

Wendy Coombey

Community Partnership and Funding Officer

10 Tips for successful funding applications.

Tip No 1: Don't Rush.

- Allow plenty of time.
- Start planning early.
- Start with the right attitude!!
- It's not an exact science.

Tip No 2: Set your vision.

- Spend time writing down your vision, including the following things:
- *What do you want to do?*
- *Why do you want to do it?*
- *Who and how will people benefit?*
- *Why is your project the best option?*
- *What will it cost to carry out this project?*
- *How will your project be managed?*
- *What outcomes do you want to see as a result of your project?*
- *How will you prove/evidence/demonstrate what your outcomes will be?*

If you don't know the answers to these questions, you are not ready to make a funding application.

Tip No 3: Carry out a range of different funding searches.

- Use the internet/web. There are some excellent web based resources – Funding Central, Directory of Social Change.
- Talk to your local authority funding team, or your local Council for Voluntary Service or Rural Community Council.
- Speak to other projects.
- Google!!

Tip No 4: Research your funders again.

- When you come up with a list of suitable or potential funding sources, *do more research*.
- Look at the web site, examine their criteria, look at their conditions. **ALWAYS READ THEIR GUIDANCE!!**
- If they give a contact or offer the opportunity to make enquiries - then take the opportunity.

Tip No 5: Answer the questions.

- Read the application form through thoroughly.
- Use the questions as a form of project development.
- Write a rough draft - think through your answers.
- Don't cut corners.

Tip No 6: Don't make the funder work too hard.

- Don't use jargon only you understand.
- Don't use acronyms without an explanation of what they mean.
- Don't tell the funder to 'refer to your previous answer'.
- Don't waffle, be clear and concise but with full explanations and answers.
- Observe word counts and stick to them.
- Only send the supporting documents that they ask for.

Tip No 7: Make your project stand out.

- Your volunteers are your greatest asset – tell the funder about them.
- If you have a track record – tell them about it – what have you done before?
- What are you contributing to the project? Money? Time? Resources in kind?
- Who are you working with and who are your partners?
- Will your project make a wider impact?

Tip No 8: Make life easy for the funder.

- Do not handwrite applications.
- Submit everything they ask for – and get someone to check it.
- Make sure the person who is the main contact knows the project inside out and is able to speak about it with confidence.
- Make sure they are available to speak!!

Tip No 9: And make life easy for yourself.

- Do not work right up to a funding deadline.
- Make sure all of your documents are ready to be sent or uploaded in the format requested by the funder.
- Keep all the paperwork up to date and read it very carefully.

Top Tip 10: Say thank you and invite them to the party!!

- Always thank a funder if they make you an offer.
- Always invite them to any launch event – they probably won't come but it's polite to ask.
- Carry out the evaluation and reporting that you agree to provide. It's not an optional extra – it's what you agreed to do in exchange for funding.



- Questions?