

# Writing a Grant Application in 10 Steps

CHECKLIST		
1	What do you want to do?	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Research the Funders	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Read the Rules	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	What is the NEED?	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	What will get better?	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Can you do it?	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Tell the story clearly	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	Get your numbers right	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	How will you show what it did?	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	Check and send	<input type="checkbox"/>

## 1. What do you want to do?

Have a clear idea of your project. Make sure everyone agrees what the project is and what it will do. Ask everyone involved for their ideas and suggestions. Does your Constitution allow it? Does the project meet your Aims and Objectives?

## 2. Research the Funders

Look at Funding Central, local councillor grants, SWMDP *Small Grants*, *Big Improvements*, AIM, AONB (see page 4 below).

## 3. Read the Rules

What do they fund? Are there any exclusions? What are their priorities? Try to find a good match first. How much do they fund? Does it need matchfunding? Is there a deadline? WHEN do they pay (some pay all or part in arrears). If they encourage contact, give them a call and discuss your idea.

## 4. What is the NEED? **Most bids fail on this!**

Why is the project important? Why are you doing it this way? Why now? What will happen if you don't do it? You have to make your project more enticing, more urgent than the other applications they receive. Find some evidence of the need. Are there any statistics you could use? Does your area have problems that your project will help? Check your County Council website for facts. Have you asked your users? It's not that you **want** something (*we would like a lift so people can get upstairs*), it's a **need** (*we had 35 visitors last year who couldn't get upstairs and 10% of people in*

*the street survey said they wouldn't even visit because they know they can't get upstairs).* You can also use a case study from elsewhere that shows the benefits.

## 5. What will get better?

Why should they give you the money? How important is it? What will the project do? What will the OUTCOMES be? They can be measurable (20 children have learnt new skills at our family fun day) or aspirational (vandalism will be reduced). Do the OUTCOMES match the NEEDS?

<p><b>Example:</b> We wanted to improve the local history display and tell younger people and incomers about their community.</p> <p><b>NEEDS:</b> New families and young people are isolated and don't easily fit in. They don't join local societies and clubs. Vandalism is worse than in surrounding areas and has increased in the last five years. In a survey 65% of people couldn't answer 5 simple questions about the area and said they would like to know more.</p>		
INPUT	OUTPUT	OUTCOME
<p>We refurbished a case, bought mounts and new display boards. We created a new display with maps and photos. We wrote a leaflet about the museum and the collections of local items we have. We asked people what they thought in a simple survey form.</p>	<p>We had a temporary exhibition in the library and gave a talk at the local school.</p> <p>We gave leaflets to families via the school and playgroup and to new people via the estate agents and social housing trust.</p> <p>We had a family welcome day at the museum.</p>	<p>Fifteen new families visited the museum. The playgroup now makes a monthly visit to the museum and the school is planning to visit annually. 5 incomers have become museum volunteers. 70% of people surveyed said they knew more about their community, had learned new things and had made new friendships in the area because of the project. Vandalism has reduced this year.</p>

## 6. Can you do it?

Will you be able to complete the project? Have you done this kind of thing before? How robust is your organisation? If your museum is new, show that the people involved have some experience. What is your track record?

## 7. Tell the story clearly

This should be the easy bit – so why do many applicants get it wrong? The funder should be able to see easily

- WHY your project is important
- WHAT you are planning to do
- WHO will benefit
- WHEN you will do it
- HOW you will do it
- HOW MUCH it will cost (and where any other money is coming from)
- WHAT it will achieve (outcomes)

- HOW you will check its success (Monitoring)
- HOW you will decide what worked and if you could have done it better (Evaluation)

Ask people who aren't involved to read it – Is it clear to them? Is anything missing? Is it exciting ? Can you think of a catchy title, a great opening line, a quote? Have you used the funder's priority words? Challenge any assumptions they might be making about your museum/area.

## 8. Get your numbers right

How much will they fund? How much are you asking for? Does it need match funding? Can your organisation handle this budget? Reassure them about your financial arrangements (Two signatories? An experienced Treasurer? Audited accounts? )

Have a look at the cost of the project? Is it reasonable for what you hope to achieve? Is it good value (not the same as cheap) ?

## 9. How will you show what it did?

MONITORING: Will you collect data, survey people, ask for feedback? How will you know if it achieved any of its aims?

EVALUATION: How will you review the project afterwards and learn from what you did? How will this help you do things better and achieve your aims in future?

## 10. Check and send

Read it all through again.

- Have you checked your Constitution, Aims & Objectives?
- Have you answered all their questions?
- Have you included any additional evidence they ask for?
- Have you checked spelling and grammar? (It matters.)
- *Have you got their name right?*

Good Luck !

## PLACES TO LOOK FOR FUNDING (FREE)

Funding Central [www.fundingcentral.org.uk](http://www.fundingcentral.org.uk)

A directory run by the NCVO National Council for Voluntary Organisations. You need to register your organisation (free) and choose categories of who will benefit and the type of work (e.g. working in arts and heritage, working in education)

Association of Independent Museums - sources of external funding

[www.aim-museums.co.uk/content/grant\\_sources/](http://www.aim-museums.co.uk/content/grant_sources/)

Local Councillor Community Chest grants

Funds for Historic Buildings

<http://www.fundsforhistoricbuildings.org.uk/>

Heritage Funding Directory

<http://www.theheritagealliance.org.uk/fundingdirectory/main/fundinghome.php>

j4b Community

<http://www.j4bcommunity.co.uk/default.aspx>

Grantmakers Online (international)

<http://www.grantmakersonline.com/>

Grantsnet

<http://www.grantsnet.co.uk/>

### Some examples

Southwest Museum Development Partnership (was Renaissance Southwest)

*Small Grant, Big Improvement* scheme. Details will be announced on May 20<sup>th</sup> 2013 on [www.swfed.org.uk](http://www.swfed.org.uk)

South West Water Charitable Donations

[www.southwestwater.co.uk/index.cfm?articleid=9235](http://www.southwestwater.co.uk/index.cfm?articleid=9235)

Available if you are near a Viridor site (you can search via the website)

Association of Independent Museums

[www.aim-museums.co.uk/content/aim\\_grants/](http://www.aim-museums.co.uk/content/aim_grants/)

You have to be an independent museum and a member (£35 – £90 p.a.)

Grants for Sustainability, Conservation of objects and preventive Conservation (collection care)

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

[www.cornwall-aonb.gov.uk/funding.html](http://www.cornwall-aonb.gov.uk/funding.html)

Sustainable Development Fund

Art Fund [www.artfund.org/what-we-do/funding-for-museums](http://www.artfund.org/what-we-do/funding-for-museums)

Victoria and Albert Museum Purchase Fund  
[www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/p/purchase-grant-fund/](http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/p/purchase-grant-fund/)

Heritage Lottery Fund [www.hlf.org.uk/](http://www.hlf.org.uk/)  
10 programmes including townscapes, parks, places of worship and landscapes. Young Roots, Sharing Heritage, Our Heritage, Heritage Grants and Skills for the Future are the ones most commonly used by museums.

## OTHER USEFUL SITES

Association of Charitable Foundations  
[www.acf.org.uk/seekingfunding/index.aspx?id=70](http://www.acf.org.uk/seekingfunding/index.aspx?id=70)  
Advice sheet on applying to foundations for money

How To Fundraise [www.how2fundraise.org/](http://www.how2fundraise.org/)  
Ideas, templates, advice, not always up to date

Directory of Social Change [www.dsc.org.uk](http://www.dsc.org.uk)  
An independent charity giving advice for the voluntary sector, including fundraising. Their directories charge a subscription, but you can subscribe for one week.

Third Sector Forums [www.thirdsectorforums.co.uk/](http://www.thirdsectorforums.co.uk/)  
Online noticeboards for discussing topics, including fundraising

SWFed [www.swfed.org.uk](http://www.swfed.org.uk)  
You don't need me to tell you how useful the Southwestern Federation of Museums and Art Galleries website is, do you ?

Tamara Essex (professional fundraising trainer) [www.tessex.co.uk](http://www.tessex.co.uk)  
Retiring to Spain, but lots of practical advice on her blog  
<http://tamaraessex.wordpress.com/>

## AND SOME THAT AREN'T

The Fundraising Authority - please note this ISN'T an authority – it a site to sell books [www.thefundraisingauthority.com/fundraising-basics/](http://www.thefundraisingauthority.com/fundraising-basics/)

UK Fundraising [www.fundraising.co.uk](http://www.fundraising.co.uk)  
A fundraising consultancy company