

Winning Funding.....with the help of some winning tips

This is part of a training course in marketing, business planning and fundraising. This can be used as a guide and information sheet for individuals or in a training context.

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Winning funds with winning tips and tactics

Raising funds and winning contract and grants can be a tricky business. Often funders will ask you to jump through all kinds of hoops so forewarned is forearmed. It is good to get your funding case or your 'pitch' as clear as possible from the start. Here are some useful tips in dealing with funders and commissioners.

Fund -raising tips.....

- Describe your organisation and its achievements succinctly and clearly using qualitative and quantitative data. It is often useful to produce an organisation and project 'brochure' or report
- Describe your project briefly, who will benefit, when they will benefit and how they will benefit. Make crystal clear what the outcomes are and what will change as a result of your project
- Put your project in a context – why is it different; what does it add to the things that are already available
- Make sure you are immediately talking to the funder's agenda. What do they want and what are their criteria for judging funding bids?
- Be realistic about what it is going to cost – find out from other organisations and guidebooks what offices, building, staff and equipment cost so that your budget is realistic and accurate. The third sector sometimes under-prices what it does
- Be clear about what level of funding your prospective funder might be able to provide – there are many cases of people asking for too little as well as too much
- Have a fall back position in case you don't get all the funds you need when you need it – take care with how much of this you share with funders. Also ask yourselves

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what are the risks here – what sort of things will cause the project to be delayed or for it not to work out as planned

- Have a fallback position in case you raise too much money – if all your ships come in! You might have a project to fund that you can hold in reserve or opt to do more things for more beneficiaries with the extra money
- If you are trying to influence funding decisions note down who you know who can influence the decision. Sometimes it is better for others who are more influential to be ‘doing the ask’
- Allow time for researching and planning your fund-raising. It takes time – this is time well spent as it helps you plan and develop your project. There are various sources of funding advice and searchable databases of funders. You might want to start with NCVO (National Council of Voluntary Organisations) and their database at: <http://www.fundingcentral.org.uk/search.aspx>