Grant Applications – Shooting for Success

How to approach the application

When going through a funding application process, it is helpful to think like a representative of a funding provider. Funding providers look for two key questions to be answered: does a significant need exist and does the applicant have the capacity to meet that need in a financially responsible way?

Funding provider considerations

When assessing applicants, funding providers will consider if the project has:

- Realistic goals with strong support and a greater chance of success.
- Potential to impact the community, address a local community priority and make a difference.
- Potential to provide long-term solutions instead of a short-term fix.
- A level of innovation.
- A quality application with strong evidence to support claims.

Key elements of a grant application

Although these can vary, there are usually common key areas of a grant application that need to be addressed. These include:

- A brief description of the organisation
- A detailed outline of the project (including how the funding will benefit the local community and address a problem)
- The project's objectives
- Methodology
- Budget
- Evaluation

Brief description of the organisation

Depending on the word limit, this is your opportunity to:

- Describe your purpose, vision, and goals.
- Demonstrate how your existing programs and practices meet community needs which will be looked upon favourably.
- Convince the funding provider that your club has the capacity to deliver the project.
- Include a short summary of the qualifications and experience of key members and their capabilities.

A detailed outline of the project

- Establish a case for support and outline a specific solution to a problem in a particular geographical area.
- The club should be able to clearly demonstrate its capacity to realistically address the problem which can be backed up by accurate and up-to-date research and statistics.
- Two ways to show that the grant will be able to solve the problem is by showcasing the accomplishments of other clubs in the community who employed similar strategies and featuring other clubs who achieved positive results from funding.
- Evidence that comes in the form of supporting letters are best if they express support for the project as well as the organisation. They will hold more weight if they outline why they think the project will have a positive impact on the wider community.
- Take into account these categories when considering how your project will benefit the community: children (0-14 years); young people (15-24 years); women; families; older people (65+); people from non-English speaking backgrounds; people with disabilities; emergency services; refugees and migrants; and LGBTIQ.

The project's objectives

Outline your plan for achieving the project. This will include:

- Aims and objectives – brief descriptions of what the organisation plans to achieve. All objectives should be specific, measurable, achievable (usually within a 12-month period) and realistic. Consider how many people will benefit from the project and how many volunteers might be involved. What will the project physically deliver?
- Timeframe – when does the project start and finish.

Methodology

Match your objectives with strategies that demonstrate how they will be achieved, by whom and by what date. Plan from the outset of the application process who will do what and by when to avoid a rush as the closing date approaches. If the organisation depends on documents to be provided by external groups, these will need to be organised in advance and potentially followed up.
A solid application will:

- Illustrate how the organisation has the people power and knowledge to carry out the tasks of the project.
- Include why these approaches were taken, which might make reference to timing and community considerations.

Budget

Include the amount requested (if that is part of the application guidelines) and the forecasted income and expenditure for the project.

Evaluation

How will you measure each of the project's objectives and whether the project has been a success? Sometimes external evaluation will be required – refer to the grant's guidelines.

Resources

There are many sources of research and statistics that can help make your case when applying for grants. Here are a few to get you started:

https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics

https://www.esc.nsw.gov.au/community/community-profile-and-population-forecasts

https://explore.fundingcentre.com.au/help-sheets/fundraising-statistics

https://goodsports.com.au/resources/