

Planning for Grants

When going for grants, planning goes a long way. ** Most funders WILL NOT grant money to something that has already started, or starts before funding is received. Funding agencies don't usually fund activities that have been run previously by your centre – it needs to look new.

Here's some initial steps to get you going:

- **Know what your Centre wants to do and why:** It is better if the grant application is stimulated by an idea rather than the other way around. That way your centre doesn't create work for volunteers just because there is money available. Start talking about the idea with others. A key question at this point is do you have the volunteers, support to carry the idea out if you get the money?
- **Identify Suitable Grants:** Go to *How to Find Grants* to see what is available, and / or google for other grant sources which link to your idea e.g. youth grants, volunteer grants, planning and environment.
- **Read the Guidelines Carefully:** Look for the key clues first – eligibility, funding objectives, priorities, target groups, overall aims of the funding agency, timelines. If the grant targets e.g. disadvantage, it is worth finding out what this constitutes.
- **Not Eligible:** If your organisation is not eligible, you could partner with an organisation that is. They become the lead agency on the application and list you as a partner. Alternatively you may find an organisation to auspice the grant i.e. manage the money and see that the obligations of the grant are met. Note: it is normal for an auspice to include a management fee.
- **Make the Call:** Important that you bight the bullet and make the call to the funding agency contact or a representative of the funding agency before you launch into the write up. Have a discussion about your ideas, the grant and what the funding body is looking for. Also worth asking how competitive it is.

- **The Grant Aims:** After reading the grant guidelines and discussing with the funding agency, do you know what is trying to be achieved through the funding and does your project do this in some way or another. This link is the most important aspect of your application. Have a look if provided at the details of previously funded projects (sometimes on the website) to get further ideas.
- **Rough Plan:** why, what, who, when, when, some details how and how much. This needs to be realistic, logical and have a well thought out budget attached.