



Glasgow  
Council  
for the  
Voluntary  
Sector

**SECTOR**  
DEVELOPMENT

# GCVS Funding Support Service

## **Fundraising Quick Guide: Creating your Case for Support**

### **Transcript text**

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### Introduction

Welcome to this fundraising quick guide from GCVS. This is only a brief introduction but we hope it will help you develop a really great case for support to boost your fundraising. You can find a short video on this topic from our website and this is the transcript.

### Why a case for support?

A case for support is a powerful fundraising tool that inspires people to support your cause. It raises awareness of what you do and why you do it, and most importantly, highlights the difference donations or funding would make. Time spent in developing your case for support is a great investment.

A clear case for support gives a consistent message to motivate everyone inside and outside your organisation. You can also adapt your case for support for different audiences and circumstances. Let's take a look at the key components of a case for support.

### Three key questions: Needs? Activities? Difference?

An effective case for support answers three key questions: What's the need for your work? Then, what ACTIVITIES will you do to address the need? and above all, what DIFFERENCE will you make?

Let's have a look at these three key elements.

First of all, **Need**: Why does your group exist in the first place? What needs to change and how do you feel about this? What motivates and drives people in your group? A good case for support message will connect people to your cause on an emotional level. It promotes empathy so people feel what you feel and they're compelled to get involved. Make clear that every donation, small or large, makes a difference to meet the need.

Then there's your **Activities**: What do you do? Explain your main activities or services in words that most people will understand and can relate to. Don't go into too much detail, be brief and avoid any technical words or jargon. Your message should aim to promote trust and show how effective you are. It's often a great idea to set your work in context within your community and explain how you work alongside other groups or organisations.

Most importantly, describe the **difference**: This is essential. Explaining the difference should be the main focus of your case for support. What changes do you deliver? What's your vision and aim? Most of us give to a good cause because we believe it will help to make this world a better place in some way. So, if you want to attract donors and funders, you must use your case for support to highlight the difference their donation would make. Don't leave this for everyone to guess or imply. State the differences very clearly. It's useful to give examples and use evidence from your monitoring and evaluation data.

Work together with others in your group to agree a case for support that captures the very essence of your work and the difference you're making. An effective case for support can convey all this instantly in just a few words or through a well-chosen image.

## **GCVS Funding Support Service**

### **Transcript text Fundraising Quick Guide: Creating your Case for Support**

#### **Don't talk about yourselves.**

Your fundraising would be much more effective if you don't talk about yourselves. Avoid cold messages that focus internally only on our activities, our staff or what we need money for. Instead, focus outwards on your cause or mission and highlight the difference a donation or funding could make. After all, your group only exists to make this difference happen. Think about the language you use in your case for support. Make it personal and try to use words like "you" or "your". Here are some comparisons,

- Instead of saying "Support our Christmas appeal" try to describe the positive difference your appeal will make. Consider something like, "Your donation will brighten children's lives in Glasgow this Christmas".
- Instead of saying "We need funding to repair our Centre's roof" try to think about the difference your Centre makes to people's lives. Tell a story, perhaps something like, "Donations from people like you helped Janet to smile with her new friends at lunch club today".

The impact would be so much greater if you could combine your case for support with a good photo or quote, but first remember to gain the written permission from anyone identified.

#### **Individual giving.**

You can use your case for support to encourage donations from individual people.

Engaging messages can nurture relationships with your existing supporters and can also help you to reach new audiences. Be clear, brief and warm. Focus on the difference donations make and try to help your donors feel good about giving.

Here are a couple of examples using imaginary projects to give you some ideas for case for support statements that promote individual giving.

#### **Example: An employment project**

Here's a case for support for an employment project.

"You can give real hope for young unemployed people in Glasgow. Your donation would give regular, one-to-one mentoring support with local partners to build essential skills and confidence for a brighter future."

- Needs: "young unemployed people in Glasgow"
- Activities: "regular, one-to-one mentoring support with local partners"
- Difference: "real hope" and "build essential skills and confidence for a brighter future"

If you focused only on the difference, you could shorten this to something like, "Give the gift of real hope", or perhaps just use the words "real hope" together with a positive photo of a young person you've helped, and a donate button on your website home page.

#### **Example: An environmental project.**

Here's an example for an environmental project.

"Your donation would transform this neglected, unused site into a beautiful outdoor space filled with flowers and bees and smiles. With seeds, tools and training, local volunteers will create a community area we can all be proud of."

## **GCVS Funding Support Service**

### **Transcript text Fundraising Quick Guide: Creating your Case for Support**

- Needs: “neglected, unused site”
- Activities: “seeds, tools and training, local volunteers will create a community area”
- Difference: “transform”, “a beautiful outdoor space filled with flowers and bees and smiles” and “we can all be proud of”

If you focused only on the difference, you could shorten this to “Your donation would bring flowers, bees and smiles.” Perhaps you could use a great photo and say “Give fresh life” together with a donate button link within an email message.

#### **Applying for grants**

If you’re applying for grants, grant makers will want to know the difference your project or work will make and how this difference fits with their funding priorities. In general, the closer the fit, the greater your chance of success.

Some major grant makers invite prospective applicants to phone them before beginning the application process. A brief discussion could save a huge amount of wasted time and effort, but, before you pick up the phone, take time to prepare a clear case for support statement. This will help you to make the most of your discussion.

Here are a few imaginary examples to give you an idea of the types of case for support statements that might be helpful when approaching grant makers.

Example: When approaching a funder whose priority is to improve mental health, you could say.

“Your grant funding will improve the mental health and wellbeing of 70 new refugees and asylum seekers in Glasgow each year who are affected by trauma and stress. Through a range of social activities, therapy and practical helps your support will ensure a warm welcome, bring emotional healing and help everyone make friends in the local community.”

- Needs: “new refugees and asylum seekers in Glasgow who are affected by trauma and stress”
- Activities: “a range of social activities, therapy and practical helps”
- Difference: “improve the mental health and wellbeing”, “a warm welcome, bring emotional healing and help everyone make friends in the local community”

Example: Or for a grant-maker who wishes to promote wider engagement with live music.

“Your grant funding will help 50 children and young people from disadvantaged communities in Glasgow to learn to play a musical instrument this year. Through weekly tutor sessions and fun group activities, your support will boost confidence and skills and will help everyone to experience the joy of making live music together.”

- Needs: “children and young people from disadvantaged communities in Glasgow”
- Activities: “learn to play a musical instrument”, “weekly tutor sessions and fun group activities”
- Difference: “Boost confidence and skills. Experience the joy of making live music together.”

When applying for grants, you can use your case for support as the first paragraph of a fundraising letter or email. If you need to complete an application form, one of the first questions will ask for a brief summary

## **GCVS Funding Support Service**

### **Transcript text Fundraising Quick Guide: Creating your Case for Support**

of your project in only a few words. Here's where your case for support statement would be ideal. You can also expand your case for support into a resource template to hold all the information you'll need to complete multiple grant applications.

#### **Further information**

If you're a group in Glasgow and you need some help to develop your case for support, GCVS provides a free two-hour online training course about this topic on various dates throughout the year. To book your place, visit the "What's On" page on our website.

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

You'll find helpful guidance from the Chartered Institute of Fundraising and also in the Code of Fundraising Practice.

#### **Conclusion**

GCVS also offers a comprehensive range of other services for 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 about the difference we can make for your organisation.

We wish you every success with your fundraising.