

# Successful funding applications

Although every funder is different, this factsheet looks at some basic tips to strengthen your funding application and increase your chances of success.

## Simple know-how

Before we look at the structure and content, here is a short list of do's and don'ts:

DO	DO NOT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read the guidance notes</li> <li>• Use the same language as the funder (such as key phrases)</li> <li>• Clearly outline the difference between the problem, the need, and the solution</li> <li>• Justify your opinions with factual evidence</li> <li>• Use your application form to meet the aims and objectives of the funder</li> <li>• Begin your answers by feeding back the question</li> <li>• Make sure that your committee is familiar with the terms and conditions of the funding that they are applying to</li> <li>• Be careful when you talk about partnership working (is the relationship clearly defined and do you have clearly written roles and responsibilities?)</li> <li>• Thank them for any successful offer that follows</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask funders to support your organisation - ask them to support the people you help or the work that you do</li> <li>• Write an application as a means of working out what your group should be doing</li> <li>• Assume that the assessor is familiar with your project (explain it for the average Joe Bloggs on the street)</li> <li>• Use derogative or arrogant phrases such as 'less fortunate than ourselves' or 'worthy case'.</li> <li>• Use jargon (for example 'roots up approach' or 'community hubs')</li> </ul>

# Factsheet

## Voluntary Action Oldham

12 Manchester Chambers  
West street  
Oldham  
OL1 1LF

T: 0161 633 6222  
F: 0161 633 9328  
E: [admin@vaoldham.org.uk](mailto:admin@vaoldham.org.uk)



## Structure and content

Having read the guidance notes and are confident that your project/ organisation can meet the criteria set out by the funder in the given timescales, you can begin to think about writing your application. All funding organisations, trusts and foundations have their own application process, each varying markedly in scale and complexity. It is important that you do your research and show your funder that you understand their priorities and that you can deliver their aims and objectives.

Here is a basic list of what to include in your application:

- 1. Profile summary** – Offer a simple introduction to your organisation by explaining who you are and what you do, include details of your legal status (registered charity, company limited by guarantee etc), where you operate and who your organisation helps
- 2. Project summary** – A summary of your project, and any activities involved
- 3. The need for the project** – Describe why the project is needed and who will benefit
- 4. The outcomes** – Describe all the changes and effects that will happen as a result of your work
- 5. Monitoring and evaluation** - Describe how you will collect and record information and how this will be used to track progress. Also describe how you will review the project, looking at its overall value and effect (usually after it has been completed).
- 6. Project management** – Describe how the project will be managed and name the people who will be responsible for it
- 7. Finances summary** – A breakdown of the costs associated with running the project and why you need the money
- 8. Eligibility** – outline how you meet their eligibility criteria

## Tips for your content

- **Think of a punchy and positive title** for your project that puts across what you do - For example: 'Bangla beats' (A music project with Bangladeshi young people).
- **Refer to your governing document** when introducing your organisations aims and objectives
- **Build your credibility** – Try to include any evidence that demonstrates your competence to run the project. What is your track record, what have been your major successes?

## Key Words

**Beneficiaries** – the people that the project aims at supporting

**Budget** – breakdown of the costs of running your project

**Exit strategy** – a devised plan for what will happen to the project or activity after the grant ends

**Full cost recovery** – funding for all of the costs involved in running a project including a share of your overheads

**Match funding** – when you make a contribution towards funding. For example, if your total project costs £50,000, you might supply £10,000 from other sources

**Outcomes** – the changes and effects that happen as a result of your work

### Voluntary Action Oldham

12 Manchester Chambers  
West street  
Oldham  
OL1 1LF

**T:** 0161 633 6222  
**F:** 0161 633 9328  
**E:** [admin@vaoldham.org.uk](mailto:admin@vaoldham.org.uk)



- **Be specific about the problem** – Make the problem concrete by explaining what it is simply, talking about the people (show that you are led by demand and are addressing a need) and using local research or statistics as evidence. Then ask the ‘so what’ question to outline any wider or long term effects and to indicate the urgency and the case for immediate intervention. Show that the problem is solvable.
- **Be specific about what you will do and how you will do it** – Groups often struggle to explain what will take place if they receive the funding in an effective way. Focus on how you intend to make a difference and what activities will you carry out to meet your objectives
- **Be specific about the outcomes** - Funders will want to know what will change as a result of the funding (‘what will the project outcomes be?’), For example, if you received a grant for exercise classes for older people, think and write down what changes take place for the older people (such as improved fitness and wellbeing, people are more active, reduction in the number of falls)
- **Be realistic about your costs** - You may need to attach a detailed breakdown of your costs. Be realistic about your costing, make sure you include all expenses and keep a record of how you have worked these out - particular if they are estimations. For instance with volunteer expenses – ten volunteers per week, over 48 weeks per year, each claim an average of £3 for travel costs = £1440).
- **Do not forget inflation** – if you are calculating your costs over a number of years, do not forget to include the costs of general price rises (through the inflation rate)
- **Include time given by volunteers** - When outlining your budget, any time given freely by volunteers is often used to provide ‘match funding’ and show funders that you can provide the necessary resources
- **Tell them your plan** – If you are not asking for the full amount or you have an ongoing project, you will need to explain how you plan to raise the balance or to source any future funding. Otherwise you may need to include a fully developed and well structured exit strategy
- **Use a mixture of hard and soft data to evaluate your data** – Hard data includes statistics such as the number of people who found jobs following a computer training course. Soft data assesses people’s views and experiences, such as how safe older people feel going out at night.

**Question: ‘Explain how you know that people in your community need this project, what evidence have you collected?’  
(Awards for All)**

**Answer: ‘We know that people in our community need this project because there are 48 families with autistic children recorded in the area our project covers.’**

**75% of these families said that they were struggling to cope and felt isolated.’**

## Voluntary Action Oldham

12 Manchester Chambers  
West street  
Oldham  
OL1 1LF

**T:** 0161 633 6222  
**F:** 0161 633 9328  
**E:** [admin@vaoldham.org.uk](mailto:admin@vaoldham.org.uk)



## Further links:

- **Fit4Funding** preparing for funds or good applications, go to the help and advice section of their website - [www.fit4funding.org.uk](http://www.fit4funding.org.uk)
- For any further information, guidance and support, please visit [www.vaoldham.org.uk](http://www.vaoldham.org.uk)

### Voluntary Action Oldham

12 Manchester Chambers  
West street  
Oldham  
OL1 1LF

**T:** 0161 633 6222  
**F:** 0161 633 9328  
**E:** [admin@vaoldham.org.uk](mailto:admin@vaoldham.org.uk)

