Community Grant Funding Toolkit

Prepared by Harbour Sport's Sport Capability Team

COMMUNITY GRANT FUNDING TOOLKIT

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Introduction

Harbour Sport is improving the support infrastructure and resources available to all clubs across all sporting codes in the region - this Toolkit has been developed as part of this process.

One of the main areas of priority identified by a great number of our sporting organisations across a wide range of sports, is the subject of Community Grant Funding. A number of organisations are heavily reliant upon grant funding for the successful running of their operation.

The main aim of this Toolkit is to simplify the process of Community Grant funding applications to:

- Make it easier to understand
- Make it less stressful to complete
- Make it far less daunting
- Improve the quality of applications submitted
- Reduce the costs of time and resources for all parties concerned

All not-for-profit organisations in New Zealand require a system, or process, for cash acquisition to survive. In fact rarely, if at all, do you hear of any organisation that has sufficient funding to meet its needs. It is a simple fact and a harsh reality, that today, the art of fundraising is a necessity and a vital skill that is needed in most organisations.

This Toolkit provides the necessary information regarding the basic steps that need to be taken to plan for and prepare Community Grant funding applications. These do not have to be confusing, indeed writing them is a skill that can be acquired.

The subject of funding applications is an ever-changing landscape and this Toolkit will serve as an **overall guide** to support you. It will give you some useful tips on the process and will provide some useful links to get you started.

However you still need to do your research to ensure that your application is as good as it can be. The time spent initially gathering the necessary information that funders require will prove to be time well spent because it will help to improve the quality of your applications. Furthermore, once the information is gathered, you then just need to keep it updated for any future applications you may want to submit.

PLEASE NOTE:

This Toolkit **does not** cover other aspects of fundraising such as:

- Sponsorship
- Fundraising Activities such as events, raffles and street collections

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About Community Grants

There are a number of funding bodies in New Zealand who distribute grants to community organisations. These include the Department of Internal Affairs (e.g. Lotteries, Community Organisation Grants Scheme), groups such as Foundation North, local licensing trusts, gaming trusts, statutory and philanthropic trusts. These funders usually have application forms that ask for information on your organisation and what it is you are fundraising for. A number of them have application submission deadlines so you need to make sure you contact them for the closing dates.

Before approaching a community grant funder for support, you first need to do some research and find out what types of organisations and projects they fund. Most funders would rather you rang them to discuss these issues with their Applications Manager, rather than to waste your and their time submitting applications that don't fit their criteria.

Developing a sound working relationship with funders is imperative so being planned, organised, effective and efficient from the get-go will serve you well – remember – you only get one chance to make a first impression!!

Even if you and your project fit the criteria, there is no guarantee that your application will be successful as, very often, community funders have more applications than funds to allocate. However, submitting a well-developed funding application can certainly improve your chances of success.

Before Writing Your Application

As mentioned briefly above, it is an excellent idea to identify and contact potential funders **BEFORE** you start to write your application for a number of reasons, not the least of which is to ensure that the time you are investing, making an application, is time well spent. The last thing you want or need is to take the time to develop and submit an application only to discover that you have wasted your time and the time of the person at the funding agency who is assessing your application because you don't meet the necessary criteria.

To avoid this and other common pitfalls consider **discussing** the following points with your identified funders **prior** to writing your application:

- Do they fund what you want?
- What is their application process?
- Do they have a specific Applications Manager you need to deal with?
- What specific information do they need to support your application?
- When does your application need to be received?
- What is their funding limit?
- If their funding limit is below what you require, who else would they recommend that you approach?

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Writing an Application – A Useful Checklist:

Here are some points to consider when developing your application:

☑ If applying using a 'hard copy' write in black pen (it is easier to scan and copy)

☑ On all types of application type or write clearly

☑ Answer questions accurately with all the necessary detail required

☑ Make sure all questions are answered - If you say 'not applicable' explain why

☑ Make sure you explain clearly what you're applying for and why - but be succinct

☑ Show the funder how your project will make a difference - how it benefits the recipients

☑ Do your homework and have some valid and concrete statistics to support your application

☑ Letters of support and recommendations from your community can add a lot of weight to your application. Keep a file of comments, emails or letters you receive. Don't underestimate the value of community support

☑ Make sure you apply for an amount of funding that is relevant to the size and age of the group and project

☑ Show the project is well planned out and thoughtful. Show that it is part of the strategic plan and researched - not just 'dreamed up'

☑ If it is relevant show that you are collaborating and sharing resources with other organisations - duplication of applications is an issue for funders

☑ Don't just use "please see attached" or summarise. Be clear about attaching details e.g. See Appendix A

☑ Once completed give your application to someone who knows nothing about it to read – can they understand the content? Ask them to proof read it too if they are able

☑ Put the right amount of time into preparing the application. Last minute applications are obvious and do not present your organisation in the best light

☑ Absolutely keep to the application deadline

☑ Always keep a copy of your application – and make sure the person listed as the contact person has a copy in case the funder calls for further information

☑ If you are asked to provide more information, make sure you do so promptly

Please Note:

If you receive funding that you no longer need i.e. the project will not be taking place or, someone else has given you funding in the meantime, call the funder and tell them. They may be happy to fund another similar project and even if they ask you to return the funds, this will help to build trust with them.

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IF your Application is Successful

☑ When you receive the funding write in and thank the funder

☑ Ensure you meet all the requirements of the funder when accounting for the money

☑ Send copies of any media articles, messages of thanks from the community, or details of the impact of your project to funders

Identifying Potential Funding Sources

Listed below are a number of useful links to help you to identify and contact potential funders:

1. The Funding Information Service http://www.fis.org.nz/ is a not-for-profit organisation that has information about funding for community groups in New Zealand. Although there is a charge for this information, most libraries subscribe to **Fundview**, and you may be able to access the information free of charge through your local library website.

2. The Department of Internal Affairs http://www.dia.govt.nz/ has information on Lotteries Grants, Crown Grants, Trust Grants and the Community Organisation Grants Scheme (COGS).

3. Sport New Zealand (Sport NZ) http://www.sportnz.org.nz/ is the new name for the government organisation responsible for sport and recreation (formerly SPARC). Here you will find a **Directory of Potential Funding Sources**

   • http://www.sportnz.org.nz/en-nz/funding/Funding-for-Communities/

4. Community Net Aotearoa http://www.community.net.nz/ is an information sharing resource for NZ community and voluntary groups. Here you'll find guides for funding and additional useful links.

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Developing A Funding Plan / Calendar

This final section of the Toolkit is designed to support your organisation to develop a process and a plan for your funding applications by identifying **what** you need and **when** you need it. This will enable you to be pro-active rather than reactive when it comes to approaching funders and will also link into, and support, your organisation's strategic and annual plans.

☑ Create a simple template for your plan / calendar then enter the following information for **each** application

☑ Identify all areas where funding will be required **(what)** well in advance – a few examples could be:

- o Pre-season tournament travel and accommodation
- o End of season tournament travel and accommodation
- o Kit or equipment approaching or past 'sell by' dates
- o New / additional items of kit or equipment
- o Club house refurbishment
- o Creation of full time Club Manager position

☑ Identify by what date the grant money is required **(when)**

☑ Working backwards from this date, put timelines to the following action points:

- o Identify potential funders
- o Contact potential funders to discuss the suitability of the application
- o Decide who you are going to submit the application to
- o Identify and gather all the supporting information required by the funder
- o Develop the application
- o Submit the application

In Conclusion

We hope that you have found this Toolkit both useful and easy to follow. Should you require any further clarification or assistance please contact the Sport Capability Team at Harbour Sport 09 415 4610