

Ten questions to ask before you apply for funding

1) Are we eligible to apply?

It sounds obvious, but many funding applications are rejected because they:

- ask for costs that fall outside the scope of the grant programme
- fail to provide information required in the application
- are from types of organisations the funder cannot support



 **Read the guidelines carefully and contact the funder if in doubt.**

2) Do we meet the criteria and/or priorities?

If a funder says they are only interested in supporting the elderly, don't waste time by applying for a project for any other purpose. Again, if in doubt contact the funder for advice.

 **Take a look at the organisations the funder has supported before, as this builds a picture of the types of projects they support.**

3) What is this funder really looking for?

Beyond the basics of criteria and eligibility, what do you know about this funder? Have you made a clear case for support? Have you tailored your approach to the individual funder?

 **Be clear about your application's main selling points.**

4) Have we got enough time to apply for this grant and do the funded work properly?

Responding to funding opportunities takes time; you should consider carefully whether you have the resources to dedicate to it. If there are time constraints in relation to when the funded activity must happen, you should consider if you can set up and deliver your project within

these timelines. Be prepared to walk away if the timing isn't right.

 **Bear in mind that you are likely to need to consult with community members or work with partners.**

5) Would this project be the best use of this funding opportunity?

In many cases organisations need funding for several projects at once. How do you decide what you apply for, what might be suitable for a loan, and what activity might you fund through income from trading or bidding for contracts? Grants can be valuable in funding types of activity which are impossible to support through other channels – although they are not the only source of income.

 **To make the best use of opportunities you need to be aware of your wider funding needs and consider each opportunity in this context.**

6) What terms and conditions might be attached to any offer?

Some funders will ask for little other than an acknowledgement of their support. But funders who expect funded organisations to meet certain standards will often be happy to explain in advance what these are. It's unlikely to cause any major problems but it's important to check in advance – as there could be implications for how you manage your project.

 **Make sure you can accept the terms of the grant before you apply.**

7) Have we included the full costs of this project in our application?

Do you know what your full costs are and have you asked the funder to meet them? It's easy to overlook the costs of management and administration, which underpin the project for which you are applying. There are still funders who will only consider direct project costs but increasingly funders recognise that organisations need to cover their full costs.



 **Make sure you know and understand the principles of Full Cost Recovery before you start.**

8) Aside from this grant, are there any other ways we could fund this activity?

Grants can be incredibly useful but also limited in terms of what they support, how long they take to apply for and when they are available. Sometimes a loan can help you respond to a need or opportunity quickly, or a contract may exist for similar activities. It's worth considering all your options before applying for a grant.

 **Knowing your other options means you have a head start if you are rejected, and**

also when considering how to make the project sustainable in the future.

9) If we get this funding, what will happen when the grant ends?

A lot of organisations use grants either to fund ongoing activity or to set up new activity which they would like to continue. Many funders are concerned about the sustainability of the activity (and organisations) they support and will be more open to applications that include the costs of preparing a project for life after the grant ends.

 **Be prepared with a strategy for how you might continue the project's activity once the funding has ended.**

10) If we are successful, could we meet the terms and conditions of the grant?

Some funders – particularly public or Lottery – may have conditions about how to account for your grant and manage activity they are funding. This may have additional costs or other implications for your organisation.

 **Find out what standard conditions might be attached before you apply.**

C3SC support

We recognise that funding is a key issue for third sector organisations. Here is a summary of the support you can access from Cardiff Third Sector Council (C3SC):

- ⇒ Meet with a Third Sector Development Officer (TSDO) for one-to-one funding advice.
- ⇒ Visit C3SC's free-to-use funding portal - Open 4 Community - online at www.idoxopen4community.co.uk/c3sc You can search it yourself or one of our TSDOs can provide you with support.
- ⇒ Keep an eye on the Current Funding Opportunities page on our website at www.c3sc.org.uk/support/funding/current-funding
- ⇒ You can download FREE funding information sheets on our website. There are three categories: 'Finding and Getting Money', 'Managing Money' and 'Assets', with a total of over 60 information sheets to help you with funding.

Get in touch

To speak to a Third Sector Development Officer, please contact us:

- Call (029) 2048 5722
- Email enquiries@c3sc.org.uk
- Twitter @C3SC
- LinkedIn www.linkedin.com/company/cardiff-third-sector-council