

# Association of GB Athletic Clubs

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Mr Phil Smith  
Director of Sport, Sport England  
21 Bloomsbury Street, London WC1B 3HF

Dear *Mr Smith*

## Your Great North Run Foundation (GNRF) Grant

Thank you for your letter of the 29<sup>th</sup> October which, as requested, we have put on the ABAC website. We note that awards are made only to not-for-profit Companies. Free standing Companies of this type often have Directors and employees who are also the shareholders. We note that while no dividends are paid by such Companies there is no external control over remuneration and expenses and no requirement to publish detailed accounts. They are opaque.

Our concern about the recent award to GNRF is that it is not a free standing and individual Company but is owned and controlled by Nova Marketing Ltd which is highly profitable. There are a number of issues which we find puzzling, namely:-

- Its principal activity is to commission and present artwork as part of the GNR culture.
- It is the publicity and cultural development arm of the Nova group.
- It is already in receipt of Lottery funding via an Arts Council grant.
- The Sport England award is nearly double GNRF's annual turnover.

In order to carry out the targets relating to your award it would appear that involvement of other parts of the profitable Nova group will be required. At that point such matters as costs, profit centres and related matters become difficult to monitor. It may be of course that these were considered prior to your grant award. It would be helpful to understand the due diligence process carried out by Sport England and the Lottery Commission in this case.

Please take this letter as a Freedom of Information request for Sport England to provide to ABAC all documents including emails which were produced in regard to this matter.

You also responded to the point regarding reduced funding for grass roots athletics. I shall be replying on behalf of ABAC with regard to this matter separately.

Yours in sport

*William Laws*

W R Laws, Chairman ABAC

cc. FOI Office Sport England