



Financial Policies

These Policies set out various processes, practices and guidance governing the financial management of Impress. Their purpose is to set standards for the establishment and maintenance of sound financial controls.

The operation of these policies on a day-to-day basis is the responsibility of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

1. Accounting arrangements

The financial year will run from 1st April until 31st March the following year.

2. Banking arrangements

The Chief Executive may open or close an account for dealing with Impress funds, having first sought the views of the Finance & Audit Committee (F&AC), and with the approval of the Board. All accounts will be in the name of Impress. Banking mandates must be approved by the Board and formally signed off by two Key Business Persons, who will normally be the CEO and the Chair of the F&AC.

3. Reserves policy

It is the policy of Impress to maintain adequate free reserves. Given the start-up nature of the organisation and its limited income, its ability to build up material reserves will naturally be constrained in its early years. Reserves will be maintained in line with the policies set by the Board having taken advice from the Finance and Audit Committee.

4. Cash flow, treasury management, borrowing:

4.1. The Business Manager (BM) will ensure that cash flow is efficiently managed so that there are sufficient day-to-day cash balances at the bank to meet liabilities as they fall due. Surplus funds are to be invested in short-term overnight deposits and/or high-quality longer-term deposits in order to maximise interest payment returns and reduce risk by spreading funds across different bank accounts. Investment in other asset classes (e.g., equities) is not currently permitted.

4.2. The policy and practices for cash flow and Treasury management, including asset quality criteria, are to be reviewed on a regular basis by the F&AC. Any borrowing must be restricted to the amount and on terms authorised by the Board.

5. Donations

Any grants or donations will be reviewed by the Board in accordance with an ethical fundraising policy to ensure that they do not compromise the independence or integrity of Impress.

6. Restricted funds

Impress may on occasion receive funds that are specified as being for specific purposes or projects. It is important that such funds are only applied for these purposes and not for any other and that separate records of such expenditure are maintained.

7. Salary reviews

Salaries shall be reviewed formally once a year as of 1st April by the CEO who will consult the Chair and Senior Independent Director, except the CEO's salary, which will be reviewed by the Board.

8. Payment of salaries, Director fees and expenses

The BM or the Business Support Executive (BSE) under the supervision of the BM, is responsible for ensuring the timely and accurate payment of salaries, Director fees and expense reimbursement. For the avoidance of doubt, provision 11 below does not apply to payments made under this heading.

9. Pensions and other benefits

Will comply with the contractual pensions and other benefits arrangements as agreed by the Board. Impress will comply with pension regulations in place including auto-enrolment.

10. Procurement

10.1. It is important that optimum value for money should be gained for Impress from any purchase of goods or services.

10.2. For expenditure or a linked series of expenditures of up to £2,500, the BM is authorised to commit Impress without the need for additional authorisation, subject to the expenditure being part of the authorised budget for the year.

10.3. For expenditure up to £2,500 that is not part of the authorised budget for the year, the BM should email the CEO describing the details of the payment and if approved, the CEO should reply to authorise the expenditure.

10.4. Authorisation emails are stored in the Finance Authorisations folder on the server.

10.5. For expenditure or a linked series of expenditure in excess of £2,500 but less than £25,000, whether part of the authorised budget or not, the BM should email the CEO describing the details of the payment. The email should contain:

- Information on whether the expenditure is already included in the budget

- The budget line that the expenditure refers to
- Description of the item to be purchased including its price

10.6. The CEO should reply to the BM saying whether the payment is authorised. The BM will file it in the Finance Authorisations folder on the server.

10.7. Expenditure in excess of £25,000 follows the process for expenditure between £2,500 and £25,000 but also needs approval from the F&AC Chair. Approval should be filed in the Finance Authorisations folder on the server.

10.8. Approval of expenditures which an individual directly or indirectly benefits from, such as travel and subsistence, season ticket loans, personal equipment, personal development, and attendance at events, should never be authorised by the beneficiary of such expenditure. It should be authorised by another Key Business Person with full access.

10.9. Planned expenditure in excess of £25,000 should normally be subject to a tender process in which a minimum of three suppliers will be invited to submit a costs proposal in response to a specification document. All contracts awarded following a tender process should be approved by both the CEO and the Chair of the F&A

10.10. The CEO is responsible for:

- ensuring the Procurement policy is followed by all staff;
- ensuring orders are duly approved before Impress is committed to any expenditure or linked series of expenditures.

11. Payment of invoices

The BM or the BSA under the supervision of the BM, is responsible for ensuring the payment of valid invoices in respect of goods and services supplied to Impress. All uncontested valid invoices shall, where practicable, be paid within 15 calendar days of the date of receipt.

12. Authorisation of expenditure (other than salary-related payments)

12.1. The BM is responsible for liaison with Impress' bankers in relation to Accounts, the issue of cheques and online payments.

12.2. Payment of valid invoices and expenditures may be made by cheque, online banktransfer or using the company debit card. The company debit card is generally used for expenditure under £500. Larger expenditures should be paid by invoice where possible.

12.3. The BM is authorised to approve any expenses directly incurred by members of staff or the CEO up to £250. Any expenses incurred by members of staff over £250 must be approved by the CEO.

12.4. Any expenses incurred by the CEO over £250 must be approved by either the Chair of the Board or the Chair of F&AC.

12.5. Any expenses incurred by the BM must be approved by the CEO or, in their absence, the Chair of the Board or the Chair of F&AC.

12.6. Everyday banking takes place using the TSB account internet banking service. In addition to prior expenditure approval as set out above, all TSB internet banking payments require dual authorisation using the payment control function. The authorised signatories with full access rights to do so are set out in a banking mandate agreed upon by the Board. Individuals with signatory-only access have the authority to make Internet banking payments from the account but do not have the authority to approve Internet banking payments. Individuals with signatory-only access do not have the authority to make any other changes to the account or apply for products.

12.7. The other Impress accounts are primarily used as savings accounts. Transfers between accounts are authorised by the CEO and actioned by the BM or the BSA under the supervision of the BM. These transfers are independently reviewed by management accountants during their monthly control checks.

13. Capitalisation and depreciation

Expenditure incurred in the acquisition of fixed assets will be recorded in the balance sheet where the acquisition cost per item is £5,000 or more. Such assets will be depreciated in equal instalments over their estimated useful lives or 5 years whichever is shorter. Such lives will depend on the class of asset.

14. Fraud and corruption

14.1. It is the duty of all members of staff, management and the Board to immediately notify the CEO of any matter that involves, or is thought to involve, financial irregularity including fraud, corruption or any other impropriety.

14.2. If the impropriety is thought to involve any member of senior management, the member of staff shall notify the Chair of the F&AC or the Chair of the Board of their concerns.

15. The Bribery Act 2010

15.1. It is the duty of all members of staff, management and the Board to immediately notify the CEO or the Chairman of the Board of any matter that would constitute a bribery offence in accordance with the Bribery Act 2010. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary proceedings.

15.2. Bribery is defined as “the offering, promising, giving, accepting or soliciting of an advantage as an inducement for an action which is illegal or a breach of trust.” Offences under the Bribery Act 2010 include bribing another and being bribed. It does not matter whether the bribe is made directly or through a third party.

15.3. A Register of Gifts and Hospitality will be kept by the BM in which all benefits received or given by staff or directors will be recorded. Details on how to use the Register are available in the Code of Conduct.

16. Audit Requirements

16.1. The appointment of External Auditors is the responsibility of the Board, who are advised by the F&AC. The appointment of Internal Auditors is the responsibility of the Board on the recommendation of the F&AC.

16.2. The External and Internal Auditors shall be given such authority and access to people and information as they need to perform their responsibilities.

We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually.

Approved by: The Board of Impress

Date: 12 December 2023

Review Date: 12 December 2025

