

## Fundraising: A Beginner's Guide

### ➤ **Getting Started...**

Fundraising is one of the biggest challenges facing voluntary and community groups. All groups need some money to carry out their services and activities or to fund new projects. So, although you'd probably rather be getting on with the 'real' work of your group and delivering those all important services and activities, you also need to spend some time planning and preparing your fundraising activities so that you can carry on this work well into the future.

### ➤ **Planning and Preparing for Fundraising**

It is important that you spend time planning and preparing for fundraising. Your group needs to have a clear idea about how much money is needed, by when, how it'll be raised, and what the funding will be used for.

Fundraising can be time-consuming and demanding. It is a good idea to form a fundraising sub-group so that the work load can be shared. Many skills are required for successful fundraising: communication, organisation, enthusiasm, confidence and commitment. Working as a group you'll be able to draw on the skills, experiences and ideas of a number of different people.

### ➤ **Legal Considerations**

Before you start applying for money, you will need to consider whether you need any of the following: 1) A written constitution; 2) Registered charity status; 3) A bank account; 4) A steering committee or governing body; 5) Last years annual review and accounts (if applicable) 6) Insurance.

It is always good practice to ensure that you offer equality of opportunity and access to all of your services. Is access available to everyone in your community? Some funders will ask to see an equal opportunities policy.

## ➤ **What you need and why**

Before you approach the funders you need to turn your initial ideas into a project proposal. This doesn't have to be a long process and the written proposal should fit onto one or two typed sides of A4 paper. The proposal should contain the following:

- **Evidence** - A clear description of the problem, need or issue (with facts, figures or research to back up your case)
- **Description** - A list of all the things your organisation wants to do to meet this need
- **Method** - How your organisation will go about doing these things
- **Evaluation** - How you intend to measure the success of your proposal
- **Skills and resources** - Why your organisation should be trusted to do the job well – have you got the experience, people, skills and resources to carry out this project?

## ➤ **How much will it cost?**

You will need to create a budget that sets out exactly how much your project will cost. When working out how much things will cost:

- Make sure your figures are accurate
- Don't under cost the work
- Don't forget the 'hidden' costs (e.g. maintenance, insurance, repairs and rent)
- Be clear on whether your costs are one-off capital items like equipment or expenses like rent and salaries.

**NB:** Your budget is also there as a guide to your spending. You should compare your budget each month with your expenditure to ensure you have enough money later on to do what you planned.

## ➤ **Developing a fundraising plan**

Once you have your written proposal and a budget, you need to plan how you will actually raise the money. You will need to think about:

- Which funders are most likely to be interested in your work?
- What resources are needed to meet each objective?
- When you need the money by? (it might help to draw up a timetable)
- Do you have the skills, contacts and time to concentrate on fundraising?
- How have other groups with similar aims raised the money?
- Could you raise some or all of the money yourselves?

The plan should set out what your funding needs are likely to be over a certain period of time and outline how you intend to raise the money to meet those needs.

## ➤ **Sources of Funding**

You need to know where the funds are to be able to take advantage of them. There are seven main sources of funding:

1. The National Lottery
2. Trusts and Foundations
3. Statutory Funding
4. DIY Fundraising
5. Individual Donors
6. Corporate Sponsorship
7. Income Generation

Contact your local voluntary sector support organisation to get more information about these funding sources and to find out which funders might fund your project.

## ➤ **Keeping Records**

Learn from your experiences - keep records on who you have applied to for funding and what the result was.

When you do get a grant, remember to thank the funder and to send them any reports and press cuttings about the project. You might even like to invite them over to see your project in action. Building up good relationships is essential, particularly if you want to approach the same funders for more money in the future.

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

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For resources, books, ideas and useful information please contact West Norfolk Voluntary and Community Action on 01553 760568 or email [info@westnorfolkvca.org](mailto:info@westnorfolkvca.org)