settle valid Group venue invoices on behalf of the Group. Enough funds must be available within each Group's accounts to support these payments

Group Convenors involved with Hired Venues are also responsible for:

- g) The Group Convenor should agree the frequency of payment with Group members, e.g. weekly/monthly/quarterly, according to the needs of the Group and venue hire arrangements. It is worth noting that rent must be paid regardless of the number of people that attend each session. Therefore, the Group Convenor may consider that Group members pay a "set" amount say for a month, quarter or year
- h) It is the responsibility of the Group Convenor to collect the agreed amount of money from Group members to support the Venue Hire required for the Group and pass that money over to the Tynedale U3A Treasurer for banking, as set out in the General Financial Principles above
- i) If the Group plans to have a "holiday" maybe for summer or Christmas, the Group Convenor should inform the venue manager as soon as possible to cancel the booking and save the Group having to pay for an unused session. The Group Convenor should also advise the Tynedale U3A Treasurer of any venue cancellations
- j) Group members' contributions should be enough to cover the total hire cost period, bearing in mind that many venues charge monthly in advance or offer discounts for long term bookings
- k) Where Petty Cash is held to pay for Tea/Coffee/Biscuits etc., this should be used to pay the venue for such items and that spend recorded

5. OTHER GROUP EXPENSES

Where Groups wish to incur other expenses to further the interests of the Group the following should apply:

- a) Some Groups may wish to incur other expenses such as the purchase of craft materials, gym equipment, library membership, magazine subscriptions, reasonable expenses for guest speakers, etc. Convenors should agree with the other members of the group how these costs will be covered. A record of these Group members' proposed contributions and the costs must be kept by the Group Convenor for sharing with Group members and with the Tynedale U3A Treasurer. Where any cheque or BACS payment is to be made for these expenses, then the Group Convenor should approach the Tynedale U3A Treasurer for assistance. It should be noted that Tynedale U3A does not operate either a Debit card or Credit Card facility
- b) Some Group members may travel together by car to attend meetings or to go on visits. Where this happens, a contribution to the driver toward the cost of travel is welcome. Members should agree any such contributions between themselves. There is no need to keep a record of such payments.

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6. HELP AND GUIDANCE

The Tynedale U3A's Committee contact details are available on the contact section of the Tynedale U3A website and on the monthly newsletter. If a Group Convenor has any questions regarding the finances of their Group, they should contact the Tynedale U3A Treasurer for advice.