

## Lord Rootes Fund Frequently Asked Questions:

### What is the Lord Rootes Fund?

The Lord Rootes Fund is an opportunity for current Warwick students to fund a self-development project or venture to encourage creativity, innovation, and positive impact. Since its conception in 1967, the fund has supported over 1,500 students and over 600 different projects covering innovation and enterprise, personal challenges, the arts and culture, and campus and community initiatives.

The Lord Rootes Fund has two funding tracks, **Develop Yourself**, for projects focusing primarily on personal development and challenges, and **Develop Your Idea**, which allows students to obtain proof of concept funding for a budding business venture or social enterprise. Both tracks should aspire to have a positive impact on the wider Warwick community and beyond.

### Am I eligible to apply for the Lord Rootes Fund?

Students who are full-time or part-time students at Warwick, undergraduate or postgraduate, on a course of at least one year, are eligible to apply. Students who are about to graduate are still eligible for the fund provided the project duration is limited to the summer vacation (i.e., the project ends by October). For a full breakdown, please visit the website.

### Can I apply as a team?

Team submissions are accepted. If you are working as a team, please submit only one application form and include the contact details of all team members. At least one team member is required to meet for a 1:1 or virtual office hours, or the submission will not be accepted.

### What is the difference between the Develop Yourself and the Develop Your Idea track?

**Develop Yourself** projects focus primarily on personal development and challenges. Examples of a Develop Yourself project may include but are not exclusive to, a documentary, film, photography exhibition, performance, arts, or cultural initiatives, educational or outreach activities, or campus and/or community projects.

**Develop Your Idea** projects are focused on providing proof of concept funding for budding ventures or social enterprises that are innovative, viable, sustainable, and have a positive impact on society. Examples of a Develop Your Idea project may include but are not exclusive to, conducting market research for a potential business idea, testing an early-stage prototype with users, collecting feedback, and running a short-term campaign to assess whether your idea is viable, scalable, and sustainable.

If you are unsure which track is most appropriate, please book a 1:1 to discuss the idea.

### How much funding would I receive?

Students are eligible to receive between £100 and £3,000. Students will receive 100% of the funding if they are successful. Students are strongly encouraged to apply only for the minimum level of funding they need to carry out the project. A full financial breakdown is required as part of the application process.

### What is the application process?

1. Prospective applicants must create a profile on Startium. All communications will run through Startium, including hosting for Virtual Office Hours, support, and updates.
2. All applicants must attend either a Lord Rootes Fund 1:1 or Virtual Office Hours to discuss their ideas prior to applying. This is the opportunity to discuss whether your idea is viable for receiving funding, and how to best use the funds to support your project/venture.

3. To apply, students must complete an application form **by the end of Week 6**, including a financial breakdown and short video submission. Full details can be found on the application form on the Lord Rootes Fund website.
4. Upon submission, the application is reviewed by Warwick Enterprise to ensure that all fields are complete. Incomplete submissions will be returned with feedback and students will be encouraged to submit an updated application in the next funding round. Once the quality check is passed, interview invitations will be sent out.
5. Lord Rootes Fund interviews will take place **in person in Week 8** with members of the Lord Rootes Fund Committee. Interviews will last approximately 30 minutes.
  - a. Students who require accommodations should email [christopher.p.wilkinson@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:christopher.p.wilkinson@warwick.ac.uk) at the earliest opportunity.
6. The full Lord Rootes Fund committee will meet to make a final decision on which projects to support. Once confirmed, successful applications will be notified beginning **Week 10** and will be asked to complete a funding agreement. Once the funding agreement has been signed, the process of releasing funding will begin. Students who are unsuccessful will receive written feedback and may be invited to apply for subsequent rounds.
7. Three months after receiving funding, students are expected to complete an impact report submission, detailing their project, the skills they learned, and their next steps.

### **What should I expect from the application form?**

The application form is your first opportunity to share your idea. Students are required to provide a project overview, details on their project, a financial breakdown, and a video proposal.

### **What should I expect from the quality check?**

The quality check is in place to ensure that the application meets the required criteria. This includes ensuring that all aspects of the application are completed to a sufficient standard and ensuring that funding the project does not expose the Lord Rootes Fund or the University of Warwick to any harm or reputational risk. The quality check is carried out by members of the Warwick Enterprise team.

### **What should I expect from the interview?**

The interview is the opportunity for you to present your project/venture in person to members of the Lord Rootes Fund Committee. You will be invited to deliver a 5-minute presentation, followed by questions and answers from the committee. During your interview, you should seek to answer the following questions: who are you and what do you want to do? How will your project or venture impact you and the wider community? How do you plan on using the funding?

### **What should I expect from the impact report?**

The impact report is the opportunity to share your learnings. It is the chance to not only reflect on your experience but also to inspire the next generation of applicants. You will be expected to complete a short form asking how your project went, and what you learned from the project, and to share advice for further applicants.

### **What support is available to help with my application?**

When students register their interest in the Lord Rootes Fund, they will be invited to join Startium, a group forum where information will be shared on how to produce a successful application.

Students will also be able to meet with an advisor for 1:1 support on their specific project or venture, as well as virtual office hours (please note, attending one of these sessions is mandatory for an eligible application).

The Warwick Enterprise Pathway Programme, which runs concurrent with the Lord Rootes Fund, also provides the skills necessary for developing your idea into a viable concept, as well as how to effectively budget a project or new venture. The Pathway Programme runs from Weeks 2-7, and the sessions have been designed to fit alongside the Lord Rootes Fund application process.

### **What makes a strong Lord Rootes Fund application?**

There is no 'right' format for the application. However, historically, strong applications share the following characteristics:

- Projects/ventures that have a clearly defined objective, and scope, and can clearly identify the desired outcomes to be attained by the beneficiaries specified.
- Projects/ventures that carefully consider the learning opportunity, and how the fund will benefit them in their future personal and professional ambitions.
- Projects/ventures that have a thorough timeline and offer contingency plans should projects be delayed.
- Projects/ventures that have carefully considered all risks (including sustainable and ethical) and detailed how they will be mitigated, or the effect be reduced.
- Projects/ventures that offer a thorough and carefully considered financial plan, including details on how the funds will be spent responsibly, and provide quotes from services when necessary and possible.

Further guidance on producing a strong application will be provided through the Pathway Programme, 1:1 sessions, virtual Office Hours, and guidance through Startium.

### **What makes a strong video proposal?**

For the video proposal, students are expected to answer the following questions:

- What is the project/venture that you are working on?
- Why is this project important to you?
- What skills do you expect to learn?
- How will your project/venture make a difference?

The video is not assessed on the production quality, but the information you share with the committee. Tips on recording a video can be found [here](#). A phone recording or screen recording will suffice. If you require assistance, please reach out to the Secretary.

### **What does the Lord Rootes Fund not support?**

There is no straight answer to this question as each application is treated on a case-by-case basis. However, the following projects are typically not supported:

- Projects that are part of an applicant's programme of study or planned future research.
- Projects that are undertaken by university staff who are undertaking full or part-time study concurrently with their employment.
- Tours by sports teams.
- Acquisition of personal equipment will be determined on a case by case basis. We strongly recommend that applicants look to hire equipment from reputable and verified service providers where possible.
- Projects that may expose the Lord Rootes Fund or the University of Warwick to any harm or reputational risk.

Furthermore, while it is determined on a case-by-case basis, it is recommended that applicants adhere to the following best practice:

- For proof-of-concept funding, we highly recommend that Lord Rootes Funds are not used for the development of finalised collateral.
- For business ventures, while the fund can support the development of initial prototypes, the fund is not able to fund large stock orders.
- If you require the procurement of services, such as website development, software development, or branding, we request you utilise verified services within the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland, and ideally within the Coventry and Warwickshire area.
- Where possible, we strongly suggest you work with other students if you require the services listed above, given the nature of the fund being a self-development fund.
- Where possible, we strongly encourage applicants to hire or rent equipment, as opposed to purchasing personal equipment (e.g., bookings for a recording studio are more likely to be accepted than asking for a personal microphone). The acquisition of personal equipment will be determined on a case-by-case basis.
- If you are seeking funding for a course, we encourage you to explore free alternatives or existing development opportunities available at the University of Warwick prior to asking for funding.

The Committee reserves the right to require repayment of the entire award should it reasonably determine that the award has not been used solely for the purposes set out by the individual, group or society in their application or has been used wastefully, ineffectively or in a manner inconsistent with the spirit and principles of the Lord Rootes Fund or if the project has been poorly attempted or largely unattempted.

### **Who sits on the Lord Rootes Fund Committee?**

The 2023-2024 Lord Rootes Fund Committee is as follows:

Lord Rootes Fund Committee Chair: David Plumb, Innovation Group, University of Warwick

Academic Representatives:

Student Experience Representatives:

External Representatives: Giles Avery, Richard Dyson, Matthew Sephton

Students' Union Representative: VP Societies

Lord Rootes Fund Committee Secretary: Christopher Wilkinson, Innovation Group, University of Warwick ([christopher.p.wilkinson@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:christopher.p.wilkinson@warwick.ac.uk))

Should you wish to contact the committee, please reach out to the Secretary. Messages to individual members of the committee will not be responded to.

### **I have questions, who do I contact?**

There are multiple ways to ask questions. We strongly recommend using the forum within Startium to ask questions, as prospective applicants may share the same questions.

For individual questions, please either schedule a 1:1 or email the Lord Rootes Fund Secretary, Christopher Wilkinson, at [christopher.p.wilkinson@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:christopher.p.wilkinson@warwick.ac.uk).

### **Who was Lord Rootes?**

Lord Rootes was a noted Coventry motor manufacturer and the innovative Chairman of the Promotion Committee which founded the University of Warwick. Lord Rootes' untimely death in 1964 prevented him from being installed as the University's first Chancellor. To commemorate Lord Rootes' commitment to innovation and enterprise and to the University of Warwick, distributors of Rootes Group products generously contributed to a fund to encourage student enterprise and effort, supporting imaginative projects by groups and individual students.