

# Tips for writing good funding applications

## Before you start your application

- Make sure all is in order with your constitution, bank account and policies etc.
- Work with another person
- Research the need
- **Involve and consult people**
- Be clear about the outcomes (the change you will make) and the outputs (the results of your project in terms of the activities /services you have delivered)
- Know how much you will need, create budget with all the costs associated with your project in it

## Once you decided on a funder but before you start writing

- **Read the guidance notes before you start to complete the form**
- **Understanding a funder's priorities.** Think about what it is that the body you're applying to is trying to achieve, and how this fits in with what you do and what you're proposing. If your application is going to spell out how your work can further a funder's goals, then you will have the beginnings of a strong case

## Answering the questions

- Answer the questions the funder asks, not what you think they should know
- Analyse the question. Bid evaluators frequently comment "they didn't answer the question properly". Use a highlighter pen/tool to identify the important words and phrases in the question. Then answer them.
- Don't assume the reader will know anything about your work or the area you work in
- If the question states "No more than 2000 words" you should use approximately 2000 words. No more.

## Style of writing

- Be positive, clear, concise, coherent and correct.
- Use robust language: no "could", "would", "should" but "we do....", "we are....". You must sound confident.
- Avoid jargon, poor grammar or bad spelling.
- Use bullet points and a report writing style to make your answers easy to read and assimilate
- Use headings to break up blocks of text and to reflect phrases or important words in the question.
- Keep sentences and paragraphs short, punchy and business-like.

- Decide on a typeface, layout and type size - not too small - and stick to them.
- Make sure everything is consistent. Are your supporting documents all presented in the same way?
- Be careful when cutting and pasting text to make sure the format stays the same.

### **Before sending it**

- Make sure you have developed a logical argument
- Read everything again. Then get a colleague to read it - checking for meaning, typing mistakes and omissions

### **What funders are looking for?**

- That you understand the issues
- That you have identified what other support exists and where the gaps are
- That you can clearly explain how your project fills those gaps or complement existing support
- That you are able to show how you are Impact focused – show what will change as a result of the activities
- There are clear links between the identified need, the activities that need the need and the outcomes or change that results from those activities
- That you are proposing something that you know works from past experience and activities or something new that you can provide a good case for it achieving the outcomes

- That you have been specific and not vague
- You have evidenced your application with examples, statistics and your own research/monitoring
- Your information is Clear, Concise, Coherent and Correct
- That what you are proposing is cost effective – has added benefits
- Demonstrated that you can deliver the project/work
- You have considered its sustainability and if successful what will happen after the grant ends

Some material sourced from LearnEast information sheets.

#### **Hunts Forum of Voluntary Organisations**

The Maple Centre  
6 Oak Drive  
Huntingdon  
Cambs  
PE29 7HN

Tel: 01480 420601  
Web: [www.huntsforum.org.uk](http://www.huntsforum.org.uk)  
Twitter: @huntsforum

Registered charity No. 1114926  
Company No. 5795877

#### **Cambridge Council for Voluntary Service**

2 Regents street  
Cambridge  
CB2 1AX

Tel: 01223 464696  
Web: <http://www.cambridgecvcs.org.uk/>  
Twitter: @cambridgecvcs

Registered Charity no: 1074947.  
Company no: 3731848.