



Voluntary Sector Support

How to write a funding application



LOTTERY FUNDED

 **Community
Impact Bucks**

PROMOTING EXCELLENCE IN VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

Things you'll need:

- A specific project
- Facts and/or statistics
- Case studies

Trust fundraising is not rocket science, yet there is a certain degree of skill and knowledge involved, and certain tried and tested methods can be employed to enhance your chances of success. Although not an exhaustive list, here are some important tips to get you going, using the acronym TRUST to help you remember them easily!

T - Tell a story

Everyone likes a good yarn, not least trustees. Tug on those heartstrings and make the message you are trying to get across more personal. Case studies are vital in trust fundraising so keep a constantly updated supply to hand, with quotes if possible. Look at the rhythm of your proposal – does it come together well and flow as an entire document, or is it a bit disjointed? It should be easy to read, just like a story, with a beginning, middle and end. However, do make sure that there are some hard facts along with the emotional side of things (see the section on Specifics below).

R - Research and relationships

Always do your research. An enormous number of worthy bids end up in the trustees' bins because the applicant has not done their research properly. Read the guidelines or giving criteria closely and do not apply to trusts that will not fund your particular type of project. Build relationships where possible with the administrators and trustees. If any of your major donors or Board members know the trustees, make contact and develop their interest in your organisation and project. Remember, relationships are not a short-term undertaking and take careful planning and cultivation.

U - USP

What is your organisation's (or project's) Unique Selling Point (USP)? Are you the only one to do what you do in your local area/region/country? Do you do something differently to others? Can you offer better or wider-reaching services? What will be the consequences of not receiving a grant? Learn to really sell your organisation and its work.



S - Specifics

Trustees do not appreciate vague applications. Be specific with facts and figures when writing about why your project needs their money, and be specific again about exactly how much money you are asking for. Finally, be specific when you are telling them what you will do with their money, how many people/animals etc will benefit, what the intended aims and outcomes of your project are, and in what timescale.

T - Timing

Linked in with undertaking proper research, find out wherever possible when the trustees' next meeting is and when the cut off date is for you to send in your bid. Ensure you leave yourself plenty of time to write the bid, obtain any signatures or referees' details required, and allow time for others to critique your bid and make amendments. Also under the heading Timing, thank any trust that gives you a grant immediately and do not forget to diarise the date by which you need to submit a grant report, allowing plenty of time for you to collate the relevant information from all parties.

