



UNGDOMSSTYRELSEN

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# Valuable Information

– on the Swedish National Board for Youth Affairs' government grants to youth organisations

# Government grants to youth organisations

Government grants to the operations of youth organisations are an important element of youth policy. Grants represent a concrete way of supporting non-profit involvement on the part of young people.

New rules on Government grants entered into force on 1 January 2002 and will be applied for the first time for the grant year 2004. The new Government grant can be given in the form of structure, development or establishment grants. The Government grant also includes a special grant.

The new rules are described in the Ordinance on Government Grants to Youth Organisations (Swedish Code of Statutes – SFS 2001:1060) and also in the National Board for Youth Affairs' Regulations on the application of the Grants Ordinance (National Agency for Education's Code of Statutes - SKOLFS 2001:32).

The rules that are described in the Ordinance on Government Grants to Youth Organisations (1994:61) apply until the end of the grant year 2003.

The new rules are presented in this information folder.

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# An objective-related grant system

In the spring of 1994, the Riksdag (Swedish Parliament) decided that the provision of Government grants to the operations of youth organisations would to an increased extent be related to the objectives of the grants according to the *Youth Policy Bill 1993/94:135*. The overall objectives are:

- to promote the democratic upbringing of children and young people,
- to promote equality between the sexes and equality between various groups of young people,
- to provide children and young people with meaningful leisure time, and
- to involve more young people in the activities of the associations.

According to the goal-related grant system, the National Board for Youth Affairs considers the operations of the organisations in relation to the objectives every third year. The system is based on each organisation reporting on its own operational development in relation to the overall objectives for the grants.

When conducting this review, the National Board for Youth Affairs proceeds on the basis of the national organisation's description of its own operation, together with the result produced upon an evaluation of the organisation's operation. Furthermore, the organi-

sation describes what concrete objectives are formulated on the basis of the overall objectives in preparation for the future three-year period. These concrete objectives will then be evaluated by the organisation in preparation for the next review. The Programme officers at the National Board for Youth Affairs have regular contact with both organisations and auditors during the processing of the grants.

The objectives for Government grants also constitute a basis for assessing applications by organisations that apply for special grants for development and renewal.



## Government grants given to youth organisations in order to:

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**promote the democratic upbringing of children and young people,**

This objective means that the structure of the organisation and content of the activities should promote democratic upbringing of children and young people. The purpose of the activities must thus not conflict with fundamental democratic principles. It is important that young people themselves have influence over and control the activities. They should have an opportunity to influence by, among other things, having voting power and by themselves being on the board and included in other decision-making bodies, both at the local and national level.

**promote equal opportunity between the sexes, and equality between various groups of young people,**

This objective means that regard should be given to the extent to which the organisations work to promote equality between the sexes, equality between Swedes and immigrants and also between other social groups in society. Regard should also be given to whether the organisations have a conscious recruitment philosophy aimed at getting more children and young people from deficient social environments. The objective means that organisations with, for example, racist ideas cannot receive grants.

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**provide children and young people with meaningful leisure time,**

This objective means that regard must be given to the extent to which the organisations conduct leisure activities through both member activities and so-called open activities.

The activities should, as regards content, have a leisure/recreational nature, i.e. a social, community or cultural content. This limits the possibilities for grants to organisations that primarily work for their members' financial interests. The objective is relevant in the sense that it defines what forms of activities the support relates to. However, whether the activities are felt to be meaningful or not should be determined by the individual members and participants.

**involve more young people in the activities of the associations.**

This objective means that the organisation should encourage more children and young people to become members of the organisation and more of the members to become active within the association activities. When assessing objective achievement, regard should be given to, among other things, the kinds of activities the organisation can offer, the relationship between the number of members and the number of activities and the extent to which those who participate in the activities also participate in the work of the association."

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# Requirements and guidelines for the Government grant

## Who can apply?

A grant may be applied for by an organisation that satisfies the following criteria:

1

**The organisation should be an open association in which membership is voluntary**

*Open association* means that the organisation is open to everyone who supports the rules of the organisation. *Membership is voluntary* means that everyone is at liberty to join or leave the organisation. The individual must also have personally applied for membership in the organisation.

2

**The organisation should be independently and democratically structured with an operation that does not conflict with democratic ideals**

*Independent* youth organisation means an organisation where the members themselves have an influence over and control the operations and finances of the organisation.

*Democratically structured* youth organisation means such an organisation where the members have powers according to the rules to affect the decisions of the organisation, either directly or through an elected representative.

Conducting an *operation that does not conflict with democratic ideals* means conducting an activity that does not violate the view of the equal value of all people. The right to vote, freedom of speech and equality in the eyes of the law are some of the most important component parts of democracy. Democracy also requires that the will of the people is respected and that majority resolutions are followed.

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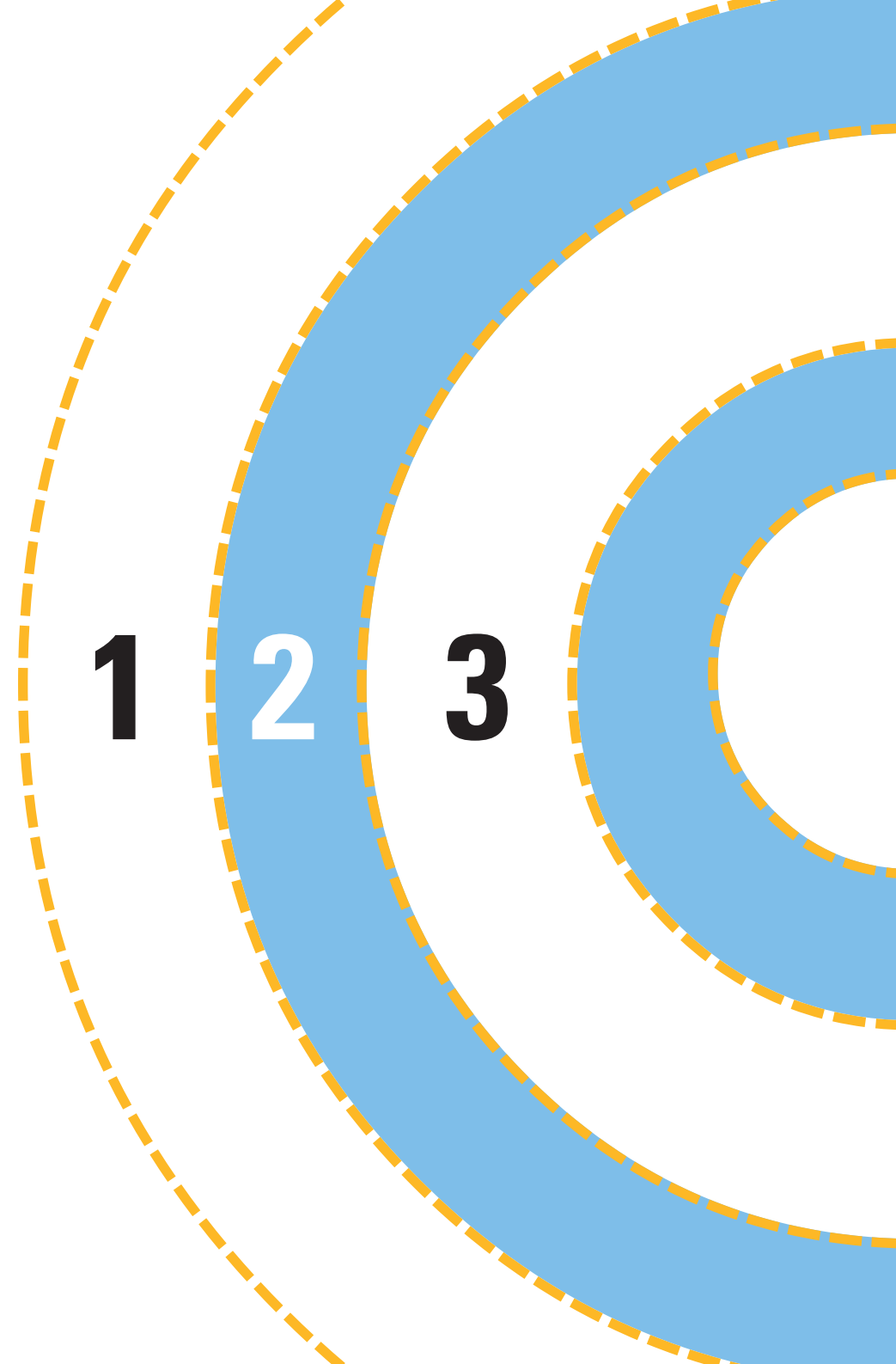
**The number of youth members of the organisation shall constitute at least 60 per cent of the total number of members of the organisation**

Youth members means those members aged 7–25 years.

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## Different levels in the Government grant system

### Structure grant

can be granted to a youth organisation that has at least 3,000 members aged 7–25 years and which has operational local branches in at least ten counties.

It can also be given to youth organisations for people with functional disabilities that have at least 400 members in at least four counties. Structure grants are allocated both in the form of a fixed grant, and in the form of a variable grant based on the total number of members and operational local branches.

### Development grants

can be given to youth organisations that have at least 2,000 members aged 7–25 and that have operational local branches in at least ten counties. The development grant is connected to developmental work in the organisation and is distributed in the form of a fixed grant.

### Establishment grants

can be given to youth organisations that have at least 1,000 members aged 7-25 and that have operational local branches in at least three counties. In order to be able to receive an establishment grant, the organisation shall present a development plan indicating what the objectives are for the development of the organisation. The organisations that receive establishment grants shall be considered each year in relation to the formal requirements, in relation to the overall objectives for Government grants, and in relation to the organisation's development plan. Establishment grants are distributed in the form of a fixed grant over a maximum of three years.



### **Relaxation grants**

If there are special reasons, and if these favour children and young people within the organisation, an organisation can receive a Government grant with relaxation. If an organisation wishes to apply for a grant with relaxation, it should submit an ordinary application and state that the organisation is applying for a relaxation. The organisation shall also state in the application the formal requirements from which they seek relaxation.

## Definitions

### Member

*Member* of youth organisation refers to a person who:

- is affiliated to a local branch within an organisation,
- has powers according to the rules to affect decisions on the organisation's activities and direction and
- in the year preceding the grant year has taken an active position regarding membership by having paid membership fees or applying for membership.

An organisation must prepare a system whereby an auditor has access to an information-base enabling a check to be made each year of the number of members. The organisation must in preparation for the audit be able to verify its membership numbers with a membership register or copies of individual member certificates where name, age and sex are stated.

Membership must be actively renewed each year, either through payment of the membership fee or by other positive action involving an application for membership and result in a signed application document.

## Active local branch

*Active local branch* within a youth organisation refers to such a branch:

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- that has adopted rules and is entered in the youth organisation's register of local branches,
- in which members and bodies selected by the members decide on the branch's operations and finances,
- that conducts activities,
- that has at least five members, and
- that can verify its activities in anticipation of each New Year in the form of an operations report. The report shall indicate which activities the local branch has conducted. It shall also indicate who is elected to the board or equivalent, the number of members of the local branch and also the national organisation to which the branch belongs. The activities shall be available for the national organisation's auditor and will constitute a basis for the auditor's review of the organisation's information concerning objectives at the time of the application for a Government grant.

An active local branch shall be a legal entity. A legal entity can itself conclude contracts, have employees, own things and be a party to legal proceedings. A non-profit making association becomes a legal entity after the members have adopted rules and elected a board. Registration is not required. All associations that have more than insignificant assets usually have an auditor.

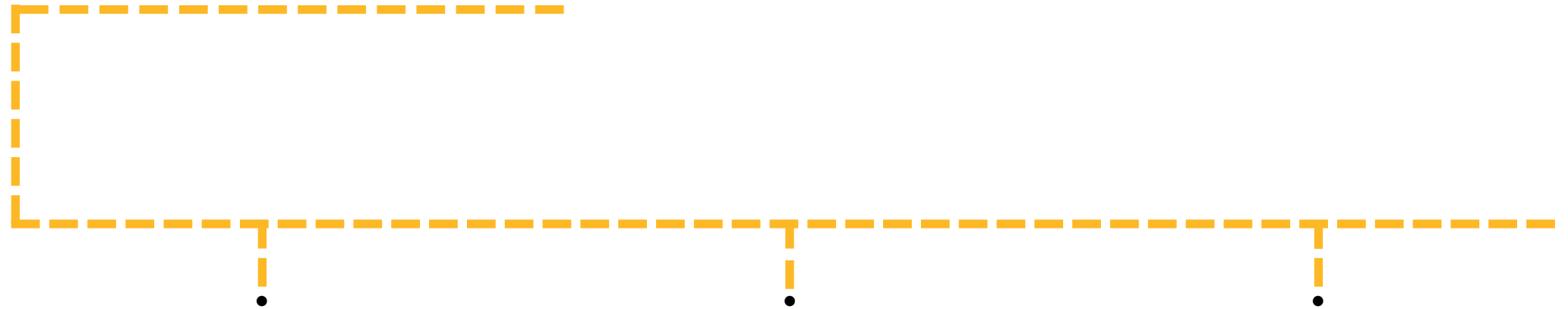
Two different national organisations cannot receive Government grants for the same local branch.

In order to make the grant system available for the renewal and development of the operations of organisations, the indirect activity grant has been removed. Local activities are no longer included as a basis for allocating grants. This does not mean that the importance of local activities has diminished.

The change aims at making it possible for the local branches of organisations to themselves, on the basis of their own situation, assess and define what activities they shall conduct.

# Special grant

– also part of the Government grant



Special grants can be applied for by such organisations that, through their activities, are considered to satisfy the objectives for the Government grant to youth organisations but that, because of their organisational nature, cannot come into question for Government grants in the form of structure, development or establishment grants.

A special grant can also be applied for by youth organisations entitled to Government grants for people with functional disabilities that have activities demanding substantial resources. The support is allocated in the form of a general grant.

A special grant may also be given to various forms of new national organisations with the aim of covering and supporting new youth initiatives.

# The application

The application for a structure, development, establishment or special grant for regular operations must have been received by the National Board for Youth Affairs no later than **1 October** in the year preceding the grant year to which the application refers. Information used as a basis for the grant shall be taken from the organisation's latest concluded operational year (base year). The application forms can be obtained from the National Board for Youth Affairs' Website: [www.ungdomsstyrelsen.se](http://www.ungdomsstyrelsen.se). They can also be ordered from the National Board for Youth Affairs.

The application shall include the information and documents that are referred to in the application form. The application may be rejected if an organisation's application is received too late and respite has not been granted.

For those organisations that have not received a Government grant previously, a separate consideration is conducted of the organisation's activities in relation to the objectives of the Government grant.

The organisations that apply for a special grant for development and renewal can submit their applications continuously through the year. The application should contain the information and documents as indicated in the application form.

# Audit and reporting

In order to facilitate the auditing of the organisation's grant application by the auditor, the National Board for Youth Affairs has, in consultation with FAR (Swedish Institute of Authorised Public Accountants), produced instructions for the audit of an organisation's application for a Government grant in the form of structure, development and establishment grants. These instructions can be seen, in full, at: [www.ungdomsstyrelsen.se/revisorsanvisningar](http://www.ungdomsstyrelsen.se/revisorsanvisningar).

Each organisation is responsible for examining the information and documents from the organisation's local branches that form the foundations of the organisation's application for a grant. It should be possible for an authorised public or approved accountant to check and certify the information. In order to be an approved accountant, an examination of professional competence as an approved (public) accountant is required. The equivalent for authorised public accountants is the higher examination of professional competence as an authorised public accountant, together with a test regarding suitability. These courses are organised by the Supervisory Board of Public Accountants.

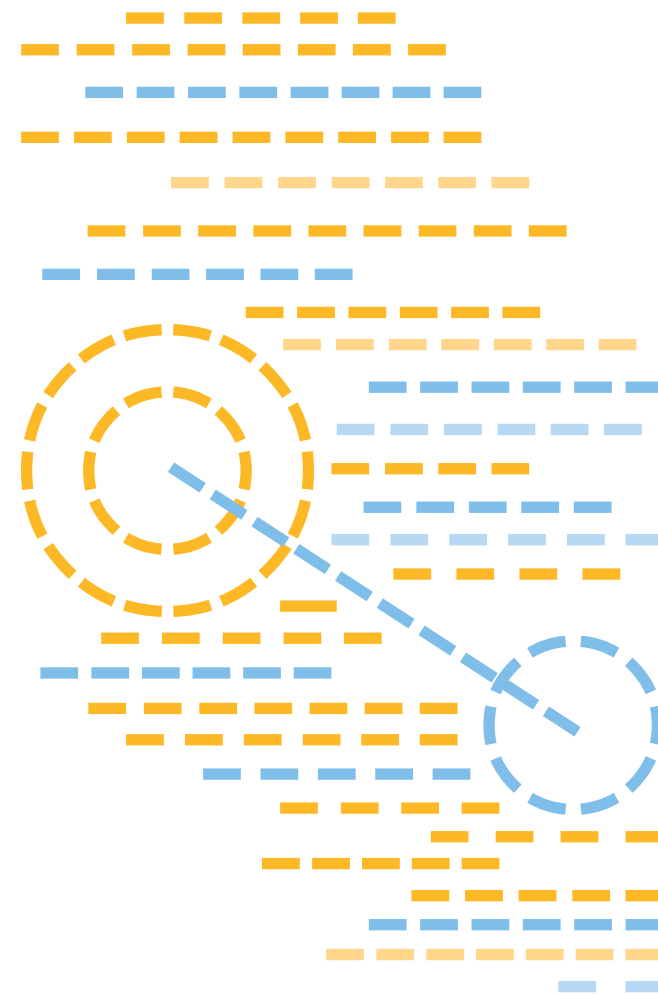
Those organisations that have been granted a special grant shall report to the National Board for Youth Affairs on how the grant has been used, no later than by the time stated in the decision. The report shall contain the information and documents that are referred to in the reporting form that the organisation received from the National Board for Youth Affairs.

An organisation that has received a Government grant is liable to provide the accounting documents, operations report and other information decided by the National Board for Youth Affairs.

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The National Board for Youth Affairs can initiate issues concerning grants to an organisation. The decision of the National Board for Youth Affairs concerning a grant cannot be appealed against.

The National Board for Youth Affairs can decide on repayment if a Government grant has been given incorrectly or at too high an amount. The National Board for Youth Affairs may also decide that a grant given shall not be disbursed if the grant has been given on the basis of incorrect information.



# Operational concept for the Swedish National Board for Youth Affairs

The Riksdag's objective for youth policy is that young people in Sweden will be able to live an independent life, they should have real influence and their resources should be utilised. The National Board for Youth Affairs is a government authority that works in cooperation with others to attain these objectives.

- We coordinate the follow-up of state and municipal ventures for young people
- We monitor developments, investigate and suggest measures to improve the living conditions for young people
- We work for the renewal of municipal and club activities for young people
- We are responsible for the EU programme Youth and other forms of international youth cooperation
- We distribute Government grants to organisations for young people
- We inform about and formulate opinions on issues relating to youth policy
- We communicate public information through the website [Ungdomsstyrelsen.se](http://Ungdomsstyrelsen.se)

Our target groups are primarily decision-makers and those who work with youth issues.