

# Applying for Funding for the First Time



*working for the voluntary & community sector in our area*

## Applying for Funding for the First Time

This is a brief guide for small community groups who are applying for funding for the first time. It will give you the basic information, but we recommend you make an appointment with one of our Capacity Building Officers who can help with all aspects of the application process.

You must have a management committee of at least 3 people, preferably more, and you must be meeting regularly and keeping minutes of these meetings.

Your group must have a constitution. This is a document that the group has adopted to specify how the groups runs and what it intends to do. It does not need to be a lengthy worded document as long as it clearly shows that your group has charitable purposes. We can help you draft a suitable constitution for your group, which must be presented to your committee to be formally adopted and then signed and dated.

If your group works with children, young people or vulnerable adults you must have a Safeguarding Policy and your staff and volunteers must have a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance.

You need a bank account in the same name as your group with at least 2 signatories (not related to each other or living in the same household).

You will need a project to apply for – that is a small identifiable piece of work which is achievable with the amount of money you are applying for. You need to know why you are doing the work, who it will benefit and what you expect to achieve.

You need accurate costings for your project. Do your research and find out exactly how much money you need. Funders do not respond well to “ballpark” figures so you will need an itemised list of everything you need and how much each item will cost. Always be specific and ask for a definite amount. You will need evidence of cost or estimates for larger items. Some funders will consider applications from small community groups who are not registered charities – but they must have charitable purposes.

Many Charitable Trusts will only give grants to registered charities, however community groups can apply if they can find a registered charity willing to receive the funds on their behalf. CVA Blyth Valley can provide this service for local groups we are currently working with (subject to certain conditions). Contact us for more information.

Be realistic in how much you can apply for. It is better to start off with smaller amounts so your group can gain experience and build up some credibility before applying for larger amounts. All funders differ in the amount you can apply for, and you must read each funders guidelines carefully.

You must be able to provide a copy of your most recent accounts which must be approved by the Management Committee and signed and dated by the Chair or the Treasurer. (for annual incomes under £25,000). If your annual income is above £25,000 you also need to have your accounts examined by a competent person who is independent of your group.

Allow yourself enough time to apply. Typically funders can take between 8 weeks – 6 months to assess applications.

**For further information contact one of our Capacity Building Team. We can give one to one support with all aspects of the funding application process and can also identify potential funders for your projects.**

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