

Funding support and advice.

12 Step Expert Guide to Grants

Network with similar organisations

You may find that there are larger groups that can act as an umbrella group for disability, age, mental health, carers, women, youth, early years, learning disability, etc.

Utilise your local Community Empowerment Network in identifying appropriate umbrella groups. You can also check with your local Council for Voluntary Services (EWS) or Rural Community Council to obtain a directory of organisations.

Know your contacts

Know who the contacts are to access funding in relation to size of grant required and the nature of the project. If your organisation is based in West Berkshire Empowering West Berkshire can support you alternatively you can contact NAVCA www.navca.org.uk

Keep up-to-date

Many communities publish their own free papers and newsletters, so get your organisation put onto mailing lists that advertise grants and other opportunities. Your local CVS, Local Authority or Rural Community Council should be able to help here.

Drop into local libraries and use the local government websites and internet to search for the latest information.

Plan with clear objectives

Ensure you have a clear plan and project in mind before you contact any funding agencies. This will ensure you can ask the right questions and be directed appropriately.

Seek guidance

Seek help and guidance with the completion of applications. Many CVS and local authorities have support units or structures that will be willing to assist. Don't be afraid to contact the funders directly and discuss your application with them.

Give all the relevant information every time

Do not take for granted that the funder knows your organisation simply because you have applied before. Read all documentation provided by funders and ensure all essential information is forwarded with the application.

Supply documentation

Back up your application with documentation that identifies the need for what you propose to do. If the funder allows, provide letters of support, research and survey findings, figures and statistics. Include any publicity material that you have produced about your organisation.

Consider partnerships

In order to build up credibility consider working in partnership with other groups. This may further improve the service you wish to offer and collaborative working demonstrates commitment, planning and your organisation's willingness to work with others. Partnership work can also show value for money in delivering projects - search our [Partner Zone](#) and discover organisations to collaborate with and learn from.

Copy all documentation

Before forwarding your application copy all documentation and file for reference purposes. This will be useful when funders contact you with queries regarding your application.

Help the funders to help you

Ensure you record any issues you have with the application process. This will assist you in communicating difficulties with the application process to funders. Do offer suggestions for improvement: your opinions count.

Keep funders informed

With successful applications gather evidence and success stories and forward these to the funder. This shows your ability to deliver what you said you would deliver and may assist in future bids.

Take control

Be proactive. Access the right people. Access the right guidance. Access the right funds.

Tips provided by:

- *Steve Harding, Training and Development Officer, Knowsley Council for Voluntary Service*
- *Denise Igglesden, Funding Advisor, Knowsley Council for Voluntary Service*
- *Jackie Mullin, Voluntary Sector Liaison Officer, Knowsley Borough Council*