



Volunteering S.A. Inc.

Developing Grant Applications



Government of South Australia
Office for Volunteers

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DEVELOPING GRANT APPLICATIONS

Objectives:

Once you have completed this training you should be able to:

- Identify your organisation's aims, objectives, strategic and financial plans
- Research and consult to collect data appropriate for the development of a grant application or sponsorship proposal
- Prepare a written application for grants or sponsorship
- Plan appropriate acquittal and evaluation processes for any successful application

Pathways to a formal qualification

This workshop has been developed to align with aspects of the following nationally recognised units of competence (subjects):

SRXMKT006A Initiate & Maintain Communication with Sponsors/Funding Organisations

SRXFIN008A Secure Financial Resources to Support the Organisation

PSPGOV603A Develop a Tender Submission

As evidence of your Participation in the Developing Grant Applications workshop, you will receive a Certificate of Attendance.

Disclaimer

Volunteering SA Inc and the Government of South Australia accepts no responsibility or liability for any inaccuracies contained in any material in this presentation.

This presentation is intended to provide general useful information and should not be relied upon as constituting any advice.

Attendees should, before acting on any matters arising out of or otherwise in relation to this presentation, seek their own specific independent legal or other advice about their situation.

Activity 1

An important part of a funding submission is the profile of your organisation, what it does, - including the services it delivers, who the clients are, how successful it has been in the past in terms of the core business, customer satisfaction, achievements, involvements etc.

This profile helps the funding body make decisions about whether to fund the project you are applying for or not.

Writing the profile in an informative, brief and positive way is a skill that will enhance the quality of your application.

You will find some additional tips in the information included at the end of this workbook.

Briefly **describe your organisation** by adding information under each of the following headings:

- i. The vision and objectives

- ii. The client group

iii. The main activities of the organisation

iv. A brief history of the organisation and/or a list of achievements and involvement your organisation has been associated with.

Activity 2

In preparation for writing a grant application this activity gets you to focus on the following points.

In the space provided respond to each question and explain what you will do, how you will go about it and/or who you will consult.

Who will be involved in your project?

How will you involve Stakeholders in your project? What role/s will they play?

Do you need a steering committee and, if so, when and how often will it meet?

How will you monitor the progress of your project? Briefly describe the process/s you will put in place to do this.

How will you evaluate the outcomes of your project? Briefly describe the process you will use to do this.

How much will your project cost? What do you need to take into account in order to calculate how much your grant application is asking for?

Following are a few suggestions for you to add to and assist you to calculate the cost.

Item to be costed	Cost per item	Running Total	Comments
Paid staff time			
Materials			
Equipment Venue/s			
Travel			
Volunteer time (in kind support)			
Total Cost of Project		\$	

Following is some additional reading provided by the Port Augusta Volunteer Resource Centre that you will find useful when developing your grant submission.

GRANT SUBMISSION WRITING

This section has been sourced from the Our Community website and newsletters.

ourcommunity.com.au

Why do funding bodies fund?

While sponsorships and business partnerships are tightly controlled because for-profit organisations have a set of corporate objectives that they must achieve - and therefore the sponsored project is merely a vehicle – funding bodies are more likely to be directed by government priorities. Some have a brief from government to support a range of activities in the community, others have a sense of civic duty, while some use it as a public relations activity to improve their public profile. You will need to ensure that the objectives of your funders aren't in conflict (e.g. Living Health and SA Brewing) or that their business practices or ideology don't conflict with the values of your organisation or the project's stakeholders.

Understanding what they want

Commonwealth, state or local governments, together with trusts, foundations and non-government groups, hand out millions of dollars to community groups every year. Naturally, there are systems and processes in place showing how to do it. The process sets out how to make the application, who is eligible, and so on.

The first step in making a grant application is understanding exactly what the funder is prepared to fund and why they set up the fund. Then you can explain your ideas in the context of what is fundable. There is no point in getting locked into plans which don't fit within the guidelines. Most organisations have clearly set out guidelines and processes – use them as they will ensure that your submission is at least considered. The first thing that some funders do is eliminate those applications that don't fit within the specified guidelines.

What do they want to fund?

- Any special target group?
e.g. women, youth, people with a disability
- Any special functions?
e.g. sporting bodies, respite care
- Any special way of operating?
e.g. self-help, sharing of facilities
- Any particular priorities at a given time?
e.g. unemployment, crime prevention.

How is the funding calculated?

- Is there a limit?
e.g. a maximum/minimum grant per project?
- What is funded?
e.g. some guidelines say salaries but not equipment or vice versa
- Does the applicant have to contribute?
e.g. meet a percentage of the costs in cash or in kind

- When is the grant paid?
e.g. after the project is complete, in advance

The process

A funding application involves more than just filling in the form. You may need to:

- Get support
- Give yourself a long lead time
- Edit to a final draft
- Deliver it in a particular way

Getting support

There are three forms of support you will need:

- Formal authority
This will be needed from your board, management committee or supervisor.
- Colleagues and stakeholders
It is wise to involve colleagues and other stakeholders within your organisation at an early stage to ensure their co-operation and assistance.
- From other organisations
You may need to ask for support from other organisations if you think this might help in adding weight to your application. (Remember that they may need a long lead time.)

Lead time

Starting early is the only way to be prepared. Grant submissions often need generic information that if compiled into a 'grants library' will always be readily available. This will streamline the grant submission process.

Start early and work through the application form, identifying what needs to be done. Allow a time buffer for the inevitable things that will go wrong. Make a plan, allocating tasks and setting deadlines. It should include:

- certificates of incorporation and a copy of your constitution
- your annual report and/or audited financial statements
- your business plans
- a diagram of your organisational structure
- copies of current insurance policies
- copies of your current operating policies, e.g. occupational health and safety, equal opportunity
- job descriptions for the staff you intend to employ
- resumés of the people who will be employed or who will be important to the project
- letters of support from other organisations
- other attachments in support of your case
- copies of the minutes of the meeting at which your organisation formally agreed to apply for the funding.

- approvals that need to be obtained both from your own board or management committee and from any partners you may have in the project.

Final draft

Allow time for a final detailed reading of the draft by a suitably skilled person who has had no direct input into its preparation.

Delivery

Send or deliver the submission – in the way the funder requires – a few days early and follow up to make sure it arrived. Make sure you keep a complete copy on file.

Submission layout

Funding bodies want submissions that are easy to read (typed) and that answer every question on the application form (if you do not understand a question, phone the grant administrator and ask for clarification, then answer it – don't leave a question blank).

The submission needs to give enough information – without being too long – to convince the funding body that you are the most appropriate organisation to handle the funds and to deliver the project. If you know what they require and stick to that, you are more likely to be considered.

Explaining what you want

Every submission, no matter how the application is set out, needs to show at least the following information:

- What you want to do
- Why it's a good idea
- What the cost will be
- Who will benefit from the project
- How you will make it work
- How you will evaluate to show it has been a success.

What you want to do

You need to make a clear link between your aims and objectives and the specific guidelines. So long as you are complying with the guidelines and can show your aims are worthwhile and you know how to make them come true, you stand a fair chance of success.

Why it's a good idea

Before you make a final decision about the programs you want to take on, you should check that your ideas are really what's needed. Ask for comments from other people who can give you feedback, especially those whom the program is intended to benefit.

Make sure that you have defined the need the program is addressing. You are then in a position to explain why your proposal is needed and to demonstrate how it will make an improvement. Consider using statistics, case studies, quotes from people, and questionnaires to support your case.

Persuasion

The best way to persuade the funder to accept your submission is probably not by lobbying but in two other ways:

- **Pre-selling your ideas**

to the administrators who make the recommendations on which your submission should be successful - by contacting them on at least one occasion to inform them of your project, to ask their advice, and to alert them to your intention to submit.

- **Getting evidence of support**

for your program and improving your credibility. This might involve demonstrating to the state or federal politician usually handling the grants that voters care about whether your proposal succeeds. Be clear about your membership and support base.

If you want to lobby, it's a lot safer to ask for help with some aspect of your submission rather than simply asking for a decision in your favour. If you do lobby, then lobby early before your submission is lodged – then you are less likely to be accused of pulling strings.

Checklists

The project

- project summary
- target group
- outputs
- outcomes
- evaluation and measurement
- resources needed
- budget
- financials
- schedule
- organisation

The grant submission

Is your grant submission up to the mark? Does it cover everything it needs to? Is it well written, clear and easy to understand? Before you send your submission away, work through the following checklist.

- **Language**

Ensure the title makes a positive statement and is not a neutral descriptor.
Check the language – is it specific, accurate, concise and clear?
Is the proposal written in the active voice with positive language and in the first person?
Does the proposal avoid bureaucrat-style language, jargon, clichés or weasel words? Is the proposal written mainly in short, simple, declarative subject-verb-object sentences?
Has it been checked for typos and bad grammar?

- **Layout**

Are the pages numbered?
Does the proposal follow the grant giver's guidelines – margins, spacing, type size, paper size, and proposal length – to the letter? Does it look professional?
Has the layout got plenty of white space, and is it broken up by charts, tables, heading, bullet points, etc. Are charts easy to understand and clear?
If there are forms to be filled out, have all the blanks been filled in?
Are statistics and statements documented and properly referenced?
Are any acronyms spelled out in full, at least at first use?

- **Content**

Do you address all items in the grant giver's guidelines?
Does the proposal assume too much knowledge of the area or too little?
Does it have a clear one-page summary?
Is there a cover letter describing how your project would further the grant maker's mission?

Does the submission have a project schedule, information on methodology, any project partners and their roles – as well as the roles of those in your group?
Is there a proper conclusion at the end?

- **Budget**

Does the proposal contain a detailed budget that is accurate and adds up?
Does it explain the sustainability of the project?
Does the budget factor in administrative overheads, and are you prepared to defend any budget estimates for salaries, goods and services?

- **Message**

Does the budget contain a contribution from your own organisation, to demonstrate your belief and commitment?
Does the proposal adequately demonstrate the existence and significance of the issue you wish to address through your project?
Does the proposal specify realistic and measurable project objectives? Does it contain a rundown of benefits to beneficiaries and the grant maker?
Do you explain project reporting procedures?
Do you show that your group can deliver the project, and why it is the best group to do so?
Does the proposal show why this project is unique, innovative, and different from (and an improvement over) existing programs?

And finally ...

Have you thought about how competitive your project might be – compare yourself and your project to previous grant recipients or other organisations that may be applying for grants.

Have you said how and why your organisation got started, what the organisation is doing today, and where you are going in the future?

The cover letter, if you have prepared one, should be short (half a page), motivating, say something different, and show dramatic need or uniqueness. Make sure the contact details of the coordinator are easily found.

Has the final version been reviewed by an objective third party?

Do's and Don'ts

- 1 **DO** learn all the facts about the group you are approaching for support. If you are aware of its interests, aims objectives and perhaps even criteria for selecting successful submissions, you will be in a very strong position.
- 2 **DO** tailor your submission to each particular organisation without altering your initial objectives.
- 3 **DO** present a clear, concise budget that is outlined in such a manner as to pass the scrutiny of both a public accountant and someone qualified in the area you are working.
- 4 **DO** include all support from other people or organisations in your budget (as long as you note it clearly as in-kind sponsorship). Anything that people give you for free has a real value equivalent to what you would have to pay commercially.
- 5 **DO NOT** expect influence (who you know) to substitute for cogent argument (what you know).
- 6 **DO NOT** send the same submission to a number of organisations.
- 7 **DO NOT** inflate the size of your request in the hope that even if it is cut it will still meet your needs. All budgets have to be accurate and completely justified otherwise it will appear that no thorough research has been completed.
- 8 **DO NOT** expect elegance or emotion in your writing to hide weaknesses in the project.
- 10 **DO NOT** expect the assessors to ring anyone for verification, look up a web page, or go and see something. They won't have time. If it is not on paper in the application it won't be assessed.
- 11 **DO** get your application in before the deadline.

Conclusion

The submission is a promotional tool. You are promoting yourself, or your organisation, and you are promoting your project. Remember this when making your application and you are half way to making a good application.

Checklist – Developing Grant Applications

To assess your understanding of *Developing Grant Applications*, having attended the training workshop, work through the checklist below.

This checklist is designed to assist you to assess your level of understanding of the issues surrounding *Developing Grant Applications* and whether you need to follow up on any point/s or not.

I feel confident that I can:

- identify the organisation’s aims, objectives, strategic and financial plans
- research and consult to collect data appropriate for the development of a grant application or sponsorship proposal
- prepare a written application for grants or sponsorship
- plan appropriate acquittal and evaluation processes for any successful application
- research information for the development of a grant application that is in line with the organisation’s aims and objectives

Developing Grant Applications

See below how this topic relates to the National Standards for Volunteer Management

1. Policies and Procedures	2. Management Responsibilities	3. Recruitment	4. Work and the Workplace	5. Training and Development	6. Service Delivery	7. Documentation and Records	8. Continuous Improvement
Policy and Procedure Reviews (1.12,)	Management System (2.5, 2.6, 2.7) Social Responsibilities (2.13, 2.14, 2.15,)						