



Support with writing funding applications

Did you know that there are many funders offering a range of funding opportunities that support organisations to deliver vital activities and services in local communities?

But with so many groups applying for limited funds, it's important to take time for planning and preparation before making an application to increase your chances of being successful.

Funders want to make a difference and for their funding to have a positive impact; they also each have different priorities which impact on what they will fund. Understanding these priorities will help you decide which funder(s) to apply to as your project will normally need to fit with one or more of their priorities.

It's also important to be able to demonstrate how the work you will do will support a need in your community. Connecting with people in your community, and/or those that will benefit from the project, is one of the best ways of understanding their needs and being able to demonstrate to a funder that you have researched your idea.

There are many ways to gather an engaging response but some of the most common are conducting surveys, having conversations (in a variety of ways) with communities or by using data sources and statistics. Providing evidence of need to a funder will increase your chances of being successful with your application.

We understand that completing a funding application can be a daunting prospect, so here is a list of things to consider when making an application and how to avoid some common mistakes.

- Ensure you have read the funders guidelines thoroughly before applying and that your project fits with their priorities.
- Check that you are eligible to apply. Each funder will have a criteria of what they will fund, this can include the structure of your organisation. For example, some funders may not fund a CIC or a non-registered charity.
- Be clear, concise and use simple language when writing your application. A good tip is to use the word count provided as a guide to understand the level of detail funders are looking for.
- Ensure you read and answer the questions provided. Often people don't provide enough information to suitably answer the question asked. If in doubt, ask someone who is not connected to your project to proofread it for you.
- Be careful when cutting and pasting multiple applications. Funders often ask comparable questions but not always in the same way so cutting and pasting can sometimes catch you out.
- Be realistic with what you are asking for. Always provide a breakdown of all costs associated with the delivery of your project. Don't forget this can include 'core' costs as long as they are in proportion. For example, don't be tempted to ask for a full-time salary when your staff costs are only 5 hours per week for the delivery of the project you are asking them to fund.

- Only submit the information requested. The application form is usually all that the funder will ask for, unless they request to see your accounts, governing document or bank statement. Don't be tempted to send other information such as annual reports or photos unless requested as these will not be considered in your application.

We understand it is time consuming, often confusing and a little daunting to write funding applications, but we are here to help.

We can support you to find the best funding opportunities for your project as well as acting as a critical friend and offering feedback on draft applications prior to submission. If you have any questions or require any advice or support, please email us at info@durhamcommunityaction.org.uk.

We also run a series of training and development workshops and regular virtual information sessions with funders - full details can be found [here](#)