

## groundswell fundraising advice

### you need money?

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If you are trying to create a new charity, community project or enterprise then one of the resources you may well need is money. Luckily there are a whole series of organisations out there whose job it is to give out money to people.

### funders

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Organisations that give out money are often called grant making trusts or foundations. Some are private organisations set up by wealthy people who want to use their money to support good causes. Some are set up to give out public money. Here we are going to group them all together and call them funders.

### partnership not begging!

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Getting money from funders is not begging. A funder is a partner. You have a job to do, and you have the ideas and commitment and skills to do it, but you need resources. The funder has a mission to achieve - often it is something like 'reduce social exclusion in our community,' but they lack the ability to do the work themselves. They need to find the right projects to give money to help them achieve their mission.

#### **By giving you money, a funder meets their own goals. They need you!**

For example a funder's mission might be to 'reduce homelessness in Liverpool'. If you run a project which trains formerly homeless people to go into schools and educate kids about the realities of homelessness, then by taking money to do your work, you are helping the funder to meet their mission. You are doing the funder a favour!

### say no to the general mailout!

Nearly all funders have their own unique application procedure, which you need to follow to get money from them.

**\*\*\* General mailouts are a waste of time \*\*\***

Every funder is different and looking for different things so do not waste your time writing the same letter to everyone. It is much more useful to spend time finding the right match with the right funder and making a specific application to them.

### first things first...

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First have a think about what you want to achieve. Develop a plan – be clear what you want to achieve and how you want to achieve it. When you know exactly what you want to do, it is time to go to funders to ask for money.

### it's not just about money...

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Money is a means to end. Before you go to a funder to ask for money – have a think if there are other ways of meeting the need. If you need money to pay for room hire, have you asked around if someone can maybe lend a room for free? Showing that you have used resourcefulness to get some of the items that you need also goes down well with funders.

## groundswell fundraising advice

### finding the right funder

There is no point wasting your own time making an application if you have no chance of getting any money. So spend some time investigating to make sure that you find the right funder:

- a. First check eligibility.
- b. Then check which of their priorities you fit.

#### how to find a funder

1. Groundswell website has a list of funders [www.groundswell.org.uk](http://www.groundswell.org.uk)
2. Ask at your local CVS – Council for Voluntary Service. Every local authority has one and it's their job to help small local charities. Again these are all listed on Groundswell website.
3. Look for similar organisations to yourself. Look at their websites or their annual reports to see who funded them and see if you can apply too.
4. There is software called Funder Finder and books that list grant makers such as 'A Guide to the Major Trusts' published by the Directory of Social Change. Many libraries have access to these.

#### a. \*\*\* check if you are eligible \*\*\*

- ▶ Many funders will only fund registered charities – so only apply to them if you are one!
- ▶ Many funders are geographically based – so check that you are in the right place.
- ▶ Some will only fund certain types of work eg only with young people.
- ▶ If there is any doubt whatsoever that you are eligible to apply – then get in touch with the funder to double check. Most have the information available on their website, but you can always give them a call.

#### b. priorities

- ▶ **find a fit**  
Many funders try and focus their money into certain types of charitable work, some support animal charities, some the environment etc. They will often publish their priorities so only apply if your work matches.
- ▶ **jargon busting**  
Many funders call the same thing by different names. If your project is run by people with experience of homelessness then you will often fit the criteria around poverty. Some call this social exclusion, or disadvantage or deprivation – if you have any doubt what they mean get in touch.
- ▶ **self help**  
Also if you are a group of homeless people doing things for yourself then you may well hit criteria around self-help or user involvement. Others call this participation or service user engagement.

## groundswell fundraising advice

### filling in applications

Once you have found the right funder, then you have to make a formal application to them. Most have their own application forms to fill in, others ask you to write your own.

#### guidelines

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These are the advice notes that funders offer to guide you in how to apply to them. These are key. They tell you all you need to know about the funding process - what information you need, how much money you can apply for etc. To stand any chance of getting the money, you must stick closely to the advice given in the guidelines.

- ▶ Make the application the right length.
- ▶ Ask for the right amount of money.
- ▶ Be clear. Do not assume that the funder knows anything about you. You are explaining your work to a stranger. The clearer you are, the easier it is to give you money.
- ▶ Show evidence that your work is needed. For example, if you are applying for money for a newsletter in a hostel, did you do a survey of residents to see if would be read? If so that's great - include it in your application.
- ▶ If your application is hand written, make sure it is readable. It can only be marked if it can be read!
- ▶ Provide all the information requested, but no more.
- ▶ Be on time. Applications that miss the deadline go in the special round filing cabinet under the desk – the bin!

#### budget

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Most funders ask for a budget. This is a list of the expenses that you will run up by doing your work.

- ▶ Think through every bit of the work and think what you need to make it happen:
  - Travel costs
  - Room hire
  - Office supplies
  - Telephone costs
  - Postage
  - Marketing materials
  - Wages
  - Volunteer expenses
  - Computers
- ▶ If you do not know how much things cost, then do some research. Look on the internet or get the yellow pages and phone some suppliers. Make a best guess if necessary.
- ▶ Make sure the budget is **realistic, accurate and achievable**.
- ▶ If you are asking the funder for less than the total amount you need, show how you intend to get the rest of the money.

## groundswell fundraising advice relationships with funders

Groundswell is encouraging you to view funders as partners in your project. This makes your relationship with a funder, like any key partner, very important. To build a successful relationship, you need to treat each other with respect. While you all know the basics, here's a quick reminder.

- ▶ Always be polite – in writing, on the phone and in person. Nobody likes doing business with people that are rude.
- ▶ Think of the long term. Just because a funder says no once, doesn't mean they won't fund you in the future.
- ▶ Co-ordinate your approach. Make sure you know which of your group is responsible for contacting each funder. You don't want two people phoning up and asking the same questions.
- ▶ Keep your promises. If you get funding and promise to mention the funder on your website and in your newsletter, then do it!
- ▶ Maintain the relationship. Send the funder reports, invite them to events, keep them involved in the work.
- ▶ Always be honest. Your integrity is one of your main assets.

### getting funding check list

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1. Develop a plan of what you want to do.
2. Work out what resources you need to meet your goals.
3. Think about ways to get these resources without money.
4. Create a clear budget for the items you need.
5. Start the hunt for funders.
6. Check if you are eligible.
7. Check if you match the funder's priorities.
8. Fill in application form, paying close attention to the guidelines.
9. Make sure your application form arrives within the deadline.

If you are not successful **always ask for feedback** – this is invaluable in improving your applications. Most people don't get it right first time.

If you get the money – congratulations! Now you can concentrate on actually getting the work done!

### good luck with fundraising

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