



For the Voluntary and Community Sector

APPLICATIONS TO TRUSTS AND FUNDS

A trust or foundation will often ask for up to 2 sides (sometimes 4 sides) of A4, but may give little other guidance on what information to give them. The following information, therefore, might be helpful to use as a checklist when writing your application. However, always follow the instructions from each trust carefully regarding information to provide, and note their individual aims and criteria.

- **Get your main points across in the first page if possible, and keep information short and succinct.** Stick to the number of pages they specify.
- **Present your letter very well, look 'professional'** – printed letterhead, logo, website. Keep simple and attractive, use strapline, include photos.
- **Do not write the same letter** or paragraphs to all funders for all things – make the information relevant to the particular project and follow the criteria/requirements of the particular funder. Think about the size and type of trust you are writing to.
- **Use positive language and limit buzz words/technical language** – Say 'we will'...not 'we hope to'. If you are uncertain of how you will do something say 'we plan to'. Be passionate about what you do. If you use technical language briefly explain the meaning.
- **If asking for salary costs or core running costs think carefully how you will build it in** – sessional costs for salaries or 10-15% for management costs. Many trusts do not fund core costs unless presented in that way as part of a project cost.
- **Before you send it** check for any errors or inconsistencies, and ask somebody else to read it through to ensure it makes sense to them! Put yourself in the shoes of the funder – what would you want to see to fund a project...have you shown this?
- **Get a trustee, preferably the Chair, to sign the letter if possible** - the trustees/board should be involved in any funding bids as they have ultimate responsibility for the organisation.
- **Documents to send with letter:** annual signed accounts (within 8 months of year end); annual review/report; budget for current year for your organisation

and project; job description and personal specifications of relevant roles; first year work plan for project. (The equal opportunities & child protection policies should either be sent or be ready to send if required – in which case, say so.)

- **Stay in touch** with the funder and keep up-to-date with progress.

Clearly describe	Have you done this?	Changes to make
Your organisation with a brief history		
What you want to do, when and where		
Why the project is needed and what the benefits will be. Use data and case studies.		
Who you work with, who will benefit (& how you will reach/engage them if applicable)		
How much money is needed (and how you will spend it if applicable). Be realistic regarding costs and salary scale. Break-down into capital and revenue if applicable. A large capital appeal could be split into stages.		
How much if any has already been found & where is the remainder going to come from?		
Have requested documents been enclosed?		
Other information if there is space and it is relevant for the funder:		
Why your organisation is best to deliver the project		
How you will know the project is progressing to plan		
Identified risks & management of them		
Why that trust/foundation should pay for it – how it meets their aims		
How the project will continue, unless it has a finite life		
Is any other information necessary and if so have you made it clear?		

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This information sheet is one of a series produced by Norfolk Information, a partnership of second tier organisations supporting the voluntary and community sector in Norfolk.

We have taken all reasonable steps to make sure that this information is current and accurate. We cannot, however, guarantee its accuracy or completeness and therefore cannot accept liability for your acting, or failing to act, on the information given.

For resources, books, ideas and useful information please contact West Norfolk VCA or email info@westnorfolkvca.org