



Your Community Space

Helpful tips to
apply for funding
and grants



Tips for applying for grants

This guide is to help you get your organisation prepared for applying for grants and funding.



RESEARCH RESEARCH RESEARCH!

Some funders are happy to talk to you ahead of an application being submitted. Ask questions to get an idea about the types of projects funders are interested in supporting.

As part of your research it is good practice to check you meet the criteria and are eligible for your chosen grant. There are also grant application guidelines available to help you through the process.

Read all eligibility criteria and guidance notes thoroughly so you don't waste your time applying for an inappropriate grant.

In addition to ensuring that your organisation is eligible you must also check that your planned activity also fits with the criteria.

Taking the time to do your research will help you find the right grant to support your project.



Be Prepared

Take the time to gather all the information you need; you can usually find what is required in the guidance notes.

A good exercise would be to get yourself 'Grant Prepared' look into your governance.

Has your constitution been recently updated, are all your policies and procedures up to date?

Get support and advice, there are numerous organisations across the UK that can help you prepare for grant applications and with your governance.

All these national organisations will regional offices where you can find additional support.

- England – NCVO <https://www.ncvo.org.uk/>
- Northern Ireland- NICVA <https://www.nicva.org/>
- Scotland – SCVO <https://scvo.org.uk/>
- Wales – WCVA <https://www.wcva.org.uk/>



Demonstrate Need

Provide evidence and a summary of the community consultation you have carried out to support your application.

Case studies, impact statements and references are helpful to include. If you have carried out any community engagement exercises the results of these should also be referenced in your application.



Show evidence of partnerships created to support your bid this could be e.g. local people who use your space, regular hirers and community groups.

It is also beneficial to highlight any support you receive from community councils, local and corporate businesses.

Tell your story and the social impact your organisation has on the local community.



Be Clear

Do you have a business plan for your organisation?

Be clear about your objectives and the problem they will solve. Address how they fit into the overall plan for your organisation.

It helps to keep your application succinct.

Sometimes applicants provide too much detail in their funding bids. However, give enough detail that funders can understand what you're proposing, how it will be carried out and the feasibility of the project.

Avoid buzz words, acronyms and jargon, use diagrams and figures where appropriate, and use plain English as much as possible. The clearer the application the easier it is for funders to understand.

Think of your project as a story with a beginning middle and end. The beginning is the problem or issue that needs addressing. The middle describes the solution your project will provide. The end is the outcomes and results of your project.

Funders need to be able to see straight away what you are going to do, how you will do it, what you need, who will benefit and why they should support you.



Finance

Obtain more than one quote for all works required for the project.

Include information from all your fundraising activities, funders like to see you are making your own efforts.

Show if the funded project will help towards making your hall become more sustainable.

Be realistic with your budget.

Make sure you're aware about what you can and cannot ask for.



Outline if the proposed project will provide income for your space. For example, an application for an extension may provide an additional room to hire out.

Gather input from your group or committee to ensure all costs are identified.

Demonstrate that your organisation has a strategy for long-term financial planning.

Ensure you have a financial controls policy and make reference to it in your supporting information.



Experience

Funders like to see the group has access to the relevant skills to deliver the project.

Provide a summary of the skills and experience of committee members.

Detail all the credentials of all the contractors being considered for the project.

Show funders you have the skills and support framework in place to manage the project.

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Essential 'Grant Housekeeping'

- Allow plenty of time to complete the application, don't rush
- Check and double-check your application
- Ask for help to proof your final draft.
- Make sure you have answered all the relevant questions
- Ensure your supporting evidence is included.
- Remember to ensure your bid is clear about;
 - Who will benefit from the project?
 - Why it is needed?
 - How it will it delivered?
 - How much it will cost?
 - When the project will start?
 - How long the project will last?

