GETTING YOUR HANDS ON THE MONEY

WHY APPLY FOR A GRANT?

Running a community group, club or sport and recreation organisation is not easy – costs are rising and funds are increasingly difficult to raise through traditional sources such as membership fees, sponsorship and fundraising. An increasingly popular source of funding is grants.

Grants can support the planned development of organisations, but grants are not usually offered for day to day activities and are not subsidies. Normal activities should rely on membership fees, and possibly sponsorship or fundraising. If it is an activity of benefit to the broader community, has the potential to involve or attract others, it may be possible to apply for a grant.

There is fierce competition for grants. Requests for funding often exceed available funds.

An organisation may be able to apply for a grant for a specific purpose - to upgrade a facility, to attract a different population group, to purchase materials and equipment or for a special event, but applications for grants should be supported by strategic, project and financial planning.

PLANNING:

Planning will determine where an organisation is now, where it wants to be, how it might get there and how to pay for it, and involves:

1. **STRATEGIC PLANNING**

   - Determines where an organisation is at in a broad sense and helps identify where it wants to get to, and how to get there.

2. **PROJECT PLANNING**

   - Identifies and defines a specific project to address a strategic plan.

   - Defines what, how and why, and makes a clear statement about a project.

   - Provides research that shows the need for a project. It is essential that projects are thoroughly researched and that there is clear community need. You may need to identify and explain the need, and show that the project will address the need.

   - Brings you in contact with other agencies such as peak bodies, local government and other service providers, and helps with discussion about a project.

   - Helps demonstrate community support and how the project will impact the community. Funding programs increasingly require that an application demonstrate strong community support.

3. **FINANCIAL PLANNING**

   - Identifies finances needed to start and maintain services, programs or projects.

   - Where funds are to come from.

   - How much an organisation can afford to allocate to a project.

   - What alternative sources of funding exist, and who else to involve in the process.

   Plan for the grant:

   - Plan strategically and financially for grant applications, because funding programs need evidence of good management and the ability to sustain projects and contributions from either the applicant or other sources. In the case of larger projects, applications will be stronger if they demonstrate cash contributions appropriate to the amount of funding sought. Applicants must plan for and demonstrate this capacity.

Planning prior to a grant application helps you be clear about:

- What you want to do and what your project is about.

- Why you want to do it, what the benefits would be to your organisation and the community, and why these represent value.

- How the project will be achieved.

- What the project will cost and how it is sustainable.

4. **WHAT ARE GRANTS?**

Grants are a source of income:

- Not usually offered for day to day activities.

- Not subsidies. No funding body will provide funding on a long term or ongoing basis.

- Offered for a specific purpose – to upgrade a facility, to attract a different population group, to purchase materials and/or equipment, or for a special event.

- Not provided for project administration costs. Most funding programs regard expenses such as the auditing of project accounts as a legitimate budgetary expense, but most will not provide funds for administration.

5. **WHERE TO LOOK FOR GRANTS**

Grants can be offered by:

- Commonwealth Government Departments

- State Government Departments

- Local Government

- Community Organisations such as trusts

- Private sector/commercial firms such as banks or multi nationals

- Philanthropic foundations.

Where grants can be found:

- Newsletters, circulars and fliers

- Web sites, magazines and daily newspapers

- State Government agencies

- Through Community Development Officers or Local Government Offices.

6. **WHICH GRANT IS THE RIGHT ONE?**

It is important to identify an appropriate grant program to your needs. Look for grants where the funding body is trying to achieve similar outcomes as you are.

Get a copy of the grant program guidelines and application form and read them before starting any tasks. Check that the outcomes of the grant provider are compatible with your project outcomes. **Only pursue an application if your project meets the guidelines.**

Be sure to understand:

- The philosophy of the funding body and why it is offering the grant, what they are attempting to achieve and what is required of applicants.

- What or who is usually funded, or what recent projects have been funded, and for how much.

- Whether it is funding new services or want to help expand existing services?

- What the target group is.

- Whether it is focussed on education and training, materials and equipment or increasing participation.

7. **COMMUNICATE:**

- Talk to the funding body for advice on requirements. Funding groups are seeking positive change within communities and they are willing to talk with organisations seeking similar outcomes. Contact might provide useful feedback that could progress your application.

- Talk with other people or groups within the community. The greater the number of linkages the stronger your application may be – consultation is often a requirement of the application process.

- Consider becoming involved in a joint application. This potentially strengthens your submission particularly in the areas of community ownership and support.

8. **HOW TO APPLY.**

Read the whole application form and guidelines carefully and fully understand its compatibility with your project.

Develop a checklist of information, requirements and tasks the funding body needs you to provide, meet or complete.

These might include:

- Your organisation's status and structure.

- Addressing criteria that describe how the project meets the aims of the grant program.

- Defining where the project is located.

- Defining what the project time frame will be.

- Describing how the project will be managed and sustained.

- Details of financial status and funding sources, including previously received grants.

- Declaring what the project will cost and how much is being sought.

- Listing what your organisation can provide towards the project.

- Declaring other sources of funding that have been secured.

Ensure the requirements can be met and that your organisation has the capacity to manage and sustain the project.

- Are you incorporated or registered under company law, or applying under the auspices of an incorporated body?

- Do you have an ABN?

- Have you the required financial capacity?

- Does your project fit with Local or State Government strategies or priorities?

- Does your project meet statutory requirements?

- Grant bodies need clear evidence that the project and grant can be managed, and that the agreed outcomes can be achieved.

- Consider including a short resume detailing project experience or expertise and any past examples of successful grant and project management.

Develop a project plan with a time line and list of required tasks.

- Develop a working group if necessary, or attach tasks to an existing committee or sub committee.

- Appoint a project coordinator who acts as the contact person, delegates tasks, arranges meetings, talks to the funding body, chases up information etc. The project coordinator is a coordinator, not the person doing everything. Others will need to be involved and accept delegated tasks.

- Work out what is to be done, by whom and when. Allow adequate time to complete tasks, keeping a close eye on progress and deadlines.

- Invite other stakeholders into the process. Consult and illustrate that more than one perspective has been taken into account.

- Develop clear evidence of community need, through consultation and data, and check to ensure the project is not duplicating services or facilities already available.

- Highlight parts of your project that make it needed and unique.

- Consider writing a short profile of your community that indicates the history, demographics, economic activity, geographic location, and relative distance to other population centres and sporting and cultural facilities etc.

- Be aware of and adhere to application deadlines.

Develop a budget and do the sums.

A clear picture of the following is essential for all parties:

- What is the proposal going to cost?

- What additional costs such as GST, bank charges and compliance' fees might be incurred?

- What funds are available within your organisation? Record your organisation's contribution. Many grants require a contribution to a project. This shares both commitment and risk.

- Consider in-kind support e.g. donated services or materials from a local professional business or tradesperson, and include in your organisation's contribution.

- What other funding has been secured (contribution from local government). Funding sources need to be evidenced in writing.

- What funds are being requested of the grant provider?

Collect your evidence.

- Gather everything needed for the submission. Make sure everything requested in the guidelines and application form is gathered.

- Offer it in a presentable format. Follow instructions on presentation and layout.

- Ensure that it is legible and easy to photocopy.

- Avoid acronyms.

- Have an independent person proof-read your submission.

Your submission might include:

- A completed cover sheet or application form

- A summary of the proposed project, service or program

- Table of contents

- A background highlighting your organisation's history and credentials

- A delivery timetable or a plan of action illustrating how the project will be managed and sustained

- Past signed audited financial records and an Annual Report

- A budget detailing what resources are required to complete the project including the resources your organisation will contribute and the amount requested from the funding body.

- Evidence that the project complies with relevant legislation.

- Evidence of facility ownership or leasehold arrangements.

- Evidence of a clear need for the project and what purpose it will serve.

- Information about who will benefit from the proposal and how. These might include outcomes and benefits to the applicant, a target population, other community members and the funding body and how the project fits with the interests and objectives of both your organisation and the funding body.

- Evidence of support from or partnerships with other parties such as local government, peak bodies, local community etc.

- Photos, videos, surveys, reports, plans, etc to highlight key points. Make sure that any supporting evidence is relevant.

- Supporting letters from other organisations and local politicians as indicators of community support. These must be chosen carefully and be relevant. Think carefully about these and include letters from parties for whom the project has a real impact and advantage. Make sure they are well informed about the project and that their involvement has been ongoing not an after thought or a last minute inclusion.

- Relevant contact details for further information.

- Appendices.

WHAT NEXT?

What do you do if you are successful?

- Undertake the project as described by action plan, time line and budget. This represents the real work.

- Keep the funding agency up to date with progress of the project.

- Meet any expectations relating to publicity by acknowledging the funding agency on signage or promotional material.

- Meet any expectations relating to acquittal (reporting requirements) as required by the funding body.

What do you do if you are unsuccessful?

- Follow up and request feedback. This should be designed to strengthen your next application not seek to change the current decision.

- Based on your experiences rework your submission in preparation for your next application to the same or an alternative fund.

- Don't be disheartened. Some suggest a good success rate is 1 in 4.

- Every attempt increases you knowledge and skills. It has the potential to better define your organisation's objectives.

- Adapt to your environment and circumstances

- Revisit your project. Consider alternative strategies such as staging your project along with delaying, deferring or cancelling it.

- Undertake more research.

- Approach resources such as the Tasmanian Sport and Recreation Skill Centre, the Office of Sport and Recreation or other resources to further develop your organisation.

IN SUMMARY

- Plan your project carefully. Know what you want to do, who will do it and how and why it will be done and how it will be financed.

- Demonstrate that there is community need and support. Seek input and feedback from the community and any other partners involved.

- Select an appropriate grant scheme.

- Read the guidelines carefully.

- Check your eligibility and the process.

- Contact the funding body if unsure of eligibility or the process and understand what the funding body really wants.

- Follow all instructions and meet all requirements.

- In developing the submission be clear but brief.

- Provide evidence of a structure to manage the project if funds are granted.

- Be careful what you wish for. A "wise list" is better than a "wish list".

- Be aware of time line especially the closing date.

- Send the exact number of copies requested.

- Keep a full printed copy of what you submit.

- If unsuccessful follow up – ask why.

Sport and Recreation email:
Info@sportrec.tas.gov.au
Phone **1800 252 476**.

Grant programs web site:
https://www.sportrec.tas.gov.au/grants_and_funding_programs