

Tips for applications

Team London Bridge and the GLE have put together a series of top ten tips for writing successful applications for funding. Some are obvious, some perhaps not so obvious, but it will help to refresh your mind before starting. Our top tip? Read the guidelines well, they should tell you everything you need to know.

1	Read the guidelines!	The guidelines will usually set out who the funders are, the amount of the fund, the criteria for entering and the aims of the fund. It's important to read these carefully to ensure your organisation and project meets the criteria and aims. You may want to research the funders to find out more about why they support the fund and what they might be looking for in an application.
2	Is the amount of grant sufficient?	If it is not sufficient, do you need to raise extra funding and if so how will you do this? Bear in mind that if your project requires other funding that is not yet secured then the funders will want to be assured that your project could still run on as lesser amount of funding.
3	Plan for the application process.	The most important part of planning the process is to know when the deadline is. You need to plan in what information you will need, who will write the application and whether you need help from anyone else. Aim to complete the application at least a week in advance and that you hand-deliver the application (if you can) as well as email an electronic copy.
4	Writing the application.	Avoid going over the word limit or writing long covering letters. Make sure the form looks neat – use only one font and one font size, usually Ariel. Try to make each application original and relevant to the fund, however, if you copy and paste text from another application, re-read it to make sure it is up to date with the correct funding details. Use as few words as possible - be concise, but say as much as you can. Use bullet points to list items where sensible.
5	Budgeting for your project.	It is important to ensure your budgets are clear and understandable. You could use an Excel spreadsheet and plan it on a month by month basis, make sure all the costs are included (direct and indirect) that you will need to cover to make your project a success. You can include an element of 'management costs' but ensure these are kept to a minimum. Some forms only require a rough budget breakdown, but you will need to manage your cashflow throughout the project.

6	Identify participants, partners and stakeholders.	'Participants' are people that actually take part in the project and usually get a direct benefit from it. 'Partners' work with you and make the project possible, through the loan of equipment, finance etc. 'Stakeholders' have an interest in the project. Both partners and stakeholders may get indirect benefits from the project, such as raised public profile, opportunity for involvement in something new or a better or safer working environment.
7	Monitoring your project.	The funders will want to be assured that your project will be managed well and kept on target, so include any key milestones. Also state how many people you think your project will benefit and keep a record of this throughout the project. You can break this down into: young people, businesses etc
8	Check the application before you send it.	Get someone else to proof read the application. They will be able to spot more mistakes than you! It is also useful to test that someone else can understand how your project will run. Do not assume that the assessors already know what you do or will understand your project.
9	Check who and where to send your application to.	Do they want it by email or hard copy? Make sure you have had a final read through of everything, answered all of the questions on the form, signed in the right place, and enclosed any other required documents, such as the constitution.
10	Next steps and the approval process.	Some funders score and comment on the applications and, after discussion, the applicants are notified whether they have been successful or not. Other funders may create a shortlist of organisations, which are then requested to present the project to a panel. If this is the case, make sure you keep the panel date in your diary in case your project is shortlisted, check whether you will need to do a powerpoint presentation, and what equipment is available. You may also be allowed to bring other members of your group as 'evidence' or back-up, but check first!

GLE delivers public policy objectives by bringing commercial know-how in economic development, finance and regeneration. Contact Stephen Boon:

T: 020 7940 1565

E: stephen.b@gle.co.uk

W: www.gle.co.uk

For more information about Team London Bridge:

T: 020 7407 4701

E: info@teamlondonbridge.co.uk

W: www.teamlondonbridge.co.uk