



Glasgow
Council
for the
Voluntary
Sector

SECTOR
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GCVS Funding Support Service

Fundraising Quick Guide: Applying for Grants

Transcript text

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Introduction

Welcome to this fundraising quick guide from GCVS. We hope it will help with your applications to grant-makers. You can find a short video on this topic from our website and this is the transcript.

This brief introduction is just one of the ways GCVS can support your organisation. We provide a range of other resources, training sessions and one-to-one support to help any voluntary group or community organisation in Glasgow where the relevant expertise is not otherwise available.

Case for support

You'll find a case for support really useful for all types of fundraising. This should be a clear, compelling and concise argument to persuade potential donors to support your work. Try to fit this into three short sentences or describe it in less than two minutes.

- Your case for support should answer three questions: (1) What is the need for your work? (2) What will you do to address that need? (3) What difference will your activities make? This sounds obvious, but it's difficult to do!
- It's important to keep your Case for Support really short and concise, use ordinary everyday language and be honest and real when describing your organisation.
- You can also expand the Case for Support to create a more comprehensive reference document containing all the information you might need to make grant applications.

Make a fundraising plan

There are many other ways of raising money and it's a good idea to make a fundraising plan.

- Remember that grant funding is only one way of finding income for your organisation. If you are relying on grants alone to fund your work, this can be risky.
- Your fundraising plan should contain a range of methods so you're not too dependent on one type. If you need help to develop your fundraising plan, you can find further guidance on this topic from our website. If you'd like to discuss fundraising ideas with us, please get in touch.
- If you can generate your own unrestricted income, it will promote your financial resilience and independence, build your reserves and support the future sustainability of your organisation. Remember you can use unrestricted income in any way you like within your charitable purposes but grant funding is often restricted to a particular purpose.

Before you begin

There are a few things to think about before you apply for a grant.

Remember, you must follow the legal requirements for fundraising in Scotland. All your fundraising should be legal, open, honest and respectful. Read the **Code of Fundraising Practice** published by the Fundraising Regulator. www.goodfundraising.scot/code-of-fundraising-practice

For grant funding, here's a short checklist of information you are likely to need.

- Make sure your **governing document** is up to date. This should include your aims and objectives and explain how your organisation is run.

GCVS Funding Support Service

Transcript text Fundraising Quick Guide: Applying for Grants

- You will need a **bank account** in the name of your organisation. Grant funders might also ask for a copy of your annual accounts or your financial management records.
- Some grant funders only give to **registered charities**, so check whether you are eligible to apply. You can find information on becoming a charity by visiting OSCR's website. www.oscr.org.uk
- It's worth mentioning that, if you have a website or social media sites, make sure they are up to date and show what you are doing. The person assessing your application might look at your **online sites** to find out more about you.
- If you need funding for more than one year, your application should follow your strategic development plan. Some grant funders might ask to see this.

If you need help with any of these areas, please contact us.

Finding grant makers

There are many thousands of grant-makers and each one is very different, with their own history, funding priorities and reasons for giving.

- **National Lottery Good Causes** are by far the biggest funders of the voluntary sector in Scotland. For example, NL Communities Fund, Awards for All Scotland, or Creative Scotland. It's a good idea to phone them for a quick chat about your work before you begin your application.
- There are **thousands of Charitable Trusts and Foundations** Many are registered charities in their own right and can only support a limited range of purposes. Some examples are The Robertson Trust, Bank of Scotland Foundation, or the Souter Charitable Trust. Also Foundation Scotland administers applications for a wide range of funders.
- **Local Authorities** also give grant funding. For example, Glasgow City Council have Area Partnership Grants.
- There are **other lottery funders** like The People's Health Trust, or The People's Postcode Lottery
- Funding from the **Scottish Government** is often administered by partner organisations.
- **Other Public bodies** also make grants

A good place to start looking for funders is with SCVO's Funding Scotland service. You can search their online directory free of charge to find the grant makers with the best fit for your work.

<https://funding.scot/> Also, [you can subscribe](#) to the free newsletter service from GCVS for funding updates for groups in Glasgow every week.

Applying for grants

When you're ready to start your application,

- It is really important to identify the priorities of potential funders, check to see how well your work fits and make sure you are eligible to apply. **Read their guidelines carefully**, take a note of any deadline dates and apply as soon as you can.
- You should aim to describe how your work fits with the **funder's priorities**. If it doesn't fit, don't apply – you'll just waste your time. Give clear, brief statements and respond to their own guidelines.

GCVS Funding Support Service

Transcript text Fundraising Quick Guide: Applying for Grants

- If you're asked to use an application form, make sure you **answer their questions** directly. Your first paragraph in every section is the most important one.
- Each application you make needs to be crafted **individually**. Please don't send mass mailing appeal letters to grant funders. One size does not fit all.
- If you work together with other organisations, remember to name them. It's good to describe the benefits of your **collaboration** and also the unique contribution you make.
- Your budget should include all the costs of delivering your project or idea. Before you submit your application do a final check to **make sure the numbers add up**.
- Now you've given all the information, so what? **What difference will all this activity and expense make?** The funding assessor will want to know how closely this difference fits with their funding priorities. As a general rule, the closer the fit, the greater your chance of success.

Funder's key questions

Depending on the type of funding you're looking for, funders might ask you some particular questions:

- How do you know there is a **clear need** for your work? Does this come from your own experience – perhaps from a high demand for your services, or is it from your own recent consultation or from local statistics?
- Funders might ask **how have local people been involved** in the design or development of your work. What do they say? Are service users or beneficiaries involved in managing your work?
- Have you been able to secure **any other funding** already, or allocated any funds from your reserves? If you have applied elsewhere, you might be asked to name the other prospective funders and the amounts you've asked for.
- What monitoring and evaluation tools do you have to **measure the difference** your work will make?
- Consider what will you do when grant funding ends? **How sustainable is your work?**

Finally, it is worth mentioning that competition for grant funding is very high. On average, only one in every five applications you make will be successful and you might need to wait for up to six months to hear the outcome. So **manage your expectations** and be realistic.

Summary

So, very briefly, when applying to grant funders it's important to

- Have your case for support ready together with your overall fundraising plan
- Have key documents for your organisation to hand.
- Choose a list of potential funders, make sure you are eligible to apply and read their guidelines very carefully.
- Tailor every application you write. This will take a lot of time to do well.
- If you are going to have any chance of success, you must describe how well your work fits with the funder's priorities
- And make sure that you describe the difference all this activity and expense will make.

GCVS Funding Support Service

Transcript text Fundraising Quick Guide: Applying for Grants

Final comments

If you are a group in Glasgow and need help with applying for grant funding for your work, GCVS provides a free two-hour training course called “Making Better Applications”. To see dates and book your place, visit the “Training and Events” page on our website.

We also offer regular one-to-one funding support surgeries where you can talk to us about your funding needs. To book your appointment, please get in touch.

GCVS offers a comprehensive range of other services to help third sector organisations in Glasgow. They include development support on various topics and also HR advice, payroll and financial services. GCVS members have exclusive access to packages of support and you can find lots of information and resources from our website. Please contact us if you would like any more information. www.gcv.org.uk

We wish you every success with your fundraising.