

CONGRESS SUPPORT POLICY

Please note, due to limited funds, to be eligible for the Congress Support Scheme you must be a visually impaired UK resident and a member of the BCA.

OBJECTIVES

1. To encourage and give financial assistance to visually impaired UK BCA members who have faithfully attended our own events, to also take part in mainstream congresses.
2. To seek to distribute funds more equally amongst visually impaired UK BCA members who have not recently received funding to play in international tournaments, by offering funds for them to play in other non BCA chess events.
3. To help promote the good work of the BCA amongst the chess community and the wider media.

FUNDING AND ELIGIBILITY

Under the Congress Support Scheme, eligible VI UK resident BCA members can claim funds to assist them in playing in a non BCA chess congress, whether the event be in the UK or overseas. Moreover, claims can be made for both mainstream chess congresses and most tournaments that are specifically aimed at VI players but are not run by the BCA. Please note however that the Congress Support Scheme cannot be used for the Windermere event or the Haaksbergen event which have separate funding support arrangements.

Under the scheme, during the period of the BCA financial year (1 October to 30 September) an eligible member can claim up to £300 over a maximum of four mainstream chess events. These claims should be appropriate to expenditure.

To be eligible to claim under the Congress Support Scheme you must fulfil all of the following criteria:-

1. You must be a visually impaired member of the BCA who is a UK resident.
2. You need to have played in at least one BCA tournament during the previous BCA financial year (1 October to 30 September).
3. You must not have received funds for £300 or more for an international event that took place during either the current or previous BCA financial year. Should a member who has accepted an invitation to play in such an event later decide to withdraw, then provided that the BCA can find a suitable replacement or have the monies refunded, the event in question would have no bearing on the members eligibility to claim a Congress Support grant. If the member in question was unable to attend the particular event due to illness or any other reason seemingly beyond his/her control, and a suitable replacement could not be found and the money could not be refunded, then in exceptional circumstances the Committee can use its discretion to not count the event against the member's eligibility to claim under the Congress Support Scheme.

GUIDES

To encourage eligible members who may be apprehensive about attending their first mainstream event or non BCA overseas congress, a novice to such events (which includes a person who has not attended such an event for ten years or more) can also claim up to £150/£75 (appropriate to expenditure) for a sighted guide.

PERSONAL ASSISTANTS

In exceptional circumstances, where it is deemed by the Congress Support Subcommittee that a person eligible to the scheme would not be able to partake of its benefits without being accompanied by a personal assistant, extra funds should be allocated for this purpose at the discretion of the BCA Committee. In such cases, the personal assistant would receive the same funding as the person he/she is assisting (subject to expenditure). However, the Committee reserves the right to refuse such a claim if it is felt to be unwarranted, and such funding will only be granted in cases of profound disability.

HOW TO CLAIM

In order to make a claim there are three simple steps:-

1. 1. Contact the congress support officer at least one week prior to the event. Retrospective claims will not normally be accepted.
2. 2. Send a receipt or proof of expenditure to the Treasurer on return from the congress. Claims can include entry fee, accommodation, travel and any other reasonable expenses. The Congress Support Scheme does not cover claims for insurance.
3. 3. Provide feedback on the event to the congress support officer. This does not need to be formal, and will be stored as an anonymous record for our database. It may benefit other BCA members thinking of attending the same event in the future.

Please note that, in the spirit of the congress support scheme, failure to complete all of the above steps may mean that we cannot guarantee that your claim will be processed successfully, as the scheme is subject to available funds.

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