

Raising finance options for community projects

Are you looking for ways your organisation can raise finances to run and deliver a community project?

There are various finance options you can take when looking for funding to get your project off the ground:

Non-repayable

- Grants - major funders, charitable trusts and foundations
- Donations
- Crowdfunding

Repayable

- Loans (from banks and specialist lenders)
- Community Shares
- Social investment

Start with some research on the different funding options – see list of suggested websites below – **My Community** is the best I've seen as an initial introduction.

Tips for Successful Fundraising – (from Grantfinder)

Grant funders are significantly more likely to fund Charities above any other type of applicant so it might be worth becoming a **registered charity** in order to successfully fundraise from major funders, other charitable trusts and foundations.

There is a lot of competition out there for funding and this is the most common reason given for failure, however, the second most common reason for funding not being allocated is applications not being up to the minimum standard.

So why do applications fail?

- Applying organisation is not eligible – check, check and check again!
- Outcomes are not clear
- Poor standard of presentation
- Viability of the applying organisation was not sufficiently demonstrated

Other less common reasons include:

- Application was not received by deadline date
- Match funding was not sufficiently demonstrated
- Lack of strong partnership
- Specific activities were not eligible
- Grant requested exceeded the maximum grant level offered
- Lack of supporting evidence of the public benefit and the need for the project

How can applicants improve their chance of success?

- Find the right funder for your project – in terms of eligibility, scale and activities.
- Read the guidance carefully and adhere to it, refer to it every time you complete a section on the application form and ask if unsure.
- Match the application to the criteria set out. Read and re-read the list of exclusions – it's often more useful to look for a list of what they won't fund than what they will!
- Start to prepare the application with plenty of time, don't hesitate to ask questions while preparing the application.
- Read the question and answer it in simple, clear language. Waffle and jargon do not impress!
- Your proposal must be researched, viable and have already achieved some success. Demonstrate clear costings and have strong preliminary data and rationale
- Really demonstrate, and provide supporting documents to show, the benefits of the project to the wider community, and do research and consultation which will demonstrate demand and value for money.
- YOUNG PEOPLE and DISADVANTAGE attract funding (both together is even better) so if you have ideas around those themes, that's a good start.
- Give funders every reason to say YES, and no reasons to say NO.

Some useful websites –

Some of these are pay to register search engines/databases but still offer useful info and initial listings.

My Community www.mycommunity.org.uk/funding-options/

Heritage Funding Directory www.heritage-funding-directory.knack.com/heritage-funding-directory

Grants Online www.grantsonline.org.uk/region-news/west-midlands/

Funding Central www.fundingcentral.org.uk

Grantfinder www.grantfinder.co.uk/

Directory of Social Change www.dsc.org.uk/

Funding Information www.fundinginformation.org/

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