

## Writing a 'good' application for funding

### How Applications for Funding are Assessed

A useful starting point is to understand how applications are assessed. An assessor needs to be clear what will be received by the community / communities the applicant wishes to serve and how they will benefit. They do this by assessing how the applicant:

1. Has analysed need;
2. That the activities meet the identified needs;
3. That both 1 and 2 above is set in context – relevant research, what other agencies are doing in this area, what other strategies are in place; in part to identify where needs are not met and to avoid duplication;
4. That the applicant will work in partnership with other agencies carrying out similar work;
5. What will change or improve as a result of the activities themselves or from the way they are carried out;
6. That the activities meet the service / activity grant criteria;
7. That the application meets the assessment / scoring criteria;

The assessor will also look at:

8. The **capacity** of the organisation to carry out the activities. This includes **resources** – finance, staff, volunteers, buildings, material; **expertise** – track record, knowledge and skills, quality assurance, training;
9. That the **activities are well thought through** – clear process; has set out why, what, where, when and how.
10. That **outputs and outcomes** are relevant and clear and can be measured. The assessor will also look at other documents that need to be submitted with the application:
11. **Accounts** – that the organisation is viable; that they are not carrying forward balances that are too high;
12. **Budget** – that it includes both income and expenditure; it is balanced, is proportional and represents value for money;
13. **Any other documents** – that need to be submitted e.g. constitution, health and safety policy; equal opportunities policy; data use and protection policies and business or service plan.
14. Governance – that **the organisation carries out due diligence** – has complied with its constitution etc. The assessor will be looking to ensure that all the above ties up into a coherent whole – that statements made are justified with supporting evidence; that there is a chain of reasoning which links all the above. Any areas that are in tension or appear to be contradictory need to be explained.

### Top Tips

- Make sure that you are **clear** and **relevant**.
- Make sure you have **covered the basics** – don't assume the assessor will know this or has knowledge of your organisation.
- Be **specific** – avoid general points / vagueness. Make sure that information is not confusing.

- Be **concise** – don't write an essay; write in short sentences and short paragraphs – bullet point where applicable; avoid jargon.
- **Don't exaggerate** or embellish – every application is different – but that doesn't mean that it is unique.
- Make sure that someone not connected with writing the application checks it – **pair of fresh eyes**.
- **Anticipate** questions that can be asked of the application and attempt to address these.