



Applications and Bid Writing

This advice note is designed to help you make successful grant applications to funding bodies.

Getting Started

When deciding whether to seek funding for a project your group has to consider some basic questions. For instance, have you:

- identified, and can you show clearly, that there is a need for your project?
- gathered information/research material to prove the need?
- considered whether you should have partners to help share the work load?
- decided who within the organisation can drive the project forward and can they show that they are capable of running the project and have enough free time to spend doing so?

You should also identify people who may be sympathetic and prepared to help:

- whom could you "co-opt" onto your committee to strengthen your position and/or help shape your project? (People with specific expertise and experience).
- who should you inform about your project? (Local Councillor, Neighbours, Legal Permissions).

Don't waste time and money re-inventing the wheel if others can help!

Setting Priorities

It is important to decide priorities. Make a list of all the tasks involved in making your application, and prioritise them. Each task should be allocated to a person, and each task should have a deadline. Combine the tasks into a logical "action plan". Time is important, but getting it right is more important.

Ready To Go

Before beginning to prepare a funding application, check your plan once more to ensure it covers such issues as:

- sustainability (can your project support itself financially after the initial funding period);
- realistic revenue projections (honest financial forecasts of weekly/monthly/annual income);

- coherence (is your project easy to understand and explained logically); and
- who is going to deal with any follow-up questions or calls?

Application Structure

An application should have clear structure. A suggested outline is:

- project title
- introduction – who you are?
- proposal summary
- the problem or need and who will benefit from the project?
- what you want to achieve?
- how you will do it?
- how you will monitor your results?
- how much money will you need?
- how much money will you raise from your own and/or other funding sources?

When in doubt remember the **Five "M"s** of project planning and grant applications. You need to provide information on the project's:

- **Mechanics:** What? Where? When? Aims and Objectives?
- **Market:** Why? For whom? Scale of demand & local support?
- **Management:** Who will manage the project? What track record do they have?
- **Money:** How much will it cost to set up and run? How much money will be raised locally? From whom do you expect to get the other funding? What assumptions have you made in the calculations?
- **Monitoring:** How will you measure the project's success? What targets will you set ?

Potential Funders

The next step is to draw up a list of potential funders. To do this, you will need to do some research. CCC Community Development provide a GRANTNET service whereby community groups can input their information into a simple web-based form and a list of potential funders will be drawn up. The service includes a wide range of possible funding sources from local Trust Funds to European Initiatives and aims to provide community groups with a first point of contact as well as an outline of the various schemes available. The search will tell you:

- What the funding is for



- How much funding is available
- Who can apply
- When to apply
- How to apply

For example:

- Research potential funders;
- Choose funders whose criteria the project fits;
- Make contact before you prepare your application to ensure your project fits the funders' criteria;
- Find out the funders' timetables or timescales for reply;
- State clearly where you hope to find all the funding.

Practical Tips

- If you can, always type up the application form.
- Make sure you enclose all of the documentation that is requested.
- Choose your referees carefully.
- Make sure your referees have a copy of the proposal.
- If an assessor calls to make an appointment, make sure you have plenty of time, and peace to speak to them.
- If the Trust or funder has a website, check it out before making the application.
- Letters of support from relevant prominent people may be useful.

- Don't hassle the funders.
- Always try and raise some money locally as a "community contribution to the project".
- Don't give up. If in doubt, ask the funder(s) for help.

Who can Help

The Community Bureau can help 'signpost' you to the most appropriate organisations:

The Community Bureau

Community Development,
Carmarthenshire County Council,
Business Resource Centre,
Parc Amanwy,
Ammanford SA18 3EP.
01269 590216

Disclaimer

This Advice Note has been produced on behalf of the Carmarthenshire Community Toolkit to assist community groups to make funding applications. However, it should not be taken as a definitive guide covering all areas of concern and it is recommended that further advice is sought in appropriate circumstances.