

An Introduction to Better Bid Writing

Improving your chances of success in securing the
funds your organisation needs

Overview

- Questions/ Matrix Map
- Funding Landscape
- Fundraising Strategy
- So What?
- Common Mistakes & Pitfalls
- Writing the Perfect Application
- Follow-up

Full Session Overview

- Introductions
- Questions to keep in mind
- Funding Landscape
- Beyond Bid Writing
- Firm Foundations
- So what?
- Evidence of Need
- Identifying Opportunities
- Fundraising Strategy
- Common Mistakes & Pitfalls
- Writing the Perfect Application
- Practical Session – Drafting an Application

Questions to keep in mind

Are we focused on the right actions for our organisation?

If yes;

Are we giving our organisation the best chance of success?





If no;

What should we be doing?

Matrix Map - Fundraising

High

Funding Readiness / Return

High Readiness Low Return 	High Readiness High Return 
Low Readiness Low Return 	Low Readiness High Return 

Organisational Readiness

Low

Potential Return

High

Adapted from
**Nonprofit
Sustainability:
Making Strategic
Choices for
Financial Viability.**
Zimmerman, Bell &
Masaoka

Funding Landscape



Funding Landscape

- Less funding available
- More specialised funding
- Greater competition

To be successful you need to stand out from the crowd!



What do you want funding for?

So What?

The 'so what?' question

Example: Lunch Club

A few people have said they would like a Lunch Club in the community centre.

So what?

Older people can come along and have a meal.

So what?

It will mean they are less isolated & improve their wellbeing.

Evidence!

Fundraising Strategy

Develop a strategy relevant and proportional to your organisation.

One side of A4 or several pages.

- Future Plans – one project or several?
- Opportunity Appraisal – where should you focus your effort?
- Action Plan – who, what and when?

Hand out – Developing a Fundraising Strategy for Small Groups

Common Mistakes & Pitfalls

Not fitting the criteria

- Location
- Organisation Type / Size
- Project Expenditure
- Project Purpose

"We get applications to repair churches in East Anglia. We don't fund in East Anglia and we don't do building work on churches. If only they had read our eligibility criteria, they would clearly see we don't fund that" Trust Secretary Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust.

Common Mistakes & Pitfalls

Incomplete form / information

- Missing out questions – use N/A
- Not providing requested supporting info

Sir James Knott Trust ask - Whether or not you have applied for Lottery funding. If not, please explain why.

Common Mistakes & Pitfalls

Not fully answering the question

Awards for All

What evidence do you have to show that your project is needed? How have you consulted with the people who will benefit from your project and what did you find out?

We also want to know how:

- your project has been **influenced** by what people have told you
- you know that the people you want to help will use your project.

Common Mistakes & Pitfalls

Using meaningless buzzwords or jargon

- There are no magic words that will make your application successful!
- Plain English & KISS

‘fostering real-time engagement using publicly accessible nodes’

Or

‘Talk to people at the village hall & post office to find out what they want’

Common Mistakes & Pitfalls

Too much focus on the past & present

- Funding is for something you will do in the future
- Track record can be important to show ability to deliver

Common Mistakes & Pitfalls

Budget doesn't add up

- Poor maths?
- Adding additional items / cost & not recalculating

In-Kind

Income & Cost

Convert hours of volunteering to financial figure:

Hours of volunteering x Living wage (as a minimum)

Writing the perfect application

- Write with passion

Get your passion for your project or organisation across while still being factual

- Focus on the difference your project will make

Think about – ‘So what?’

- Don't make it boring!

How many applications start with

“We are a registered charity, set up in 1980, we are based in a deprived area.....”

- Use positive wording

Writing the perfect application

- User voices

Get a story from a service user, volunteer etc. into your application based on the difference it makes or will make.

- Edit

Cut out anything surplus to requirements

- Proof-read by someone else

Errors, typos etc.

Ask them to describe back to you what the project is about. Is their description what you think you have written?

- Send it!

Follow-up

Better Bid Writing – Full Session

22nd September 2016 9:30am to 3:00pm

At Northumberland CVA offices in Ashington

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