DOUGLAS HOUGHTON MEMORIAL FUND

APPLICATION FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE WITH THE COSTS OF STUDIES OR WORK DESIGNED TO FURTHER ANIMAL WELFARE

Introductory notes

How was Lord Houghton associated with animal welfare?

Lord Houghton of Sowerby (1898 – 1996) had a life long interest in the welfare of animals. He was a vice-president of the RSPCA and the League Against Cruel Sports and Chairman of the Committee for the Reform of Animal Experimentation. He was elected President of the Scottish Society for the Prevention of Vivisection (now OneKind) in 1978. He was President of the Animal Welfare Year held in 1976-7 and aimed to ‘put animals into politics’. He persuaded all political parties to include an animal welfare commitment in their manifestos for the 1979 election. Lord Houghton was a key figure in debates on the replacement of the Cruelty to Animals Act 1876 with the Animal (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986, with legislation to ban the sale of pets from street markets and the tightening up of legislation protecting badgers. He was involved with the amendment of the Dangerous Dogs Act in 1991 and in 1993 promoted the idea of a new advisory committee to be run along the lines of the Farm Animal Welfare Council, now called the Companion Animal Welfare Council.

What are the purposes of the Fund?

The Douglas Houghton Memorial Fund (DHMF) has been established in memory of the life and work of Douglas Houghton and to acknowledge his tireless work on behalf of animals. The DHMF will provide financial assistance to individuals for the purposes of attending established University animal welfare courses including postgraduate courses or undertaking projects that further the cause of animal welfare.

What level of support is likely from the Fund?

The support that the DHMF can provide will vary from year to year but will generally provide the whole of the course fees for a maximum of two individuals and will contribute towards the expenses of other approved projects.

Am I eligible for an award?

In the case of University animal welfare courses you will need to have been accepted onto the course by the University concerned and complete a DHMF application form. For other projects you will need to complete an application form describing the project and the intended contribution to furthering animal welfare. To be eligible you will need to show a keen interest in and commitment to the welfare of animals.
What is the process for application?

Applications are made using a standard form that may be obtained from the organiser of the animal welfare course you wish to follow or, in the case of projects not associated with an animal welfare course, the secretary to the DHMF. Forms include a number of questions you must answer in your application and should be returned to the course organiser or the secretary to the DHMF by the date given in the application form. Candidates may be asked for interview and successful candidates will usually be notified by early July.

Publicity

Trustees retain the right to publicise awards and may feel that useful publicity for the work of the DHMF would be gained by arranging a formal presentation of the award at a public function or other event. Awardees would be expected to attend any such function.

How important to my application is the contribution to animal welfare that I expect to make?

Lord Houghton believed that humans should always seek to treat animals with kindness, understanding and compassion. It is the purpose of the fund to advance animal welfare. It is important to note that candidates are more likely to be successful if they can explain clearly how they intend to advance animal welfare, or to influence others in advancing animal welfare, after completing the study or work for which they have applied for support.

What if the course or work to be supported includes the use of animals as experimental subjects?

The welfare of any animals involved in any studies carried out as part of any course or work funded is a matter of particular concern. Any use of animals must not cause pain or distress but a project may include the observation of stressful situations in commercial or laboratory undertakings that would have occurred anyway including existing projects that might be licensed under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986. However, no project will be supported that requires the student to possess a personal licence under the Act. Further, the DHMF will not provide funds for any use of animals that requires a new project licence under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986.

Where carrying out a project is a part of an animal welfare course, the trustees will want to know of the topic selected. The report should explain any use of animals involved.

Are progress reports required?

The trustees require a report to be made by successful candidates at the completion of their course or project. The report should not exceed 300 words and should include an assessment how the course or project has assisted in enabling the awardee to advance a particular area of animal welfare or in their future career in general.