

DOCUMENT RETENTION & ARCHIVE POLICY

Introduction

Alt Valley Community Trust (AVCT) creates and holds a wide range of recorded information. Records need to be properly retained to enable AVCT to meet its business needs, project and legal requirements, to evidence events or agreements in the event of allegations or disputes and to ensure that any records of historic value are preserved.

Conversely, the permanent retention of records is undesirable and disposal is necessary to free up storage space, reduce administrative burden and to ensure that AVCT does not unlawfully retain records for longer than necessary (particularly those containing personal data).

This policy supports AVCT in demonstrating accountability through the proper retention of records and by demonstrating that disposal decisions are taken with proper authority and in accordance with due process.

Document retention requirements vary with each type of funding and the organisation concerned, therefore the longest retention period required by the project's funding make-up and/or Grant Recipient's/funders' policy must be used.

Documents will be held either as originals or certified true copies of the originals.

Scope

This policy covers paper, electronic files, (including database, Word documents, powerpoint presentations, excel spreadsheets, webpages, emails, photographs, scanned images, CD-ROMs and video tapes. This list is not exhaustive and may cover records held in other formats.

AVCT will keep records of

- Invoices and bank statements or equivalent to show that the payments were made
- Participant and personnel files containing personal information to prove eligibility to join the project and right to work in the UK
- evidence of auditable, accountable match funding, including copies of match funding acceptance letters and bank statements showing receipt of match funding
- Compliance of project specific publicity requirements
- Copies of all publicity material in line with AVCT's publicity policy

- Compliance with equal and diversity, health and safety and environmental sustainability requirements
- Documentary evidence of outputs and results
- Audit information and associated paperwork
- Databases detailing project information
- where indirect overheads costs and salaries have been apportioned to the project, records will show the agreed methodology for calculating these costs

AVCT will keep retain their own project related documentation and also that of the delivery partners named in the funding agreement.

Records will be clearly marked and labelled with appropriate project details and referenced accordingly.

Length of retention

All project documents will be kept for 10 years after the final European funded claims are paid by the ESF Managing Authority and then only disposed of with the authorization of the Managing Authority. Original documents or verified true copies of the documents relating to projects and its implementation and financing, will need to be available for any associated audits during and after the end of the project.

AVCT will comply with and assist the Managing Authority to comply with document retention requirements under the applicable State Aid rules. Such records will be kept for 10 years after the last aid is granted under the scheme.

Financial records will be kept for 7 years or longer depending on any additional audit requirements that may be necessary.

Loss of key members of staff

AVCT will ensure that there are sufficient numbers of project staff aware of the location of project evidence to ensure that if a member off staff leaves the organisation unexpectedly for whatever reason, then alternative members of project staff will be in a position to access and retrieve the relevant information as required.

- During the project's lifetime
- Following Project closure

Given the long timescales that are involved with document retention, AVCT will retain the systems, software, and equipment necessary to read any electronic format in the future.

AVCT has secure long term storage for all records and can adhere to potential future audits from the European Commission. The storage locations are in the archive rooms at The

Communiversity Building, Altcross Road, Liverpool, L11 0BS. Only staff approved by the Chief Executive or his deputy will have access to the document storage locations following an access request to demonstrate a legitimate need.

Communication

The policy will be available to staff and accessible at all times.

Review

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis and AVCT will review the document retention policy and modify it as new technology becomes available.

Destruction of records

No destruction of a record(s) should take place until

- Permission is given for records to be destroyed by the relevant Managing Agent;
- the record is no longer required by any part of the business;
- no work is outstanding by any part of the business

- **Organisational Closure**

Should the organisation cease to exist then the records would be transferred to a secure location with access arranged if needed and the associated document location register updated and available to aid easy retrieval of any documents that may be required. This will be following discussion and agreement with the managing agent or relevant authorities or funders.

Document retention will also be in line with the requirements as detailed in the project funding agreement.