

Bursary policy

One of the Information Commissioner's aims is to support the public debate on privacy, data protection and freedom of information. To this end, the ICO hosts a number of conferences and events on these topics every year. We may also sponsor or contribute to events hosted by other organisations.

It is very important that all relevant groups are represented in this debate and that a wide range of views is heard. The Commissioner is aware that individuals, civil society and third sector groups are often under-represented at ICO conferences and events.

For that reason, the ICO has decided to put aside a small budget to provide help with the costs of travel, attendance and event fees for delegates whose perspectives might not otherwise be heard.

Can I apply for this bursary?

The following people / organisations can apply for the bursary.

- Civil society groups in the areas of privacy, data protection and freedom of information.
- Other charitable, not-for-profit and third sector groups where their attendance at an event would provide a valuable perspective on issues of privacy, data protection or freedom of information. An example might be patient groups in relation to a conference on confidentiality in the health sector.
- Private individuals.

The bursary is not available to representatives of private sector organisations or public authorities, or to journalists. It may be available to academics, if they cannot claim for the cost of attendance from their institution or funding body.

The bursary is limited to one person per organisation per event. Any provision of funding to cover travel, accommodation or delegate fees at an event is provided at the discretion of the Information Commissioner's Office.

What is the bursary available for?

The bursary is available for ICO events and events sponsored or co-hosted by the ICO.

The bursary is to cover or contribute towards the total cost of attending an event, including delegate fees, travel, and accommodation. It does not cover subsistence costs, such as meals. Applicants must demonstrate that any costs claimed for are necessary.

What conditions are there?

- If you are unable to attend the event or send a suitable alternative delegate, you must inform the ICO as soon as possible. You will have to refund any money already given by the ICO.
- You must only spend the money on attending the event, and provide evidence of this (such as receipts). If for any reason the eventual cost of attendance is lower than the bursary offered, the ICO will pay for the amount actually spent. If the ICO has given the bursary in advance, any excess money must be returned to the ICO.
- You must behave in an appropriate manner at the event. Inappropriate behaviour would include being disruptive or abusive, staging a political protest, or falsely claiming to represent the Information Commissioner. Delegates who are deemed to have acted in an inappropriate manner may be required to refund their bursary.
- You should provide brief feedback to the ICO on the value of the event. We may ask you for more formal feedback or to write a short review, but this would be voluntary.

How do I apply?

Fill in the **Bursary Application Form** and submit it at the same time as registering for the event. You will need to demonstrate why the event is relevant to you or your organisation and give a breakdown of the costs being applied for.

The ICO will inform you prior to the event whether assistance will be provided. Costs will usually be reimbursed after the event, when we have received appropriate evidence (such as receipts). However, we may provide money in advance where there is a strong argument for this.