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| Who does this guidance apply to? |
| This guidance applies to RCN members |
| Purpose and description of the document |
| This guidance outlines the different sources of branch funds and how they can be applied. |
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| RCN Branch finances: funding sources and use of funds |
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RCN Branch finances: funding sources and use of funds

The following information is designed to inform you about the different sources of branch funds and the type of activities that it can be used for.

In summary there are four types of funding:

- [Branch administration funds](#)
- [Congress funding](#)
- [Board \(branch activity funding\)](#)
- **Income from members**

1. Branch administration funding

- 1.1. Also known as 'core funding', this type of funding funds the running of the branch for the year and should be used to benefit all members in the branch. It is provided by the RCN based on branch membership as at June of the previous year. For example, the 2025 branch budget would be based on membership numbers from June 2024. The funds are allocated by way of a budget to each branch.
- 1.2. Each branch receives £100 plus an additional 15 pence per member. For example, if a branch has 1,000 members, they will receive £250, as $(15p \times 1,000) + £100 = £250$.
- 1.3. The total annual budget allocated to the branch will be notified to the branch treasurer by 1 January each year. The Country and Regional offices will share this information.
- 1.4. Branch administration funding can be used for activities such as:
 - meeting room hire for branch meetings, AGMs and events.
 - travel to branch meetings, branch AGMs and branch events for branch officers*.
 - travel and parking at meetings and events for members if they are formally representing the branch.
 - travel to the RCN AGM or EGM by members asked to attend on behalf of a branch.
 - stationery, postage and other materials to support engagement with members
 - printing costs at 0.4p per page black and white print, and 3.8p per page print in colour.
 - if MS Teams is not available for branch meetings, the cost of using teleconference facilities.
 - branch recruitment activity and materials.
 - speakers at branch events.

- hospitality for speakers and guests at branch events.
 - gifts up to a value of £50 (such as flowers in the case of retirement, or serious illness or death of a serving member).
- 1.5. All expenses should be paid in accordance with the [RCN Expenses Policy for Unpaid Office Holders](#). Branch expense claim forms should be signed off by another Branch Officer * before they are sent to the country or regional office for processing.
 - 1.6. Administration funding cannot be used to send members to Congress ([please see section 2](#)) or for awards, bursaries, travel or training for representatives, or attendance by individual members on courses.
 - 1.7. Any funding remaining at the end of the financial year cannot be carried over into the following year. Branches should ensure that branch funds are utilised effectively throughout the year for the benefit of the branch.

***Branch officer means branch chair, secretary or treasurer.**

2. Congress funding for voting members

- 2.1. The RCN contributes to the cost of voting members attending Congress.
- 2.2. The number of voting members funded to attend is based on the formula of one member per 1,000 members of the branch or part thereof as at 01 September of the preceding year. For example, Congress 2025 voting places will be based on the branch membership as at 01 September 2024. If a branch has 6,300 members, they will receive funding for seven voting members to attend Congress.
- 2.3. The September dates allow branches to promote Congress attendance at their AGMs. In terms of congress funded voting places, they can use the AGM to encourage a broad representation from the branch membership to apply.
- 2.4. Country/Regional offices notify the branches of the total sum of money they have to spend on sending their voting members to Congress.
- 2.5. All expenses should be paid in accordance with the RCN Expenses Policy for Unpaid Office [Holders](#).
- 2.6. Any funding not used will be returned to general reserves after Congress each year.

3. Board funding (for branch activity)

- 3.1. Annually, there is a fixed amount allocated to all branches across the 4 countries. Each branch receives its contribution based on its total membership as at June of the previous year. The annual amount may differ year to year.
- 3.2. The amount allocated to each Country/Regional Board will be calculated as part of the annual budget process and shared with the Country and Regional offices by

October each year. The Country and Regional offices will then share with the Branches in line with their allocation.

3.3. The Boards will report annually to Council on their annual spend.

3.4. These funds can be used:

- to run continuing professional development events (CPD), and recruitment and retention activities.
- lobbying and campaigning activities.
- sending non-voting members to Congress (this is different to the Congress discretionary funding).
- to meet the cost of members attending national trade union marches.

NB: Boards may decide to spend some of the available funding on activities or events that will benefit branch members across the whole Country/Region.

NB: Any member who is funded to attend Congress from these funds cannot also use Congress funding.

3.5. All expenses should be paid in accordance with the [RCN Expenses Policy for Unpaid Office Holders](#).

3.6. Boards will work with branches to decide how to make the best use of the available funds.

3.7. Board Chairs working with Country Executive Directors/Regional Directors will ensure that the criteria by which they will be making decisions regarding the allocation of the funding and the dates of meetings at which funding allocation decisions will be made are clearly communicated to all their branches in a consistent and timely manner.

3.8. Board Chairs in liaison with Country/Regional offices must ensure there is a clear and auditable trail of all funding decisions made and that such decisions are communicated to all branches in a timely manner.

3.9. An application form has been developed, attached at [Appendix A](#) for branches to use to request funding for specific activities. Completed forms should be returned to their Country and/or Regional office.

4. Income from members

4.1. This section reflects the RCN's legal status and the fact that income generated from non-members is taxable.

4.2. Income can only be generated from other members, rather than the general public, and any income generation activity will be planned in conjunction with the Country/Regional office for activities in the Country or Regional operational plan. This is because income generated from non-members would be taxable and we must be able to account for how all income is generated, from whom and for what purpose.

4.3. We cannot fundraise, as the RCN is not a charity. Money can still be raised for charity but not through branch funds. For example, you can raise money for the RCN Foundation and pay the funds directly into the RCN Foundation accounts. Donations to other charities, including sponsorship, cannot be paid from branch funds but branches can income generate for other charities and any funds raised should be paid direct to that charity.

5. Planning and budgeting

5.1. Each branch (Chair, Secretary and Treasurer) will receive a monthly management report of its administration funds budget. The Branch Treasurer provides a report at each branch meeting and the AGM.

5.2. Boards prepare a Country/Regional board plan which includes branch activities and a budget which includes all expenditure planned by branches during the year in question. This means that your board will be responsible to Council for pulling together your Country/Regional business plan and budget, and monitoring the delivery of the plan within budget. The branch will be accountable to the board for the delivery of their part of the plan in the budget.

Updated September 2024

This guidance will be reviewed in September 2027.

Appendix A

Application form for RCN branches to request funding for specific activities.

Name:

Country/region:

Name of branch:

| Activity | Timing of activity | Costings | Target audience | Purpose of activity / event |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|--|---|--|
| <i>Example: Run a study day</i> | <i>October 2024</i> | <i>Example: Venue Hire -£500 Catering - £300 Publicity materials - £200 Total - £1,000</i> | <i>Example: Students (member & non-member) in x region catchment</i> | <i>Example: Recruit new members / promote and raise awareness of RCN</i> |
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