

How our Eligibility Criteria was chosen

In order to obtain charitable status, the SMF had to clearly identify who would be eligible for our SMF Support. Below we look at each criteria and explain how we arrived at the decision.

Why did we choose 11- 25 yrs?

The SMF has chosen to support neurodiverse individuals within the age range of 11 to 25 years for several strategic reasons. One key consideration is the desire to concentrate resources where they can have the most significant impact. By focusing on this specific age group, the SMF can direct its efforts more effectively and make a substantial difference in the lives of individuals who are at a critical stage of development.

Individuals within the 11 to 25 age range are still in the process of developing coping mechanisms and strategies for navigating the challenges associated with neurodiversity. This developmental stage is pivotal for acquiring essential life skills and adapting to the demands of adulthood. By providing support during this formative period, the SMF aims to empower these individuals with the tools and knowledge needed to face challenges head-on.

Furthermore, the SMF recognises that young people in this age range often require additional support in terms of empowerment and confidence building. Adolescence and early adulthood can be particularly challenging for neurodiverse individuals as they strive to find their identity, build social connections, and pursue education or employment opportunities. By offering targeted assistance during this critical period, the SMF can positively influence the trajectory of these individuals' lives.



It's important to acknowledge that resources are not limitless, and if there were no constraints, the SMF would be stretched too thin, trying to provide support across all age groups. By focusing on the 11 to 25 age range, the SMF can allocate resources more efficiently, ensuring a deeper and more meaningful charitable impact on the specific challenges faced by individuals within this demographic.

Finally, the choice to concentrate efforts on the younger generation is rooted in the belief that, as individuals progress beyond the age of 25, they are more likely to be in a relatively stable place compared to their adolescent counterparts. While this is a generalised view and individual circumstances vary, the SMF aims to address the unique needs and vulnerabilities associated with the developmental stages of adolescence and early adulthood.



In summary, the SMF's decision to support neurodiverse individuals aged 11 to 25 is driven by the desire to maximise impact, empower individuals during their critical developmental years, and the awareness that the older generation is likely to be in a more stable place than their adolescent counterparts.

Why are we only supporting those in England & Wales?

This decision stems from the challenging process of officially registering as a charity and the guidance received from the charities commission.

During the arduous process of obtaining official charitable status, the charities commission advised the SMF on the importance of careful regulation. The commission emphasised that regulating a charity is a complex task, and doing so across a smaller region, such as England and Wales, would be considerably more manageable. In light of this advice, the SMF has chosen to limit its geographical scope during its initial years of operation.

The charities commission suggested that by concentrating its efforts on a smaller region, the SMF could demonstrate its effectiveness and impact more easily. By proving itself over a defined area, the charity can provide tangible results and showcase its commitment to its mission. This approach not only simplifies the regulatory process for the commission but also increased the likelihood of the SMF's application being a success.



Importantly, the commission recommended that once the SMF has established itself and demonstrated its capabilities within England and Wales, it can then consider applying to extend its support to a broader geographical region. The rationale behind this phased approach is that, by the time the SMF seeks to expand its reach, the commission will have gained a thorough understanding of the organisation's operations, governance, and impact. This familiarity is likely to enhance the chances of receiving approval for an extension of the charity's coverage.

In summary, the SMF's decision to support neurodiverse individuals exclusively in England and Wales reflects a strategic approach to facilitate the charity's official registration. By focusing on a smaller region initially, the SMF aims to prove its effectiveness, simplify the regulatory process, and increase the likelihood of successfully expanding its support to a wider geographic area in the future.

Why are we supporting Neurodiverse people & why within the world of Engineering & STEM?

To be eligible for SMF support, individuals must be neurodivergent and share an enthusiasm for engineering, making, or other STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) activities.

This specific criteria is deeply connected to the essence of Sanjay Mortimer's passion and endeavours during his life. Sanjay struggled with his neurodiversity and was a fervent supporter of STEM fields, particularly Engineering. His dedication to these areas and the impact he made within them inspired the establishment of the SMF in his memory.

The foundation aims to identify neurodivergent individuals who may possess talent and interest in STEM activities but could potentially face challenges through traditional educational systems or be overlooked without specialised support. By focusing on this specific intersection of neurodiversity and STEM interests, the SMF seeks to carry forward Sanjay's legacy.



The SMF's mission goes beyond providing support; it is dedicated to helping these individuals recognise the value of their differences. The foundation aims to empower them, fostering confidence and self-belief. By celebrating neurodiversity and encouraging individuals to embrace their unique perspectives, the SMF aspires to create a pathway for these talented individuals to make significant contributions to the world of science and engineering.

In essence, the SMF is not just a support system but a catalyst for positive change. By nurturing and empowering neurodivergent individuals with a passion for STEM, the foundation envisions creating a community of contributors who, like Sanjay Mortimer, can impact and shape the future of science and engineering while simultaneously breaking down barriers for others who may face similar challenges. The eligibility criteria thus encapsulates the very spirit and purpose of the Sanjay Mortimer Foundation.