

TOP TEN TIPS FOR FUNDING APPLICATIONS

If you are responsible for applying for funding for your charity or voluntary group, this guide will help you secure the funding you need. We have collated our top ten tips on how to write a successful funding application.

If you would like to talk through an application or discuss your funding activity, contact us on frankie@communityimpactbucks.org.uk.

1. CHECK YOUR ORGANISATION AND PROJECT ARE ELIGIBLE

Most funders will have published eligibility criteria, sometimes called **'what we won't fund'**. You need to understand what the funder is looking to achieve with their funding and if your project is a good fit. **You may be more successful if you spend more time on a few relevant applications**, as opposed to submitting many which do not match the funders' criteria and priorities as closely.

2. SHOW WHY THERE IS A NEED FOR YOUR PROJECT OR SERVICE

You need to articulate clearly who you support, why they need help, how they are impacted by the issues and why other existing services are not meeting their needs.

This may be because they do not exist or have a different geographical or demographic focus. **Making the case with both hard data (such as consultations, evaluations, key statistics, or third-party research), as well as the human story to bring it to life is key.**

3. EXPLAIN CLEARLY WHAT YOU WILL BE DOING

Sometimes we are too close to our own activities to be able to make it clear to an outsider. **Ask yourself if you have been specific enough about your planned activities – what, where, when, who, how many and how often, by whom?** Would someone outside your organisation understand what you are planning to do?

4. EXPLAIN WHAT DIFFERENCE YOU WILL MAKE TO YOUR BENEFICIARIES

Your impact for your beneficiaries is what the funder is really interested in as well as being your reason for existence, **so it is crucial to spell out how things will be different because of your work and how you will measure success.** Again, case studies can be a powerful way to get this across as well as hard data.

5. SHOW THEM WHY THEY SHOULD FUND YOU

Do not be shy about saying what makes your organisation best placed to deliver the change and how you are different from any similar services that exist. What is your expertise and experience and can you back that up with data as well as case studies or quotes from beneficiaries, their families or carers or other stakeholders with an interest in your services?

6. ASK FOR THE RIGHT AMOUNT OF MONEY

You need to ask for an appropriate amount of funds that is realistic for the work you are planning, backing figures up with quotes if relevant. Funders will compare the amount of money that you are asking for to the activities that you want to deliver and to your income as an organisation, to make sure that the amount seems reasonable and is manageable by an organisation of your size.

7. WORK ON A FULL COST RECOVERY BASIS FOR SUSTAINABILITY

Remember to cost your activities to include all costs (not just direct delivery staff but also line management and support) as well as an appropriate amount for overheads. Where funders will permit, submit applications on a full cost recovery basis and be sure to plan for any shortfall from elsewhere.

8. GIVE THEM WHAT THEY HAVE ASKED FOR

Answer the questions as robustly as you can with enough information and detail. However, make the words count by writing succinctly and powerfully. If they give a word count this gives you a feel for the level of detail they expect. Make sure to supply all the documentation that the funder asks for or you could render your application ineligible.

9. MAKE SURE YOUR ORGANISATION STANDS UP TO SCRUTINY

Funders will often use external sources to conduct checks on the robustness of your organisation so make sure that your website and your social media is up to date. Also, if you are a registered charity, make sure that your submissions to the charity commission are up to date.

10. CHECK YOUR APPLICATION FOR ERRORS BEFORE YOU SUBMIT IT

Do the numbers add up? Are there typos? Have any cut and pasted sections referred to a different funder? Have you included your charity number if they haven't asked for this elsewhere in the application? Does it make sense to someone outside your organisation- having someone else read it through can be very helpful. Remember to keep a copy.

For further help see below:

- For more funding advice look at our [General Funding Advice](#) page
- Identify suitable funders using the [Bucks Funding search database](#)
- Check out information about [other sources of income](#)
- Find out more about covering [core costs and Full cost recovery](#)
- Contact us for one-to-one funding advice frankie@communityimpactbucks.org.uk