



SOURCES OF FUNDING FOR VOLUNTARY & COMMUNITY GROUPS

The aim of this factsheet is to give an overview of the sources of funding available to voluntary and community groups. It is also about targeting appropriate funders for your group and project.

1. RESEARCHING AND TARGETING FUNDERS

Firstly, think about going back to any past or existing funders. Did you spend the grant properly? Was the money used well? Did you get positive feedback from the funder about your achievements? If so, they may be happy to fund you again.

Next, **use contacts**. Ask management committee members, staff, volunteers or members if they have had any contact with funders or know of similar groups or projects that have been funded. Carefully read all the information you have about each funder to see that you are eligible and meet the funding criteria. Some funders target very specific causes, others give more generally, to all kinds of groups that deal with community or disadvantaged. Target those whose criteria you most closely meet first. List potential funders in order of priority. Think about how much time and effort you can put into applications and limit your list to the number of funders you can deal with.

A golden rule : Quality not Quantity. It is better to work hard on a small number of bids to find the right funders and to show each funder how well you meet their aims.

2. TYPES OF FUNDERS

There are different types of funding available to voluntary organisations:

- Charitable Trusts
- Lottery Funding
- Company Giving
- Statutory Grants
- European Funding
- Government Funding

Which of these sources you go for depends on your organisation and what you want the money for.

Charitable Trusts

Trusts (sometimes called Foundations) are set up by companies or individuals as a way of giving money to certain causes. There are local trusts, preferring to give in specific areas. Many more are national, giving around the country. The amount can range from a couple of hundred pounds to tens of thousands or more if you match their aims closely and can show a big impact. Applications to Trusts are often as simple as a two-page letter or basic application form. More details might be requested for larger requests.

Lottery Funding

The Lottery gives money to five 'good causes' each of which has its own pot of money and application procedure. They are:

- The *Big Lottery* which is for projects aiming to help meet the needs of the most disadvantaged people particularly severe, long-term and multiple needs.
- The *Heritage Lottery Fund* which supports projects which relate to the national, regional or local heritage of the UK.
- *Sport England* which supports projects that, for example, aim to increase participation in sport among groups such as disabled people, ethnic minority communities, young people and women and girls.
- The *Arts Council England* which aims to foster and support the country's artistic talent and create more opportunities for people to experience and participate in life-changing artistic experiences.

There is also *Awards for All* which offers small grants (£300 - £10,000) to projects in one or more of the above areas. You do not need to be a registered charity to apply but your group must have charitable aims.

Company Donations

An alternative to grants is approaching a local company to ask for money or resources. The advantage of this approach is that you may get a very quick answer as there may be no official application process. Additionally, you could develop a long-term relationship with the company.

More often companies will give 'in-kind' contributions. This may involve contributions like staff time rather than cash donations. For more information contact Business in the Community who may be able to find a company which is interested in supporting your group in this way.

Businesses may be willing to enter into a sponsorship deal. This involves you offering a service, usually publicity for the company in your publications or at

events, in return for money. It is more of a business deal than a donation so you have to be able to deliver your side of the bargain.

To find out more contact companies directly and ask for the Community Affairs or Marketing department or a person who can deal with donations.

Government Funding

Government Funding for the voluntary and community sector is now covered on a new website with easy to follow details of all current funding opportunities. Please note whether funding streams are currently open. You can also access application forms and guidance notes for most schemes.

Contact: www.governmentfunding.org.uk

Statutory Grants

Statutory means that the grant comes from a local, regional or national Government body such as the Council, Health Authority or Education Authority. Strategic grants are given to voluntary groups for work that the Government or local agencies have identified as a priority. To find out more, or for guidance and application forms, contact your Council for Voluntary Service.

European Funding

European funds are generally for projects involving regeneration, training and employment. Groups usually access them through a local office. European grants can be large but require time and effort due to the large amount of paperwork involved in applying for, monitoring and reporting on your project. The money can take a long time to arrive and you often need to find match funding (grants will only cover part of your project costs, perhaps 45% and you need to find funding to match that which you get from Europe).

Government Office for the West Midlands

The Government Office represents Central Government in the region. They will be able to put you in touch with those agencies which deal with local European funding schemes.

Contact: GOWM Enquiry Line 0121 325 5050

Website: www.go-wm.gov.uk

3. FURTHER HELP

Arts Council England	0845 300 6200	www.artscouncil.org.uk
Awards for All	0121 200 3511	www.awardsforall.org.uk
Big Lottery	0121 212 3081	www.biglotteryfund.org.uk
Heritage Lottery Fund	020 7591 6042	www.hlf.org.uk
Sport England	0121 456 3444	www.sportengland.org/westmidlands

