



Guidance Notes for Applicants

Who Can We Support?

The person benefiting from the equipment funding must:

- Be aged 0 -18.
- Be an individual with disabilities, special educational needs, chronic or terminal illness or an organisation* that supports children with disabilities.
- Not have applied in the last 12 months.
- Live in the following postcode areas:
 - TD: postcodes TD12 and TD15 (in Northumberland only).
 - All NE postcodes.
 - All SR postcodes.
 - All DH postcodes.
 - DL: postcodes DL1-5 and DL13-17 only.

What Do We Fund?

The Chronicle Sunshine Fund provides specialist equipment to children with disabilities. We fund equipment that is not funded by the NHS or any other source.

Examples of specialist equipment we have funded in the past includes:

- Wheelchairs, specialist buggies and accessories.
- Specialist beds.
- Specialised seating.
- Sensory and play equipment – both indoor and outdoor.
- Trikes and adapted bikes.
- IT and Communication equipment.

Exclusions:

- Anyone aged 19 and over.
- Anyone who lives outside of the Local Authority areas of Northumberland, North Tyneside, Newcastle, Gateshead, South Tyneside, Sunderland and County Durham.
- Any equipment that requires integration into the structural, electrical or plumbing services- e.g. home lifts, baths and ceiling track hoists.
- Medical specialist beds – beds that are essential to managing complex health and/or medical needs.
- General fundraising appeals.
- Holidays and trips.
- Garden and home renovation or improvement.
- White goods and home furnishings.
- Assistance Animals.
- Travel costs.
- Car costs including leases.
- Childcare costs.
- Professional fees and costs.
- Training courses and or college Fees.
- Insurance & extended warranties.
- **Any equipment that can be funded through the NHS or Local Authority:**
 - Please make sure you have been referred to these services and have checked that they cannot provide you with the equipment you need before applying to us. If this has not happened, it will delay your application being processed or a decision being made.

* Please note that applicant organisations must not have an annual turnover that exceeds that of The Chronicle Sunshine Fund. If you are organisation that this may apply to please speak to our office regarding this before you make an application. Alternatively, you can access our annual accounts on Companies House.

Filling in the Form

Section 1

This is for the details of whomever is applying. This could be the young person themselves, a parent, carer, or a professional who is working with the family. The email that is put here will be the primary email address for all contact from the charity. Please ensure all address details are correct as this will be information used for delivery.

Section 2

This is for the beneficiary's details – the person who will benefit from the equipment. If you are a young person writing your own application, please repeat your details here.

Please list yours/your child's medical diagnoses and special educational needs and disabilities, including any relevant surgeries or procedures.

For multiple beneficiaries, fill out one application form for one piece of equipment but list the children who will benefit.

We accept one application, per child, per piece of equipment every 12 months. This means you can apply for separate pieces of equipment if you have more than one child with disabilities or special needs.

Section 3

Only fill this in if the parent or carer details are not recorded in Section 1.

If you are a young person under the age of 18 applying, please write down the details of your legal guardian. Please ensure all address details are correct as this will be information used for delivery.

Section 4

Please write down the details of the piece of equipment that you want to request. This must include:

- the make
- model
- description
- cost

For equipment to be funded, the professionals providing the letters of support must state this piece of equipment and agree with funding what is detailed here. **Please note we now have more specific guidance around how much funding you can apply for depending on the type of equipment. It is essential that you read the “Equipment Contribution Guidance” document before filling in your application and seeking quotes.**

Section 5

Explain why this piece of equipment is needed:

- The benefits and positive impact it will have.
- Why it is needed now.
- Please explain how the medical and special needs shared in Section 3 affect daily life and the difference this equipment will make.

Section 6

6a) We need to know who recommended the equipment and why.

6b) We need to know whether an appropriate professional has assessed the suitability of the equipment and who they are.

For certain pieces of equipment our panel of experts require assessment from physiotherapists and occupational therapists to be approved. This applies mainly to equipment that has a clinical use – wheelchairs, specialist buggies, baths, trikes, standing/walking frames, beds, play equipment, sensory

equipment – e.g., weighted blankets. **Without this support from a qualified professional, your application will not be agreed.**

For equipment that has an educational or communication function we need a speech and language therapist or teacher to be assessing the equipment requested.

Please get in touch with us if you have any questions about this or are unsure and we will be happy to help.

6c) We need to know that an appropriate professional will be providing instruction and/or training on the piece of equipment. This could be the professional who recommended the equipment or a rep for the supplier.

Section 7

Our funding criteria strictly states that we cannot provide equipment that could be funded by community, NHS and local authority services. We must know why the piece of equipment cannot be funded.

This is important for applications for wheelchairs, specialist buggies, beds, seating, standing, and walking frames. Our panel will want to see that there has been a referral to a service such as: Wheelchair Services, Disablement Services, or Community Loan Equipment Services. They will want to know if they were unable to fund the equipment and the reasons why. If this information is not provided, they may decide to defer the application until a referral and assessment is done.

To prevent unnecessary delays, we recommend submitting a letter with the application that explains a referral was made to these services and that they are unable to provide the equipment and the reasons why.

Section 8

Equipment quotes must be provided as part of the application. We require two quotes for the same or similar piece of equipment. Most companies will provide you a formal itemised quote free of charge and their account details for payment.

We do not currently accept quotes that are screenshots of an online website basket. Please contact the company and request a quote.

There may be only one supplier that provides the equipment you require. If this applies to you, please explain this on your application form.

If you are unsure who an appropriate supplier may be, please feel free to get in touch as we have worked with many different companies over the years and may be able to signpost you towards them.

Please note that we have very high levels of applications, and the panel will typically choose the quote that is lower cost, providing it meets the needs of the person benefiting in the same ways as the more expensive quote. If there is a strong therapeutic need for the more expensive option, please detail this on your application form and in the letters of support.

Many pieces of specialist equipment are VAT exempt. Please check with the supplier about your eligibility and make sure this is reflected in the quote you submit to us – we do not want to have to pay more than we need to for equipment! **Please note that we will also apply for VAT Exemption on your behalf if your equipment is eligible, unless you instruct us not to do so.**

IT Equipment

If you are applying for IT Equipment – specifically an iPad or laptop – you do not need to submit any quotes as we have a standard IT offer.

IT Equipment	Approx Value
iPad 32GB – wifi only, no 4G data plan. Basic protective case provided.	£350.00
Windows 10 Laptop with approx. 14 inch screen.	£400.00

Please contact us if you have any questions regarding the technical specifications of the IT provided. Please note that due to whatever the current availability is when placing orders; all IT devices will be approximate equivalents – specific makes, models and technical specifications cannot be guaranteed.

If you require something different or very specific to meet your needs, then you will need to clearly state this on your application, giving educational, medical or therapeutic reasons why and provide two quotes. This includes:

- larger screen devices.
- robust protective cases.
- essential software and or hardware.

Section 9

We understand that families often apply to different charities to fund their equipment. We are happy to work alongside other organisations and joint fund. If you have been successful in securing funding, please detail this here and in Section 8. Please tell us the specific amount of funding you need from The Sunshine Fund. We will pay any agreed funding directly to the nominated supplier. We cannot pay money into other charity bank accounts.

Section 10

Section 10 has been removed. Please continue to Section 11.

Section 11

If families are successful in their application, we offer the opportunity to be part of our PR campaigns – for example – across our social media channels and website, or in our column which is printed in the The Chronicle newspaper and online. This helps raise awareness, informs others looking for support and encourages local businesses to come forward to make donations. It's completely optional to be part of our publicity as we appreciate that not everyone is comfortable with this so, please let us know your preference on your application.

Decisions about your application will not be affected by your answer to this question.

Section 12

We are a fundraising organisation and rely completely on charitable donations to be able to fund the equipment we are asked for. We do not expect families to fundraise for us but if you are interested in getting involved, please let us know by circling your preferences. Families can support our fundraising in two main ways:

1 – By sharing statements or brief bits of information about your experiences and how the equipment has helped. This could be anonymous if you prefer. This information could be used on our website, as case studies and examples of how we help families. Please circle YES or NO depending on your personal preference.

2- Being involved in either our Sunshine Fund events as volunteers or participants or arranging your own fundraising activities. Please circle YES or NO depending on your personal preference.

Decisions about your application will not be affected by your answer to this question.

Section 13

Please tell us how you heard about the charity. This is important for us as it allows us to see where our information is being seen.

Section 14

This is an optional section that you can use if you feel there is anything else you'd like us to know regarding your application.

Section 15

For electronic submissions we accept typed signatures. Please note that by signing this you confirm the information provided is correct and that you agree to The Chronicle Sunshine Fund's Terms and Conditions. Full T&C's can be provided on request.

Section 16

This provides information on how to submit your application. For electronic submissions the quotes and letters of support can be attached as scanned files- PDFs or high quality JPEG/PNG files.

Supporting Letters

- We require two supporting letters to support the application.
- They must be submitted on letterhead paper from the organisation.
- Any medical or clinical equipment must be assessed by a health professional – Occupational Therapist, Physiotherapist, GP, Consultant.
- Other equipment can be supported by: Speech and Language therapist, school, teachers, social worker, nursery manager, family support worker.
- The two letters need to directly reference the equipment and state why the child will benefit from the piece of equipment.
- Ideally the panel require the letters to be from professionals from different fields/specialisms.
- If the panel feel there is insufficient evidence in the application; it will be deferred until the necessary support can be provided.

If you need any support with your letters please get in touch and we can offer assistance and advice.

For ‘agreed in principle’ or ‘deferred’ applications: Please be aware that there is a **three month** time limit on providing all required information. If additional evidence is required by the panel this must be submitted within three months or the funding allocated to your piece of equipment will unfortunately be withdrawn. You will need to apply again with a new application form. You will be informed of this when you are given the decision on your application.

Data Consent Form

It is an essential part of the application process that we share your application with our expert panel. As part of our new GDPR procedures we require all applicants to complete and return a Data Consent Form. This gives us permission to share your information with staff and trusted partners, such as our panel. If you do not consent to us sharing this information with our panel of experts, we will be unable to proceed with your application. Please be aware that in the current Covid-19 restrictions, our equipment assessment meetings are held over secure video conferencing facilities.

Equality Monitoring Form

We are committed to promoting equality of opportunity, to ensure that everyone has the chance to participate fully in the services offered by the organisation. It is not mandatory to complete this form to submit your application, however, if you are happy to share your information, it will help us understand who we are reaching and how we can better serve our local community.

Payment

Payment for the equipment will be made directly to the supplier via BACS. Please make sure you have this information on the application form. We cannot pay money into personal bank accounts or provide a cheque.

Reapplication

We require all applicants to wait a period of 12 months from the panel meeting the application is assessed in before reapplying. After this period we can receive applications from families who have previously applied.

Ownership

The Chronicle Sunshine Fund is not responsible for the maintenance and/or ownership of any equipment. The equipment is the responsibility of the organisation or the individual applying. This applies to any warranties, servicing or issues that arise once equipment has been delivered. Applicants are able to independently purchase warranties and insurance.

Unfortunately, we cannot accept donations of equipment, nor the return of used equipment that has previously been funded. We would however be delighted if you recycled the equipment to other parents or organisations such as Percy Hedley School and St Oswald's Hospice.

Communication

Communication from the charity will be via email; it is vital that the address listed is a working email account. If a professional is applying by proxy; they must ensure that should they change jobs etc that an alternative contact method – such as the office telephone number – is also provided.

- Applicants can expect emails at the following points:
- Upon receipt of application.
- Notification that the application is being taken to the equipment assessment meeting.
- The decision of the panel and expected timescales for funding.
- Any updates regarding funding.
- Notification that the equipment has been paid for and that the supplier will be getting in touch.
- Checking after delivery that everything is ok.

Contact Details

We ask that you contact us by email or on our Family and Application Helpline number. Bev works Monday – Friday and is available to speak to families and/or professionals via our Family Helpline: **07593298541**

The Family Coordinator
The Chronicle Sunshine Fund
2nd Floor, NCJ Media Offices
Eldon Court
Percy Street
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 7JB

bev.wright@thesunshinefund.org

Disclaimers

The Chronicle Sunshine Fund reserves the right to determine what equipment can and cannot be funded by its charitable funds.

The Chronicle Sunshine Fund reserves the right to decide how much funding an agreed application receives, even when the amount requested is under the maximum funding contribution amount. Funding for 100% of the equipment cost is not guaranteed and all cases are assessed on an individual basis.

Incomplete applications or applications submitted with insufficient information may be deferred or rejected.

The applicant is responsible for replying to requests for additional information within the timescales provided. The Chronicle Sunshine Fund will not follow up or chase applicants for information.

The Chronicle Sunshine Fund does not make recommendations of specific equipment. We can provide a list of suppliers that we have funded equipment from in the past.

The Chronicle Sunshine Fund is not responsible for the ownership and the ongoing maintenance of any equipment. The equipment is solely the responsibility of the organisation or the individual applying.



Guidelines for Professionals

As a professional working with children who have disabilities and special needs you may be approached by a family to write a letter of support. This document is a guide for what we need to be included in a letter of support.

Each application must contain an application form; two quotes (where applicable) and two letters of support from professionals.

We accept application forms written on behalf of families by a professional. This professional can also provide a supporting letter if appropriate; however they must work in the allied field to the type of equipment requested. If not, then two separate letters may be required by the panel. Please contact me if you have any questions regarding this.

Requirements:

- The letter must be on letter headed paper from your organisation.
- Let us know in what capacity you know and support the child/family.
- The letter must confirm the child's diagnosis and needs stated on the application form.
- You must state if you support the application for the specific piece of equipment.
- We need to know how and why you feel the equipment will be of benefit to the child.

- Whether you have played any role in assessing the child for the equipment.
- Confirm that to your knowledge, that the local authority/ NHS service could not fund this particular piece of equipment (or suitable alternative).
- Confirm that referrals to appropriate services have been made – e.g., for a specialist buggy or wheelchair to Disablement Services/Wheelchair Services/Community Loan Equipment Services.
- If the child has been refused assessment or allocation of the equipment, please explain why.
- If you still support the child's need for the equipment you need to state why.
- Our panel of specialist therapists require full assessments to have been undertaken for most types of equipment – no assessing professional can mean the application is deferred or declined.

Medical/Clinical Equipment:

- We would expect that for a piece of equipment that has a medical or clinical purpose – e.g., wheelchair, trike, or specialist seating; at least one letter of support from an Occupational Therapist and/or Physiotherapist.
- We would also expect that the person writing that letter had been involved in the assessment process; or was suitably satisfied that a risk assessment from yourself/the service was not necessary.

Educational/Developmental Equipment:

- For a piece of equipment that has an educational and/or developmental purpose we would ideally like a teacher, early years practitioner and/or speech and language therapist to provide one of the letters of support.

Communication Equipment:

- For a piece of equipment that has a communication purpose we would ideally like a speech and language therapist to provide one of the letters of support.

Submission:

- We ask that you give the family your letter of support and that they submit their application to us with the letters and quotes etc. You are not required to send us the letter directly but if it's more convenient for both you and the family; you are welcome to email the letter to me.
- You may be contacted after the panel has sat by the family if more information is required to approve the application.
- If you have any queries around your letter of support, please get in touch.

Beverley Wright – Family Coordinator - 07593298541

bev.wright@thesunshinefund.org

The Chronicle Sunshine Fund
NCJ Media Offices, 2nd Floor
Eldon Court
Percy Square
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 7JB