

Coping with the Crisis – Checklist 4

Writing winning proposals – bringing in grant and contract funding

We are all looking for additional funding to support our beneficiaries particularly during the Covid-19 crisis when many of our usual fundraising routes have vanished (for the moment) - charity shops have closed, the London Marathon didn't happen and all our wonderful Spring and Summer plans to be outside raising money, just haven't been possible. Applying for grant and contract funding sounds a great idea but remember, everyone else thinks so too. Give your charity a fighting chance of winning. Check this list!

Key things to know	Have you...
DSC, Small Charities Coalition, NCVO and others provide regular alerts; there are also paid-for subscription services which will regularly drop opportunities into your mailbox.	Made a diary note to regularly check for funding opportunities? <input type="checkbox"/>
If the deadline has passed, you have missed your chance. Be aware many grant-funders have 'windows' during the year – if you have just missed one, find out when the next one is.	Checked the submission deadline and ensured you can meet it <input type="checkbox"/>
99.9% of funders including trusts and statutory funders (e.g. local authorities, NHS) will ring-fence their funding to support specific beneficiaries i.e. ex-offenders, homeless, young people, older people.	Checked whether or not the funder wants to fund the work you do and with the beneficiaries you support? <input type="checkbox"/>
Funders often specify what type of organisation they will support e.g. only charities; income below £100k/above £100k/above £1m etc.; in a specific geography; no more than 3 months operating reserves and so on.	Read all the funder's forms and checked their rules and can you meet them all? <input type="checkbox"/>

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Don't start working on your proposal without reading through all the questions first – if you miss anything out, you will lose valuable points or may even be instantly excluded from the competition.

Checked all the questions you need to answer; can you provide the information they want?

Do not bid for something you can't really do – if a funder wants to work with care leavers in Gwent and you work with young offenders in Hull, they won't be interested in your proposal.

Made sure you understand fully what the funder wants by reading their specification and any other information provided?

Always get someone else to read through your answers. Has your narrative addressed what they want? Is your prose, clear and unambiguous, grammatically correct and spelled right? Checking your own work does not guarantee the above – you know what you mean!

Answered every question fully and told the funder what they want to know?

Always, always work on your proposal with the deadline in mind – funders will not make an exception if your bid is late for WHATEVER reason as that would be unfair to everyone else.

Submitted everything the funder wants before their deadline?

Sources of further support

Funds Online – 8,000 funders giving £8bn

<https://fundsonline.org.uk>

The Complete Fundraising Handbook

<https://www.dsc.org.uk/publication/the-complete-fundraising-handbook/>

Writing Better Fundraising Applications

<https://www.dsc.org.uk/publication/writing-better-fundraising-applications/>

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The Directory of Grant Making Trusts

<https://www.dsc.org.uk/publication/the-directory-of-grant-making-trusts-2020-21/>

Funding Central

<https://www.fundingcentral.org.uk/default.aspx>

National Lottery funding

<https://www.lotterygoodcauses.org.uk/funding>

Government contract finder

<https://www.gov.uk/contracts-finder>

Check your local authority for local opportunities.

This Coping with the Crisis Checklist is part of a series, visit www.dsc.org.uk/crisischecklists for more

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