

# 10 tips to winning the next grant you apply for

1. Does your Neighbourhood House/Centre have a project it would like funded?
2. Have you found a philanthropic trust/foundation that supports projects like your Neighbourhood House/Centre's proposed project?
3. Is the grant application deadline soon?



If you have answered yes to two or more of these questions, read below.

There is no magical secret to writing a successful grant application. That said, the following tips will increase the chances of your grant application being a winning one!

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|  <b>1</b> Read the guidelines                     |  <b>6</b> Be detailed - outline goals, outcomes, timeframes |
|  <b>2</b> Research philanthropic trust/foundation |  <b>7</b> Outline the need for the project                  |
|  <b>3</b> Phone the contact person               |  <b>8</b> Use plain English                                |
|  <b>4</b> Obtain additional funding sources     |  <b>9</b> Provide facts and statistics                    |
|  <b>5</b> Present a realistic budget            |  <b>10</b> Proof-read the application                     |

## Tip 1: Read the guidelines carefully

It can be tempting to launch into the writing of the application without reading carefully through the guidelines. This is especially the case when the deadline is looming! However, reading through the guidelines can save you a lot of time. It would be disappointing to respond to the application questions only to realise that the project and/or your Neighbourhood House/Centre is ineligible to apply.

## Tip 2: Research the philanthropic trust/foundation and corporate

Have the philanthropic trust/foundation or corporate funded Neighbourhood Houses/Centres in the past? Understanding the projects the philanthropic trust/foundation or corporate has supported in the past can give you some clues as to the types of projects they fund. You might find that learning about other projects helps you to develop and/or refine your project idea further.

### **Tip 3: Speak to the contact person at the philanthropic trust/foundation**

The name and phone number of the grant program contact person is there for a reason – to be contacted. Touch base with this person prior to submitting the application to discuss the project you would like to have funded and to get any questions you might have answered. Following the submission of your application, you might like to telephone this person again to confirm they have received the application.

### **Tip 4: Obtain additional funding sources**

Who else can your Neighbourhood House/Centre partner with to develop and deliver the project? Consider ways to include other organisations in the project and whether they can contribute support, in-kind or financially. Not only will this benefit your project, it will also be attractive to a philanthropic trust/foundation or corporate.

### **Tip 5: Present a realistic budget**

Just because Neighbourhood Houses/Centres are expert at delivering projects on a shoe-string budget does not mean you should request very little in the way of funding. If you do this, the philanthropic trust/foundation and corporate you are applying to may question the ability of the project to meet its intended objectives which will jeopardise the likelihood your project will be funded. If you are required to submit a budget with your application, make sure the budget is:

- Accurate and realistic – do not underestimate the time and resources required to meet the project's objectives. Cutting corners with the budget in an attempt to make your application more competitive will not necessarily increase the likelihood that your application will be successful.
- Include overheads including insurances, Workcover, rent, equipment hire, office supplies, etc).
- Include in-kind support including staff and volunteer time, as well as room-hire, office space, administrative support, etc. If the philanthropic trust/foundation or corporate has not set amount to cost volunteer hours, go with a base rate of \$20 per hour.

### **Tip 6: Be detailed**

Attention to detail is very important in a grant application and will increase the likelihood of your application being successful. Think through how your project will be delivered including timeframe, outputs and personnel required. Will your Neighbourhood House/Centre hire new staff to run the project, or can it be delivered by existing staff and volunteers? What are the intended outcomes of the project? Be as specific as you can be for each aspect of the project. For example, with respect to outcomes, state the number of expected enrolments in a course, attendees at an event, the number of people 'job ready,' etc as a result of the project. Where possible, identify the possible risks associated with the project and suggest strategies to effectively mitigate those risks.

### **Tip 7: Be clear about the need for the project and why your Neighbourhood House/Centre is the appropriate organisation to deliver this project**

Do not assume the philanthropic trust/foundation or corporate understands the problem your project seeks to address. Clearly outline the need for the project and why your Neighbourhood House/Centre is the most appropriate organisation to deliver the project.

#### **Tip 8: Use Plain English**

In most instances, your Neighbourhood House/Centre will know more about the issue the project seeks to address than the philanthropic trust/foundation or corporate. It is therefore important that the application is written in Plain English and free from jargon. This will make them easier and faster to read.

#### **Tip 9: Use statistics and facts**

A good application includes statistics and factual information on the issue the project seeks to address. Data collected on your Neighbourhood House/Centre that relates to the project can support the application, as can data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). The local council your Neighbourhood House/Centre is situated in may also have collected useful data to support the application.

#### **Tip 10: Proofread your application**

Once you have completed the application, ask at least two people (one from within and another external to your Neighbourhood House/Centre) to read through the application. You might like them to indicate whether the project's intended goals are easy to understand and whether the answers provided effectively address the questions asked.

#### **Sources**

The information above has been informed by reading information found at the following websites:

<http://www.youthcentral.vic.gov.au/government-info-assistance/youth-grants/tips-for-writing-grant-applications>

<http://www.fundingcentre.com.au/help/writing-grant>

<http://www.probonoaustralia.com.au/news/2012/11/top-10-tips-grant-writing#>

<http://mgnsw.org.au/sector/resources/online-resources/grants-and-funding/writing-grant-application-tips-success/>