JEAN ROBERTS

GRANT APPLICATION TRAINING MANUAL

2014

Organisations, businesses, groups, researchers, scientists and career enthusiasts rely on grant applications to access or gain resources, information, credentials, equipment, and a variety of opportunities.

With 40+ years experience in designing and presenting training workshops on this theme, Jean is pleased to offer this free Manual as a resource for in-house or on-site training.

Jean's first book was Successful grant application Writing for Business and Nonprofit Organisations, published in 1985 by Information Australia. Further editions were published in 2005 and 2008.

Each of Jean's publications, including this Training Manual, is available free of cost by emailing Jean, as below, with your request. A full list is provided on page 3.

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Purpose of this free Grant Application Training Manual:

- Is structured for on-site or in-house training – which is the most effective form of training, learning and professional development – for selected sessions or a complete course,
- Each section consists of 'core material' followed by a number of discussion worksheets,
- The aim is for Board members, managers, staff and volunteers to collaboratively review current efforts and plan appropriate improvements.

Workshop objectives

1. To increase confidence & competence of participants in preparing and lodging grant applications.
2. To workshop proformas & checklists to assist in the major stages of needs analysis, project development, documentation preparation and project management.
3. Develop a proforma grant application draft that could be used by volunteer services when seeking grant money.

The outcomes of the Workshop

Participants will have:

1. an increased confidence in preparing grant applications,
2. a practical workbook as a guide to improve the process of preparing grant applications, and
3. the ability to break this major task down into a number of manageable units of work.

Suggested uses:

1. Can best be used to guide several sessions with the same people – to work through the manual together to improve the process,
2. Preparation by the internal trainer and trainees includes choosing two previous grant applications from the organisation – whether they have been successful or not. These internal documents could then be used for small group discussions throughout the course,
3. Can be tailored to specific audiences, eg Board of Committee of Management, Senior Staff, staff or volunteers involved with service delivery,
4. Can be used as an ongoing resource manual by one person or a work/task group

Evidence of need for this training manual:

1. Organisations and business still think that the task is 'grant writing' rather than 'accessing resources in order to achieve a specific and measurable outcome or impact',
2. Common concerns about grant writing,
3. Issues raised at numerous workshops, and by many grant writers,
4. Lack of effort to improve the 'strike' or 'success' rate,
5. Lack of acceptance of grant writing as a core business function,
6. Lack of policies, procedures and proformas to guide this important function,
7. Lack of recognition of the task in role descriptions, performance appraisal, etc., and
8. Not treating income generation as a measure of the organisation's viability.

Jean's experience with grant applications, submissions and proposals:

1. Nine years employed as a Community Development Officer based in schools, and totally reliant on grant funds through these nine years – 1976 - 1985,
2. Through 27 years of self-employment, worked with a wide range of clients to improve their submissions, grant applications – and later tenders, proposals and quotes (1985 – 2012),
3. Providing countless training workshops through 40+ years with TAFE Colleges, Schools, Councils and Shires, health services, government departments, service-providers, peak bodies, industry associations, community centres, neighbourhood houses – and more
4. Close and ongoing monitoring of changes in the 'grant' sector since 1976, including changes in language, terminology, formats, technology (from hand-written to on-line), terms and conditions, eligibility and assessment criteria, specifications and mandatory requirements,
5. Close and ongoing monitoring of changes in the 'business of allocating grant funds':
    a) in the 1970s, the basis for funding was 'needs-based' – emphasising the nature and extent of need,
    b) In the 1980s, the basis of funding moved to 'submission-based' – emphasising the capacity and capability of the grant applicant to manage the funds, deliver the program or service and account for the use of the funds on conclusion of the funded program or service,
    c) In the1990s, the basis of funding moved to outputs and accountability – 'outputs' represented what was delivered with the grant funds, and 'accountability' represented an assurance that the funds would be used for the program or service for which they were requested,
    d) In the 2000s, the basis of funding moved to outcomes – which represented an assurance that the people who were involved with the program or service were able to do better or more as a result of their involvement,
    e) Now, in the 2010s the basis of funding has moved to achieving measurable social outcomes and impact – which represents the extent to which the funded program or service will contribute measurably to building or strengthening the local community's capacity and capability, strengthening the social and economic development of the local community, or reducing costs associated with ill-health, unemployment, business failure, environmental damage, etc.

Related publications by Jean – available free on request by email:

- Governance Kit No.1: clarifying the roles and responsibilities of nonprofit Board Members
- Governance Kit No.2: Partnership Relationships
- Governance Kit No. 3 Personal responsibilities of nonprofit Board Members
- Governance Kit No. 4 – Nonprofit Board Dynamics and Behaviours
- Jean's Outcome and Social Impact Measurement Checklist
- Jean's Service Delivery for Nonprofit and Commercial Service Providers
- Jeans Successful Quoting and Tendering for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and Nonprofit Organisations
- Making Ethics Work Toolkit
- Riding the Waves of Community Development in Australia since the 1970s

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Section One - INTRODUCTION

Common Issues:

A common response to my introductory question *'Why do you write grant applications or submissions?'* is this – '***of course, we write grant applications for money'***

Mistake No. 1. You don't write grant applications to get money – you write grant applications to attract the resources needed to achieve a specific outcome, benefit or impact.

A common belief is that ***if your grant application to any funding source is unsuccessful, it's because they had run out of money***.

Mistake No. 2. Funding sources don't 'run out of money' – they have an allocated fund to distribute in accordance with their internally endorsed eligibility and assessment criteria. The reality is that applications are received requesting more funds than are available, and your application has failed to meet the endorsed eligibility criteria, assessment criteria, or their funding program objectives.

In short, either your organisation or your project was not sufficiently presented as compatible with their eligibility or assessment criteria or their program objectives to warrant investment of their funds.

A common attitude is to ***make sure to get your grant applications in as soon as you hear of a funding opportunity – get the application form, complete it as quickly as possible and upload or lodge it before the advertised due date.***

Mistake No. 3. Writing a grant application that will have some chance of attracting the resources you need requires careful planning and diligent attention to detail. If a grant application is important to you, then you must give it the time and attention it deserves**.**

A common complaint is that ***we never have enough time to prepare grant applications – lucky if we have two or three weeks notice***!

Mistake No. 4. Attracting income through grant applications is a frequent activity – and therefore a core business activity – among nonprofit organisations of all shapes and sizes. It is not an ad-hoc task!

Treating Grant Applications as a core business function means:
1. appropriate Board-endorsed policies and procedures are in place to guide such preparation,
2. ensuring recognition of associated skill and experience among your paid and unpaid staff, and
3. prioritising programs, functions, services and other initiatives for grant applications when funding opportunities become available.

Such preparedness results in quality applications being ready in a short time to meet the requirements of each funding opportunity.

The 'business end' of strategic and business planning means:

1. agreeing on the specific target-group and/or community outcomes, benefits or impact your organisation wishes to achieve during the next 1-2 years,

2. finalising your operational plan, setting out the programs, function, services and other initiatives to be introduced, continued or improved through the next 1-2 years, and

3. having your grant application team identified, ready and prepared to carry out this core business function at a steady pace through the year – as part of their duty statement.

When I review successful or unsuccessful grant applications to identify improvements for future applications, I look to see:

1. how the applicant (person, team, group, organisation, etc,) is introduced and presented – including organisational structure, lines of reporting, current financial situation and current funding sources,
2. how the integrity and viability of the organisation are to be ensured,
3. what your organisation is doing now with currently available resources, and particularly how well your financial resources are responsibly managed,
4. who the target group for your grant application is, how well your organisation knows and understands their needs, interests or aspirations, and your organisation's track record in working with and for the target group,
5. the nature and extent of your target-group's needs, interests or aspirations, and why your organisation is the best one to address or remedy the situation,
6. how your organisation intends to address or remedy these identified needs, interests or aspirations – ie program plan with costs, budget and schedule,
7. how your organisation intends to monitor and measure process and progress in achieving or addressing the identified needs, interests or aspirations, and
8. what experience your organisation has to date in achieving measurable social or community outcomes and impact – and that these are compatible with the funding source's stated objectives.

Life-cycle of a Grant Application

Some nonprofit organisations start their search for funds by identifying and then selecting a variety of funding sources – rather than by needs-based planning.

Stage 1: Conception – the planning stage where you clarify the desired outcome

1. **Why this? – '*this*'** applies to the outcome, impact, result or benefit you are planning to achieve or address with the grant,

   You have to know exactly what you intend to do with the funds you are applying for, which means you need to start with a project plan complete with cost estimates, budget procedure and oversight, and scheduling of tasks, revenue, expenditure, reports and checking of process and progress to demonstrate how the funds will be used.

   'This' includes evidence of the need, problem or opportunity to be addressed, and your confidence in the outcome, benefit or outcome to be achieved. The more confident you are in your project plan and budget, the more positive, powerful and persuasive your grant application can be;

2. **Why us?** '***us***' applies to the person, team, group, organisation, business, university, etc., who will:
   a) do the work,
   b) receive and manage the grant, and
   c) are the most appropriate, skilled and available people to achieve or address the outcome, impact, result or benefit.

   You have to justify why you, your team, group, organisation, business, university, etc., is the best possible choice to address the need or problem, or to achieve the desired opportunity at this time – and to ensure your stated outcome, impact, result or benefit.

   This includes:

   a) proving either that what is currently offered to address the stated need, problem or opportunity is not adequate, available or appropriate for your service-users or target group, or

   b) that there is no such program, service or opportunity available at this time.

3. **Why now** – ***'now'*** applies to the timing of your application – and the timing of your project plan.

   What do you know 'now' about the outcome, impact, result or benefit you are planning to achieve or address, and why is 'now' the most appropriate time or stage for you to do this work.

   Why is 'now' the best time for the funding source to invest their scarce funds in your organisation and project – and what is the certain return on investment for them?

   This needs to be explained in clear and concise language that is:

   a) meaningful to them,

   b) meets their eligibility and assessment criteria,

   c) complies with their specifications, and

   d) re-assures them that your organisation is confident and sufficiently competent to achieve the stated outcome, result, benefit or impact.

Summary – three distinct stages in writing a grant:

1. **Always begin with the project** – what you want to achieve or address with this grant,

2. **Move into detailed project planning, costing, budgeting and scheduling** – what you are going to do, how, why, when, where, and who does what,

3. **Then, and only then, start to think about writing the application** – writing clearly, concisely and convincingly 'why this, why us, and why now'.

<u>Stage 2: Birth – choosing the best way to achieve the desired outcome</u>

Service-providers need to have consistent methods and systematic procedures for these five sequential steps:

1. **Collecting statistical information** on the nature and extent of need that can be addressed through a specific funding source about:
   a) currently met and unmet needs, and
   b) predictable and projected future needs.

2. **Analysing the statistical information** to quantify and understand how best to respond to this research by designing, implementing and evaluating quality services:
   a) for the immediate (now to 6 months) and short-term future (6 to 12 months), and
   b) or the longer-term future (12 to 24 months).

3. **Designing services** that address the identified and prioritised needs within available resources:
   a) following a consistent and replicable service model that covers and embraces the planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and review of service delivery,
   b) tailoring services to the individual needs of service-users or compatible groups of service-user, and
   c) harnessing available resources outside of the organisation through service networks, strategic alliances or partnerships that enrich the quality of service delivery and consequently of service-user outcomes and benefits,

4. **Allocating adequate and appropriate organisational resources** to the major stages of the Service Model, ie planning, implementing, monitoring, evaluation and review, and

5. **Treating the Service Model as the core business of your organisation**, regardless of the funding source.

Stage 3: Growth – visualizing your project plan, schedule and budget in action

Important definitions:

1. Measure a basis or standard for comparison: a particular action intended to achieve a recognisable effect

2. Measurable able to be measured: perceived or significant

3. Measurable service-user outcome – correction of a gap between (a) the current and (b) the desired/achievable situation in the life or lifestyle of a service-user: note that 'desired' is governed by the service-user, and 'achievable' is governed by the nature and extent of available resources.

4. Activity a planned series of actions or events designed to achieve a measurable outcome

5. Outcome something that follows from an action or situation: a result: a consequence

6. Service-user the person or group whose life or lifestyle will be improved or enhanced as a result of the planned activity

7. Service-model there are three major stages in a service model:
   - research – assessment of the target audience and their needs, interests and aspirations,
   - service design – to ensure that the service design is based upon the research stage, and
   - service delivery – to ensure that the services delivered are consistent with the service design.

   The Service Model must cater for the specific needs of the Service User, Service Provider and Funding Source.

The initial step in identifying, planning and achieving a measurable service-user outcome begins with the desired outcome being negotiated between the service-user and staff member. The process involves three major steps:

1. assessment of the current situation,
2. agreement about the desired improvement or enhancement, and
3. planning of an acceptable, achievable and affordable activity that will achieve the desired improvement or enhancement.

There are a number of variables in this process, any one of which can affect the process:

1. readiness and willingness of the service-user,
2. agreement on an acceptable, achievable and affordable outcome,
3. availability of adequate and appropriate resources,
4. suitable measurement tool or process, and
5. suitable evaluation model.

Much of the suspicion about measurable service-user outcomes has evolved due to inadequate preliminary analysis to ensure that the outcome is acceptable, appropriate and achievable to both the service-user and staff member, and affordable within the resources available for the activity.

Stage 4: Maturity – due to your detailed knowledge and understanding of your project.

You will have worked through the stages of Conception, Birth and Growth – and reached this stage of Maturity to prepare a positive, powerful and persuasive response in the relevant grant or submission application.

Summary:

It is vital to start your planning by:

1. gathering evidence of service-user needs – **quality of research**;
2. designing one or more project plans, schedules and budgets - **quality of design**; and
3. finalising your evaluation method and tool – **quality of conformance**.

THEN look for suitable funding sources for each project plan –

THEN obtain the relevant submission guidelines and specifications –

THEN prepare and submit your submission/grant application.

Most common concerns about writing grant applications

The concerns people continue to share with me about this 'thankless task' have pretty well remained the same through the past forty years: it's the people who change, rather than the concerns.

The most commonly expressed concerns are listed below, grouped under broad headings – all of which are highly relevant today.

Your company's or organisation's responses to the likelihood of change –

Attracting additional resources – whether funds, sponsorship, value-in-kind, partnership relationships, etc - almost certainly involves change within your company or organisation:

1. How do you get access to vital information about your company or organisation should the person in control of that information refuses you access, is not available, or is unable to provide this information when you need it?
2. How do you find out that your organisation is prepared to introduce change?
3. How do you convince people of the benefits, profit, savings, new opportunities, etc., if additional resources become available to introduce specific change – and how do you gain their commitment to the possibility of change?

Applying to an internal source –

In large organisations, companies, departments, conglomerates – internal applications, submissions or proposals are commonplace:

1. What happens when the efficiency you are predicting in your application, submission or proposal is seen by managers, co-workers or colleagues as a threat to their territory or status?
2. How do you identify 'key players' or 'key stakeholders' within or external to your organisation, and obtain their support?

Finding a likely funding source/sponsor -

1. Where do you go to get funding?
2. Is it 'who' you know rather than 'what' you know?

Writing the application -

The application is often provided electronically, sometimes provided as a series of questions, and sometimes it's left to the grant writer to work out what to include:

1. How do you make sure that you use the appropriate jargon/language?
2. How do you match needs to criteria?
3. How do you write specific, appropriate and achievable aims, rather than just present broad generalisations?
4. What amount of detail should you include?
5. What is the art of a grant application structure?
6. What if you are writing from a small group within a larger company or organisation – rather than from the organisation-as-a-whole?
7. How do you use standardised forms – with minimum space or maximum characters allowed?

Reading the guidelines or brief from the funding source/sponsor -

1. How do you understand and interpret the guidelines?
2. How do you select the key points to address in your grant application?
3. What are the differences in writing grant applications to Government Departments, Local Councils or Shires, or Philanthropic Foundations or Trusts?
4. How do you know how much to ask for, or how to prepare a reasonable budget: is it better to ask for more than you need in case they give you less?

Developing your project plan -

Your application should include a detailed project plan – or at least a summary of same. This is a schedule of activity from the date of receiving the funds or support through to a successful conclusion of the funded activity:

1. How do you define the need, problem or opportunity – and express it clearly?
2. How do you conceptualise what the project will achieve?
3. How do you go about researching needs – how do you define 'need', and what if there's a variety of needs?
4. How do 'needs' link with 'innovation'?
5. How do you use surveys?
6. What about inflexible barriers or boundaries?
7. What's the best way to ensure a successful outcome?

After lodging the grant application -

1. How can you track the progress of your application after it has been lodged or uploaded?
2. How can you find out why you were unsuccessful?
3. What do you do after you hear that you've been successful?

Managing your time in preparing your grant application -

1. How can I do all of this preparation, write the application and lodge it before the due date – as well as do all the other things I'm required to do each day in my job?
2. What about the closing date – is it flexible?
3. Is it better to lodge an incomplete or inadequate response rather than miss the due date?

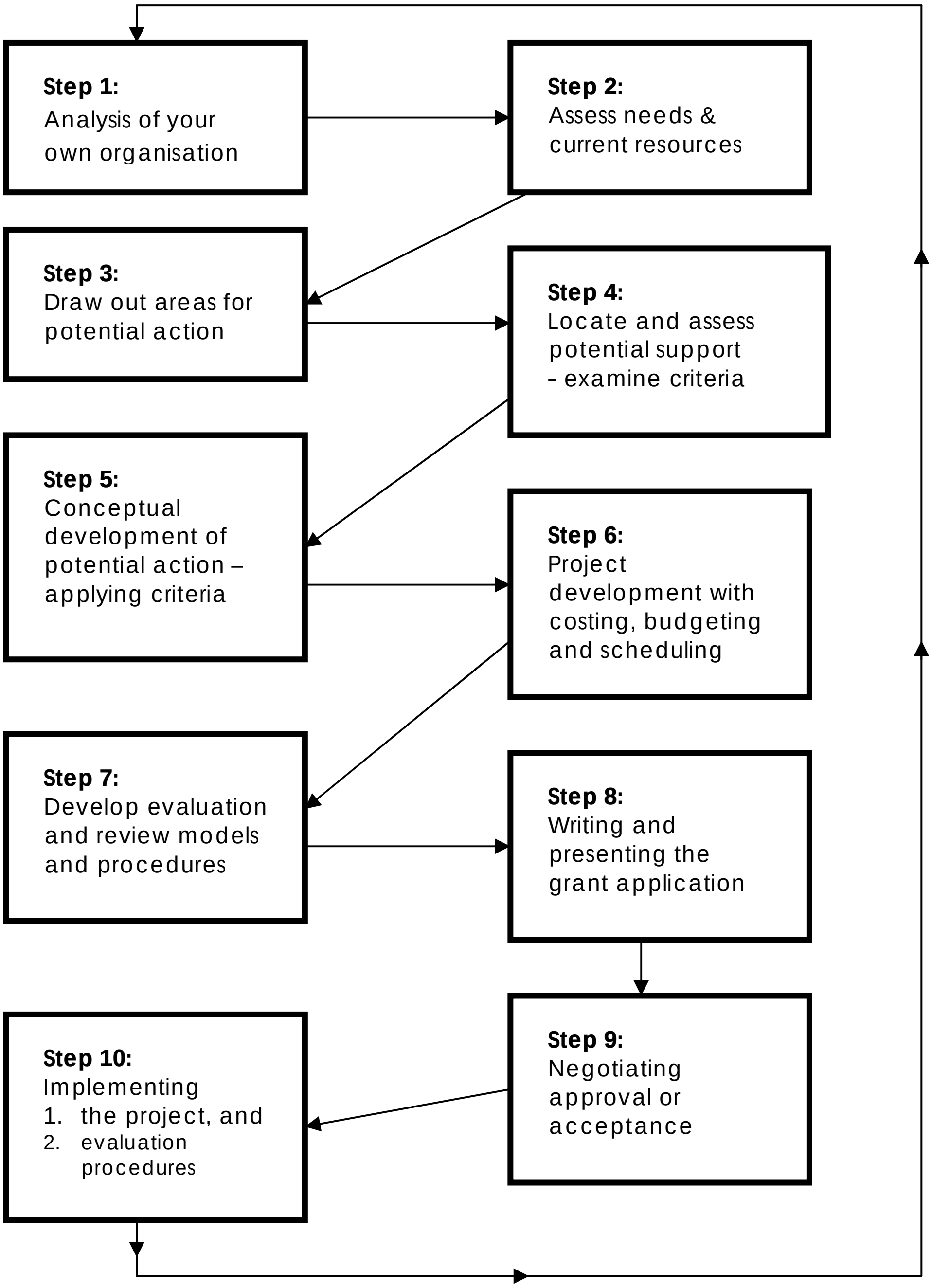
Discussion Worksheet No. 1

Please write your questions or comments on the following topics.

Topics	Your questions or comments
Common Issues – page 5	
Reviewing successful or unsuccessful grant applications – page 6	
The four stages in the Life-cycle of a Grant Application – page 6	
Most common concerns about writing grant applications, submissions, proposals – page 9	

The 10-step model of successful grant application writing

Source – *Successful Submission Writing for Business and Nonprofits*, 3rd Edition (Jean Roberts 2009)



Discussion Worksheet No. 2

Please write your questions or comments against any of these ten steps

Steps	Your questions or comments
1. Analysing and understanding your own organization or company	
2. Identifying and assessing the needs of your target group, and resources already on hand	
3. Deciding on the specific need that will be the focus of your grant application	
4. Understanding the criteria or guidelines that your application has to satisfy	
5. applying the criteria or guidelines to your specific need	
6. developing the detail of your project, with costing, budgeting and scheduling	
7. deciding on your evaluation and review model and procedure	
8. writing your grant application	
9. negotiating approval or acceptance of your application	
10. implementing the project and evaluation procedures	

Two planning structures to guide your preparation

It is necessary to have a basic planning structure to guide the design and development of any project – whether or not a grant application is relevant.

A planning structure will enable you to separate out the major components of your project, so that you can work on each component initially as a separate task and then as a coordinated plan.

1. <u>CIPPPOO – the seven components are introduced in order:</u>

a) **<u>C</u>**ontext
b) **<u>I</u>**nputs
c) **<u>P</u>**eople
d) **<u>P</u>**rocess
e) **<u>P</u>**roducts or services
f) **<u>O</u>**utputs, and
g) **<u>O</u>**utcomes.

An introduction to each component will surely convince you of its value:

Context

This is the state of your organisation or operational unit within an organisation at a particular time, for example as documented in the latest Annual Report of your organisation, including:

a) organisational purpose, philosophy and structure
b) operational effectiveness
c) financial base and viability
d) immediate and planned use and application of available resources
e) planning and evaluation tools and techniques
f) information and knowledge management.

The context describes the parameters within which you will design the program, eg:

a) the current strategic priorities of your organisation
b) a profile of current and targeted consumers
c) a profile of services currently offered
d) how people within your organisation relate to each other and to external linkages
e) major functions or activities through which your organisation is achieving its purpose
f) nature and extent of currently available resources and how these are being used
g) plans for the organisation's progress through the following year

Inputs

Additional resources that will be available or introduced as a result of your grant application being successful into the identified context in order to commence the project plan.

People

Those who are, or will be, involved with or affected by the processes of project planning, implementation and evaluation.

Process

The manner in which things are done - how decisions are made, resources allocated, authority delegated, etc.

Processes display and reflect the values and philosophy of an organisation, and the degree of openness within the organisation's culture.

Products

Elements from which activities can be developed and offered. They can be compared to a smorgasbord, in that a number of elements can be selected to create an activity designed to achieve a measurable outcome. Examples of elements are expertness, experience, consultation or counselling material and methods, treatment models, facilities, equipment, quality procedures, staff time and knowledge, volunteer effort, intellectual property.

Outputs

Activities, programs, services, publications, counselling and treatment sessions, etc, which are offered to individuals or groups – these are what the organisation and/or project does.

Outcomes

The purpose of an Output – the benefit or ongoing impact of outputs in the life or lifestyle of service-users, target group, or community.

2. <u>PQCT – with four components</u>

Purpose and philosophy of your organisation: key word is **<u>appropriateness</u>**

a) the program or project must be appropriate (ie acceptable and achievable) to your organisation's purpose and philosophy

b) the project plan should be compatible with your organisation's strategic direction and current year's business plan, and with your organisation's current initiatives and commitments – and ongoing obligations.

Quality: key word is **<u>specifications</u>**

a) your organisation should have a documented quality assurance program in place that is suitable and acceptable to any external funding source

b) required or specific processes, standards, outputs and outcomes should be checked to be sure your project plan will fully satisfy such requirements or specifications: these are often found in the Quality or Service Standards or Accreditation requirements

c) include individual performance objectives, measures and indicators – and organisational key performance indicators, measures and targets – in your planning

d) design a suitable and affordable evaluation model and schedule that can used to monitor process, progress, outputs and outcomes – together with time and cost schedules.

Cost: key word is **<u>budget</u>**

a) cost each stage of the project as well as the total project

b) consider these major budget components and examples:

i.	staffing	- direct wages, salaries, fees
ii.	volunteer support	- costs to the organisation to ensure and support the volunteer effort and achievement required
iii.	on-costs	- percentage of staffing and related costs
iv.	materials	- items purchased for the project
v.	supplies	- items purchased generally, and used for the project
vi.	equipment	- purchase, lease or rental: depreciation and replacement
vii.	general/admin	- management and support, ie indirect costs
viii.	overheads	- organisational costs, eg power, premises, technology that apply whether or not your project is funded

Time: key word is **schedule**

a) assess the duration of each stage as well as the total project

b) anticipate time delays as realistically as possible

c) consider the likelihood, cause and implications of delays that may threaten the project's completion date, eg delays in progress, resources not being available when needed, financial miscalculations.

Discussion Worksheet No. 3

Please write your questions or comments against either of these two planning structures

Planning Structures	Your questions or comments
CIPPPOO – page 14 • **Context** • **Inputs** • **People** • **Process** • **Product** • **Output** • **Outcome**	
PQCT – PAGE 15 • **Purpose and Philosophy** • **Quality** • **Cost** • **Time**	

What is a grant application?

A very simple definition: It is a request for funds, sponsorship or permission to introduce a change into the life of your organisation, or into the life or lifestyle of a specific group of people – who may be within or external to the organisation. It is – and has always been – a competitive process:

- applications are received for more funds than are available,
- many applications are badly written or worded, inadequately explained, do not address the eligibility or assessment criteria, or are incomplete.

The process of preparing a grant application includes the development of a project from the birth of the idea or the notion of change (refer Life-cycle of a Grant Application, pages 6-7). The project is built on the determination that a need, problem or opportunity exists and should be addressed or redressed for the benefit of those most closely affected – and for the benefit of your own organisation.

Preparing and presenting grant applications is a core business activity, and deserves appropriate internal structures, processes and procedures to ensure consistency in style and format – and close monitoring of return on the investment of effort.

Most importantly, aim to increase your strike or success rate. If you are winning 40% of your grant applications, you are missing 60% of your efforts – and the cost of winning 40% of your effort is the cost of preparing and writing 100% of your effort – not to mention opportunity costs (ie how you could have better used your time, effort and initiative).

<u>Three basic requirements of a submission/grant application:</u>

In very simple terms, a grant application must cover these three points:

1. the nature and scope of a problem – why this?
2. what is currently being done about it – why now?

   and
3. what you would like to do about it – why us?

<u>Three basic requirements of a submission/grant application writer:</u>

1. knowing your own organisation,
2. understanding the problem area you are attempting to change, and
3. exploring the total implications and effects of your proposal.

Proven facts that will improve your strike/success-rate

1. Always treat your application as a marketing document as well as a soliciting or bidding document, offer or request.

2. Spend sufficient time in preparation to ensure a positive, powerful and persuasive response to the guidelines, eligibility and assessment criteria, terms and conditions.

3. Include accurate and validated detail on cost, quality, delivery and timeliness to convince the funding source of your organisation's credibility, capability (competencies), capacity (resources), and commitment to a consistent and superior quality of program or service

4. Provide sufficient validated detail to convince on your capacity, capability and reliability

5. Capability (intangibles such as competencies, skills, experience), eg:
   a) able to meet the guidelines, assessment criteria and specifications
   b) appreciation of operational implications
   c) demonstrated technical ability
   d) commitment to innovation
   e) knowledge and understanding of legislative, statutory and contractual duties and obligations
   f) knowledge of service-user or target group needs and expectations
   g) Board-endorsed strategic, policy and financial framework

h) previous relevant experience and performance
i) ensuring a consistent quality of program/service design and delivery
j) responsive to service-user or target group needs and expectations
k) skills, qualifications and experience of management and staff

6. Capacity (tangibles), eg;
    a) equipment,
    b) resources
    c) accreditation
    d) financial stability
    e) material management
    f) organisational structure
    g) plant and equipment
    h) resource management
    i) systems and methods
    j) technology

Checklist to guide an internal review of your grant application procedures

If you are winning 40% of your grant applications, you are doing so at the cost of preparing 100% of your grant applications.

This Checklist will guide you through your internal procedures, starting with your organisation's attitude and behaviour towards these core business functions:

1. The aim of preparing and submitting grant applications is to be and remain service-provider and employer of choice
2. Identify your point of difference which is not just what your organizations does, but also the individual benefit of what you do in the life or lifestyle of service-users, and acknowledged social impact of your total organisation's existence, achievements and effort
3. Identify your Board-endorsed strategic priorities – to ensure your organisation's viability, sustainability and credibility
4. Ensure that the preparation of grant applications is accepted and treated as a core business function to achieve measurable outcomes and social impact, viz:
    a) increase your grant income,
    b) decrease the real cost to your organization of preparing and submitting grant applications, and
    c) increase your organisation's capacity, capability and community contribution through grant income

    Appointment of a grant application writing team to commence process of preparation

    Project development:

    a) plan for compliance with relevant guidelines, eligibility and assessment criteria, terms and conditions,
    b) finalize your project by:
        i. assessment of service-user or target group needs, interests or aspirations,
        ii. design of a program or service to address or achieve identified needs, interests or aspirations, and
        iii. ensuring your organisation's commitment and ability to ensure a consistent quality of service or program delivery and conformance,
    c) finalize your costing, budgeting and schedule details, including an 'added value' over and above the expectation or requirement of the funding source,
    d) carefully negotiate agreements with any collaborative or partnership relations essential or related to your grant application,

e) assess the relationship of your proposed project with your organization's existing and ongoing obligations, and

f) finalize the internal approval procedure.

14. Prepare and package the grant application, following your organization's endorsed 'corporate style'

15. Lodge, submit or upload your grant application in compliance with the stated requirements of the funding source

16. Responsibly negotiate the terms and conditions of the offered grant

17. **Sign the agreement or approval to proceed**

18. Commence procedures to 'deliver' the agreed project

19. Commence your Project Management procedures to ensure:

- that what you are delivering is what you have agreed or contracted to deliver,
- that your organisation's integrity and reputation are enhanced throughout the grant period, and
- that your relationship with the funding source and your service-user or target group is, and remains, positive

13. Schedule for receipt of grant funds

14. Completion has three possibilities:

- According to plan – which positions your organisation for further grant income opportunities,
- With variations – back on track through renegotiation with the funding source, with possible further grant income opportunities, or
- Failure for whatever reason, allocation of fault or penalty – with possible black-listing with the funding source, therefore requiring urgent relationship re-building.

Each of these three 'completion possibilities' indicates a next step:

1. if a funded project goes through to completion according to plan, you need to know and understand why it did, and do everything in your power to incorporate these success factors into your internal procedures,
2. if a funded project goes through to completion with variations, you need to check your initial procedures to see if these variations were the result of incorrect or inadequate calculations, procedures - or a lapse in individual or team performance or availability,
3. if a funded program fails to go through to completion, you have a lot of work to do: start by checking the faults, discrepancies or failures, and link each back to any likely internal causal or contributing factors:
   a) where you have control over the internal factors, you have the potential to remedy them,
   b) where you only have influence over the internal factors, you have potential to exert your influence - which may or may not be sufficient to introduce changes,
   c) where you have neither control of influence over internal factors, you have potential to display your entrepreneurial flair by focusing on the first step in this Checklist – and attempt to address the organisation's inappropriate attitude or behaviour toward grant applications.

Discussion Worksheet No. 4

Please write your questions or comments against these topics

Topics	Your questions or comments
What is a Grant Application – page 17	
Proven facts that will improve your strike/success rate – page 17	
Checklist to guide an internal review of your grant application procedures – page 18	

What to look for in the guidelines when considering a grant application.

Reading the guidelines requires and deserves intense concentration. Therefore, allow adequate time for this early step in deciding whether to apply.

The 'guidelines' can be one document or set of documents, prepared by the funding source to detail the specifications against which an application will be assessed. Or, it can be a number of separate booklets or documents available when you register your interest in applying. Reading the guidelines is rarely light work!

Difficulties in reading grant guidelines

In many cases, different sections of the guidelines have been prepared by different persons within the funding source, or culled from earlier guidelines prepared for completely different funding programs. Worse still, the guidelines document has not been sufficiently scanned, checked or edited before release.

Difficulties can include:

1. inconsistent details through the guidelines, eg closing date, budget limits, background to the funding program, terms, references, incorrect page numbers given in the contents page – if there is a contents page!
2. no contact person within the funding source for enquiries – or perhaps name but no contact details,
3. different terms or titles in different sections,
4. the assumption that only those who have applied previously will be interested to apply for this round of funding
5. sections in the guidelines headed ***Eligibility Criteria, Selection Criteria*** and ***Assessment procedure*** can be very specific – yet when you turn over a few more pages to another section, you can find statements which obviously should have been included under these headings.

These – and other – difficulties result in potential applicants being tempted to rely on guesswork or their own experience rather than making formal enquiries of the funding source.

What to look for when first reading any guidelines:

1. legal and organizational status of the funding source, and profile of their funding program that will provide the funds,
2. aim or purpose, strategic priorities of the funding program, including desired outcomes and social, economic, cultural, geographic (etc) impact of the funded program or service
3. eligibility to apply, eg target group/service users, geographic area, evidence of financial viability and community profile
4. assessment or selection criteria and procedure
5. timeframe, eg will you have sufficient time to prepare a thorough application before the deadline/due date?
6. Maximum grant amount
7. value statement, explaining the funding source's philosophy, values and current funding priorities
8. evidence of capacity and capability,

9. legislative or statutory requirements to be met and maintained throughout the funding period – including performance, quality or service standards, acknowledgement of the funding source in all promotional material,

10. mandatory requirements – eligibility and assessment will depend upon acceptance of these

11. grant terms and conditions, including payment schedule and acquittal requirements

12. project management details, including reporting requirements, throughout the funding period

13. requirements to ensure that your application complies with eligibility and assessment criteria

14. deadline and procedure for lodging the application

15. commencement date and procedure for implementation through the funding period.

When reading through the guidelines, highlight similar details as you read – particularly information, instruction or references to such categories as:

a) timeline details – due date, funding period, reporting requirements, etc

b) document instructions – guidelines, additional information, how to complete the application form, etc

c) project details – aim, objectives, needs to be addressed, funding limitations or constraints, budget, outcomes to be achieved, budget, roll-out schedule, etc

d) eligibility, selection and assessment criteria

Read the guidelines several times – concentrating on only one category of information or instruction with each reading: use different coloured highlights for each category of information or instruction. Note that some information or instruction may be relevant to more than one category of information or instruction.

The table overleaf is an example of how you can extract mandatory and useful information from any set of guidelines, and identify questions to raise with the funding source.

Careful checking of grant application guidelines

Timeline details

- other info available
- procedure for enquiries
- due date
- assessment period
- notification

Check:

- other commitments of our key people
- can we do it well, professionally?
- must we do it?
- are there any additional resources we need and at what stage?

any questions for the funding source?

Document instructions

- proforma or free-form
- guidelines
- instructions
- sequence of information
- mandatory content
- selective content
- limitations/constraints

Check:

- core material
- tailored material
- specific material
- admin support

any questions for the funding source?

Project details

- needs to be addressed
- options to be explored
- problems to be remedied
- action or activity to be undertaken
- project plan

Check:

- is it our core business
- is it our non-core business
- do we apply alone or with others?
- who else might apply?
- who are our experts?
- nature and extent of risk of we proceed

any questions for the funding source?

Eligibility, Selection and Assessment criteria

- standards
- value for money
- our experience and expertise
- our qualifications
- our track record

Check:

- our suitability
- our capability and capacity
- are we able, willing and motivated to do it?
- will it compromise current projects or commitments?
- nature and scope of risk if we proceed or don't proceed

any questions for the funding source?

Two important stages in your preparation:

1. it is almost certain that the number of applications received by the funding source will be shortlisted according to the eligibility and assessment criteria as detailed in the guidelines:
   - this is a process of selection.

2. it follows that selected applications will then be considered for approval:
   - this is a process of elimination.

For example:

1. say that 100 applications are received within the deadline,
2. of these 100, 70 are considered to be 'conforming' applications, which means each application meets all requirements and instructions as set out in the guidelines,
3. from the 70 conforming applications, 50 are found to be worthy of consideration for funding,
4. funds available for distribution are $1m,
5. the total amount sought by the 50 conforming applications totals $2m,
6. the assessment criteria and procedure kicks in to approve the best return on investment for the funding source of the $1m – which may mean that 35 applications are fully funded, 7 are part-funded, and 8 are invited to apply in the next funding round following suggested improvements to the information provided in their application.

Discussion Worksheet No. 5

Please write your questions or comments against these topics

Topics	Your questions or comments
What to look for when considering a grant application – page 21	
Careful checking of grant application guidelines – page 23	
Two important stages in your preparation – page 24	

Formal organisational procedure for preparation of grant applications

Not-for-profit organisations are frequently preparing grant applications for funds, sponsorship, provision of services or tangible support.

In such organisations, preparation and lodging of grant applications should be treated as a core business activity and function. This means that the activity, function and relevant competencies are fully acknowledged in the annual budget and position descriptions/appraisal procedures of relevant staff members.

Preparation of such documents is divided into two separate stages:

Firstly, the Grant Project

The action or purpose for which funds or other forms of support are requested

Secondly, the Grant Application

Explaining:

1. project aim, objectives, timeline, monitoring points, etc.
2. how the project is going to be managed and staffed
3. how much it is going to cost
4. the period of time it will run for
5. benefits and outcomes for service-users or target group
6. how these benefits, outcomes and impact are going to be at best measured or at least recognised
7. what happens at the end of the funding period

Applications are prepared either by responding to a known, advertised or regular funding source, or through the initiative of a person or group within your organisation.

The Board needs to be, and be seen to be, the ‘owner’ of all grant applications forwarded in the name of the organisation, which means that the Board:

1. knows and understands each application submitted to external funding bodies in the name of the organisation,
2. is committed to each application, with a formal motion to this effect appropriately recorded in the Board minutes,
3. is satisfied that each application is in line with your organisation’s philosophy, purpose, strategic and policy framework and financial priorities,
4. has formally accepted each application in detail, including consideration of the ramifications of implementation on current and ongoing obligations and responsibilities,
5. is willing to give any additional time .. and perhaps allocate extra resources .. to ensure a successful implementation of each application’s project,
6. is willing to consider any necessary changes if the success of a project comes under challenge, eg if funds are suddenly withdrawn or additional resources are needed to maintain its success,
7. is assured that all staff affected by each application have been advised of preparation, which should avoid any later misunderstanding or misinterpretation, and
8. is aware of any possible negative effects of each application on existing commitments or obligations.

The procedure for grant applications therefore needs to make sure that the role and responsibilities of the Board regarding the financial viability of the organisation are able to be fulfilled.

And with all frequent or repetitive functions, there should be Committee- or Board-endorsed policies, procedures, protocols and proformas to guide this activity and function.

Group Activity – Drafting a grant application preparation procedure

The purpose of this group activity is to assist a Board to draft a new, or review an existing, procedure which can then be presented for formal Board endorsement.

Board members and key staff members should be present for this activity.

Step 1 The group begins by identifying all funds received as a result of grant applications within the previous two years. Such funds may be providing:

a) individual projects and on- or off-site programs or services for service-users
b) new or refurbished buildings or facilities
c) equipment
d) materials
e) vehicles
f) full or part salaries
g) office equipment
h) publications
i) community or industry support
j) training programs for Board or Staff members and volunteers
k) meeting, seminar or conference activities

A complete list should be made under the following headings - add more lines if needed:

Title of each grant received through the past two years	Source of funds	Funds sought	Funds received	Was the project successfully completed?
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				

If possible, this list should be prepared by the senior staff or the finance sub-committee prior to the group activity.

Step 2 Discussion by the full group follows along these lines:

a) what percentage of our grant applications have been funded? This gives us our strike/success rate.
b) What percentage of our income or revenue is the result of grant applications? This will show how important grant income is to your finances.
c) is each Board member familiar with the practice and process of preparing grant applications?
d) does the Board have any policies or procedures at present regarding the preparation and presentation of grant applications?
e) does the Board have a finance sub-committee, and if so, are members involved in the preparation or presentation of grant applications – eg do they advise or approve the amount requested?

f) Who among the staff are involved in preparation or presentation of grant applications?

g) are these staff members concerned about the workload involved in preparing grant applications?

h) are there any suggestions as to how policies, procedures and proformas associated with the task of preparing or presenting grant applications can be improved to increase the efficiency of the task and improve our strike/success rate?

i) do Board members have any comments on the amount of information they are receiving about the preparation and presentation of grant applications?

Step 3 Other questions will flow from the discussion points in Step 2.

A record is to be made here of all helpful or clarifying comments, questions, particular ideas and suggestions, together with issues which signify stress, discontent or conflict in relation to the preparation or presentation of grant applications.

These should be noted on butchers' paper and taped to the wall for all to see.

Step 4 The group will work on a draft procedure.

The objective is to finish this activity with a procedure acceptable to the Board, CEO/Manager and staff, which can then be discussed and adopted at a formal Board meeting and immediately introduced.

Step 5 Finally, an action plan is developed to decide:

a) collation of all workshop notes in Steps 1 – 4 inclusive,

b) Collation of all discussion points from Steps 2 and 3, and the dates on which these will be further discussed by the Board or key staff,

c) how and when the agreed procedure will be presented to a formal Board meeting for approval, and who by, and

d) the practical changes that need to be introduced to any existing procedures to bring them into line with the newly approved procedure.

Note - when designing any procedure, it is necessary to agree on:

- who supervises the total procedure,
- who is responsible for each separate action,
- exactly what each person is responsible for,
- how each action is to be carried out,
- by when each action should be completed,
- what costs are involved with each action, and
- who reports to the Board on progress, and how often.

New Project or Activity proposal proforma

One suggestion is that the Board receives this completed form for approval – prior to any staff time being allocated to prepare a grant application.

The major benefit of this proforma is that any person or group within an organisation is able to present an idea for improvement or expansion, and can call on others within or external to the organisation to join in preparing the proposal. This will facilitate an early response to a detailed proposal – thus improving and enhancing an organisation's planning and resource management processes. It will also give Board approval to allocate staff time to preparation of a grant application.

Each proposal to introduce a new or amended program, service, function or activity begins as a request for approval in accordance with the organisation's endorsed policy and procedure.

The following proforma can be adapted, giving sufficient space for each item. The headings and degree of detail can be changed as appropriate.

Program Title: ____ Date: __________

Submitted to: ________________________________ No. of pages: ___________

Submitted by: ____

Copies to: ___________________________________

Subject/Theme: ____

Action requested: ( ) for information ( ) for approval ____________________________

1. Background

a) nature and extent of the need, problem or opportunity to be addressed

b) process undertaken in preparing this proposal

c) scope of the proposal

d) any similar projects known about - if so, where, who by, who for and with what benefits and outcomes

2. Specific information

a) evidence of 1a above

b) details of needs, interests or aspirations of key stakeholders, including primary beneficiaries

c) relationship of 1a to the organisation’s current strategic direction and priorities

d) details (including fact and opinion) leading to options

3. Options considered

a) indicate the extent to which each option has been considered and the implications of each option

b) present a cost estimates for each option, explaining the source of funds to meet the total cost

4. Preferred option

a) present the preferred option, with reasons and (again) reference to the strategic direction and priorities

b) present a time-schedule outlining how the proposed project would be implemented and evaluated, how the proposed project fits with existing or planned commitments, and anticipated action at completion of the project

c) indicate whether and why this proposed project is considered urgent or important

5. Specific recommendations

a) action plan, listing individual activities
b) allocation of responsibilities
c) budget - showing estimated costs, income or savings (if any), and source of revenue to be allocated
d) time schedule, showing starting and completion dates
e) monitoring points through the time schedule to check progress
f) what happens at the conclusion of the project/program or at the end of the current financial year

Action details:

- by whom
- by when
- at what cost

6. Summary

Summary statement of the proposal

Signed..

Position..

Discussion Worksheet No. 6

Please write your questions or comments against these topics

Topics	Your questions or comments
Formal organisational procedure for preparation of grant applications – page 26	
Group activity – drafting a grant application preparation procedure – page 27	
New Project or Activity Proposal proforma – page 29	

Section four: GETTING THE PLANNING DONE

Simple Planning headings

WHAT	- activity, service, program, function
WHY	- outputs (what you wish to do)
	- outcomes (benefits or impact of what you wish to do)
HOW	- method, system, process, procedure of achieving or addressing
WHEN	- scheduled actions or tasks through the funding period
WHERE	- location of actions, tasks or facilities
WHO	- responsibilities (who does what)
WHO FOR/WITH	- service-users, stakeholders, collaborators, community
AT WHAT COST	- direct and indirect costs, overheads, variables = total cost
HOW MONITORED	- milestones to review progress against activity, time and cost targets

Drafting your organisation's credentials

UNIQUENESS	- what difference would it make to whom if your organisation ceased to exist – what would anyone miss?
POINT OF DIFFERENCE	- what makes your organisation different or better than any other service provider or grant applicant?
CREDIBILITY & VIABILITY	- why should the funding source invest their scarce resources in your organisation, and in your project?

Difference between a Project and Program

The terms 'project' and 'program' have different meanings in different contexts.

Some examples:

1. a 'program' refers to a funding body's available pool of funds with specifications for eligibility to apply, and a 'project' refers to a specific activity that is funded through the program

2. a 'project' refers to the process of research, development, trialling and refining, and 'program' refers to the roll-out of the resulting replicable model

3. a 'project' can consist of a number of 'programs'.

The terms 'project' and 'program' are sometimes used interchangeably. Practical and proven experience has shown that success of a 'program' or a 'project' depends upon detailed planning and preparation prior to implementation and evaluation.

A program or project

- a service, activity, function or product that can be specified, described, recognized, measured and justified: it is capable of being estimated, costed, budgeted, scheduled, implemented, monitored, evaluated and reviewed

- an action or activity designed to address or remedy an identified need, or capitalize on an identified opportunity, with a carefully designed and detailed project plan that provides a valid basis for estimating, costing, budgeting, scheduling, monitoring and evaluation

An activity

- a planned series of actions or events designed to achieve or address a measurable consumer outcome: a function to support a program component

Definition of a project in this Manual:

> *a project is a specific service, event or activity that can be specified, described, recognised, measured and justified: it is capable of being estimated, costed, budgeted, scheduled, implemented, monitored, evaluated and reviewed.*
>
> *A project can be a service, program, publication, event, new equipment, a process of review or research ... and many more.*

Discussion Worksheet No. 7

Please write your questions or comments against these topics

Topics	Your questions or comments
Simple planning headings – page 32	
Drafting your organisation's credentials – page 32	
Difference between Project and Program – page 32	

There are four distinct stages in project development

Stage 1 Needs Assessment	Stage 2 Project Development	Stage 3 Project Management	Stage 4 Organisational review
Identifying and assessing the nature and extent of need or opportunity – and available resources Page 34	Designing, costing, budgeting and scheduling a project to address or remedy Stage 1 Page 36	Implementation and evaluation of Stages 1 and 2 Page 47	Post-project review of Stages 1, 2 and 3, and impact on your organisation Page 48

Stage 1: Needs Assessment – identifying and assessing the nature and extent of need or opportunity – and available resources

Definitions:

Need - a state that requires relief; a requirement for survival, a deficit, a shortfall

Resource - source or possibility of usefulness or assistance; means of support; capacity, wherewithal, facilities, staffing, volunteers, technology, information, techniques

Matrix as a needs assessment tool – health care is the context for this example
- categories of need on the horizontal
- categories of service-user or target group on the vertical
- categories of service-user or target group could be determined by type of health care required (eg type of complaint or injury, nature of health risk)

Service-user or target group ↓	Information re health care service	Education about health care	Intervention to improve health	Treatment - out-patient	Acute care – in-patient	Post-acute care – rehab

Matrix as a resource assessment tool – health care is the context for this example
- best use or application of resources on the horizontal
- categories of resources on the vertical
- categories of 'resources' could be determined by type (eg technological, major equipment, publication, staffing, finance, expertise, research, social support)

Resources ↓	Information re health care service	Education about health care	Intervention to improve health	Treatment - out-patient	Acute care – in-patient	Post-acute care – rehab

Needs and resources are interwoven: needs are met by allocating resources, and resources are obtained and allocated to meet needs

Having recognised and identified certain needs, you now have to research, examine and validate the depth and extent of each need.

Strategies include:

1. brainstorming
2. formal and informal surveys
3. searching the literature
4. discussions with key stakeholders
5. gut feelings and intuition
6. examination of history, tradition and culture

Sources of information	
1. records 2. progress reports 3. tests 4. attendance rate 5. drop-out rate 6. attitude surveys 7. questionnaires 8. observation of participation 9. notes from discussion sessions or interviews	10. observations of meetings 11. anecdotes 12. meetings 13. field notes 14. brainstorming 15. peer feedback 16. self-appraisal 17. utilization of facilities 18. external communications

The focus of needs assessment is your service-user or target group

What is your service-user or target group able to achieve or improve now? **ie Current situation**	**What does your service-user or target group wish to achieve or improve in (say) 1, 2 or 3 years' time?** **ie Desired situation**	**What can your organisation provide or offer to assist the service-user or target group to move from their current – to their desired – situation?** **Ie Project aim and objectives**
<u>Notes – and potential actions – following needs assessment</u>		

Stage 2:	Project Development – designing, costing, budgeting and schedule activities to address or remedy the needs assessed in Stage 1

Project development checklist

This checklist has eight clear steps and is recommended when planning any new or extended project.

Step 1: **Assessment of needs and currently available resources** (as Stage 1, page 34)

Step 2: **Stakeholder Analysis** - identify individuals and groups who have an interest or stake in the process or outcome of the project

a) a **'stake'** means that the individual or group has potential to gain or lose through this project: an **'interest'**, means that the individual or group is an interested observer – and will not gain or lose through this project

b) some may be able to contribute tangible or intangible resources

c) on the other hand, some may be antagonists, particularly if they are not consulted during the development stages- therefore, try to involve them as early as possible

d) always remember that your organisation and the proposed service-user/s are the primary stakeholders

Step 3: **Draft the Project aim, major stages and tasks within each major stage** (sample below)

a) **the aim** is an indication of the benefits or outcome/s to be achieved, and the process of achieving the aim

b) **major stages** are major units of work or effort necessary to achieve the aim, listed in chronological order

c) **break the major stages down into a series of tasks** that can be individually planned, costed and scheduled: the best way to do this is to ask 'what, why, how, who by, who for, when, where, at what cost and how monitored' to achieve each major stage

d) this information will be the basis for detailing the **roles and responsibilities** of people to be involved in implementing or evaluating the program or project

e) this level of detail is essential in order to responsibly **estimate, schedule and validate calculations of expenses and revenue**

Aim:				
Major Stage 1	**Major Stage 2**	**Major Stage 3**	**Major Stage 4**	**Major Stage 5**
Tasks in Stage 1	**Tasks in Stage 2**	**Tasks in Stage 3**	**Tasks in Stage 4**	**Tasks in Stage 5**

Step 4: **Prepare a Project time-plan or schedule**

a) this is a grid to show the actual time allocated to each task (from commencement to completion of the project) and how all tasks relate to each other in terms of time. Shade in the relevant time period for each Major Stage: if desired, you can insert rows within each Major Stage to show the estimated time required for each task within each Major Stage

b) the table below caters for five major stages, and a 6-month period: you can extend the grid to the required number of stages and time-periods c)

	Month 1		Month 2		Month 3		Month 4		Month 5		Month 6	
Major Stage 1												
Major Stage 2												
Major Stage 3												
Major Stage 4												
Major Stage 5												

Step 5: Prepare a total Project budget

a) **the budget** is an estimate and should be as near as possible to being realistic and complete

b) it is possible that your actual figures won't be exactly as you predict, but without a budget you have nothing to compare as the Project proceeds

c) a similar table can be prepared for income where income is anticipated

Major Stages ⇒ Categories ⇓	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**Total $ for each category**
Salaries & on-costs						$
Fixed costs						$
Variable costs						$
Individual program/project costs						$
Other						$
Totals $ for each Major Stage	$	$	$	$	$	**$ total**

salaries **-** estimate your labour costs within each major stage, and include wages, back-filling, on-costs or items of staff support throughout the project

fixed costs – these are costs that exist regardless to the level of achievement

variable costs – these are costs that vary directly with the level of achievement

individual project costs - these costs are unique to the project

income or savings - on a separate table, show the anticipated income or savings under appropriate categories on the vertical against each stage or activity through the project life-time, with totals per category and per stage

Step 6: Design the program risk strategy (sample below)

a) review all of the working papers to date and identify likely risk, how you would recognize a pending risk, and how you would manage it if it did occur

b) then review your working papers to include risk avoidance and risk management strategies, which may well have their own costs and time allocation to add to your time-plan and budget c)

Category of risk	List likely risks, and level of control or influence that exists to avoid or manage each likely risk	Develop strategies to either avoid or manage likely risks – then cost, budget and schedule relevant activities
Strategic risk – likely to negatively affect or impact on the org'n		
Operational risk - issues likely to negatively affect tasks		
Financial risk - issues likely to negatively affect financial performance or viability		

Risk aversion – avoiding a decision on the basis of the likelihood of risk

Risk avoidance – successfully anticipating and therefore avoiding an identified risk

Risk management – successfully managing an identified risk with the least possible loss to the stakeholders

Step 7: Design an appropriate evaluation model

a) review all of the working papers to date and adopt an appropriate, acceptable and affordable evaluation model or tool

b) the main decision re evaluation is whether to introduce evaluation tools and procedure (i) from commencement, (ii) at regular intervals, eg quarterly, or (iii) on completion of the project

c) if your organisation has a standard or required evaluation model, it will be necessary to comply with this model

d) when decided, integrate your evaluation model with your project plan, time-schedule and budget (as costs may be involved) to ensure achievement of the project aim

Link between needs assessment and evaluation

Evaluation can:
a) provide feedback and guidance during the course of a program (formative)
b) provide information on which to decide the program's effectiveness in achieving original objectives, and the worth of the program's maintenance (summative)

Evaluation should:
a) be of use to identified audiences for program improvement
b) be feasible in terms of investment, eg finance, human and material resources
c) respect the rights and privacy of those involved
d) be technically adequate, eg statistics, validity and reliability
e) be in accord with good policy, eg acting with sufficient prudence and discretion

What is to be evaluated:
a) nature and extent of progress made
b) strengths and weaknesses
c) initial intentions
d) suitability, eg of definitions, needs assessment, resources, methods, objectives, pace, sequence
e) content
f) previous decisions, eg about resources, methods, objectives, schedule, budget

Step 8: design an appropriate reporting procedure and proforma

a) one option is output-based reporting (ie what the project has achieved) with focus on the nature and degree of planned activities or tasks, together with the benefit and impact of such outputs

b) the purpose of reporting is to ensure the regular flow of pre-determined information in a clear, concise and readable form. Project reports can be presented:

   i. for information only,
   ii. for approval or action,
   iii. to justify a recent action or expense, or
   iv. to present recommendations, suggestions or opinions, which should be supported by evidence, logic and facts.

A reporting policy and procedure must ensure:

a) that information is treated responsibly and with respect throughout the organisation,
b) that requests for information are followed through with diligence,
c) that the reporting function, ie provision of information, is able to be performed with minimum cost and within required timelines, and
d) that provision and distribution of information is a recognised and respected task within the organisation and given a high priority.

Worksheets are offered as a basis for discussion :

Page 40 -	Step 2:	Stakeholder Analysis
Page 41 -	Step 3:	Draft the Project aim, major stages and activities and tasks within each major stage
Page 43 -	Step 4:	Prepare a Project time-plan or schedule
Page 44 -	Step 5:	Prepare a total Project budget
Pages 45/46 -	Step 6:	Design the program risk strategy (sample below)

Step 2 Worksheet: Stakeholder Analysis – see notes on page 36

Individuals and groups involved with or affected by the grant application project:

1	2	3
4	5	6
7	8	9
10	11	12
13	14	15

Star ❋ all stakeholders who should be involved in the grant application preparation stage, and then plan ✐ each involvement to 'add value' to our grant application before contacting ☏ the appropriate person to discuss ✍your plan.

Note that this last stage may involve a signed heads of agreement or protocol agreement for inclusion in your grant application document – particularly if your grant application involves a partnership or auspice agreement or arrangement.

Step 3 Worksheets (pages 41 & 42): Draft the Project aim, major stages and tasks within each major stage – see notes on page 36

Aim of the Project - *Expressed in terms of outputs (tangible results) and outcomes (benefits in the life or lifestyle of the target group)*

Draft the Aim of a 6-month Project to introduce new equipment:

Draft the Aim of a 6-month Project culminating in a major Community event:

Major stages of the Project – in sequential order

1	2	3	4	5
Example - Equipment				
On receipt of money: a) Purchase or lease equipment b) Finalize program c) Finalize initial participants	Arrange delivery, installation, and all things necessary to prepare for use or access Arrange insurance, permits or licences as appropriate	Arrange promotion Accept registrations or estimate level of interest	Implement the project	Evaluation of: a) Anticipated outputs b) Unanticipated outputs c) Anticipated outcomes d) Unanticipated outcomes
Example - Event				
On receipt of money, make final preparations, etc: a) Public announcements b) Recruitment/training of staff or volunteers c) Complete necessary bookings (venue, transport, equipment, hire, etc) d) Purchase goods and services necessary for preparation or implementation, including insurances	Make public announcement Recruit and/or train participants Prepare venue	Rehearsals? Practice? Briefings?	event	Evaluation of: a) Anticipated outputs b) Unanticipated outputs c) Anticipated outcomes d) Unanticipated outcomes

Detail the tasks or activities in each major stage on page 40 for either the Equipment or Event Project – see notes on page 35

	Major Stage 1	Major Stage 2	Major Stage 3	Major Stage 4	Major Stage 5
What					
Why					
How					
When					
Where					
Who by					
Who for					
At what Cost					
Any planned income?					

Step 4 Worksheet: Prepare a Project time-plan or schedule – see notes pages 36/7

Schedule the tasks or activities identified in the grid on pages 41/42 through either the Equipment of Event Project – each of 6-month duration.

Notes:

1. Assume that project funds have been received prior to commencement,
2. The Major Stages are listed on page 41,
3. take account of the Christmas/New Year period in the midst of this project, when key people may not be available,
4. 'Milestones' are points at which all previous tasks or activities must be satisfactorily completed before the next task or activity can take place, and
5. 'Meetings' may be necessary to coordinate activities – see Stage 4 Project Management on page 47.

	Month 1 October	Month 2 November	Month 3 December	Month 4 January	Month 5 February	Month 6 March
Milestones						
Meetings						
Reports						
Stage 1						
Stage 2						
Stage 3						
Stage 4						
Stage 5						

Step 5 Worksheet: **Prepare a total Project budget**

See notes on page 37

Major stages ⇒ Major Cost Categories ⇓	1	2	3	4	5	Total $ for each cost category
Total expenditure for each Major Stage						Total Project Expenditure here
Major categories of income ↓	1	2	3	4	5	Total $ for each income category
Totals income for each Major Stage						Total Project Income here

<u>Step 6 Worksheets (pages 45 and 46): Design the program risk strategy – see notes on pages 37/38</u>

Risk analysis - in relation to the <u>Equipment</u> project

What could possible happen that would threaten the satisfactory completion of the project?	How would we recognize the possibility of it happening?	What would we do if this risk did happen?	What should we do to avoid this risk happening?
Target group doesn't understand how to use the equipment			
Equipment breaks down after a short time, and costly repairs are needed			
Equipment is stolen or vandalized			
Target group loses interest in the total project			
Target group numbers grow, and the initial equipment in inadequate or inappropriate			

Risk analysis - in relation to the Event project

What could possible happen that would threaten the satisfactory completion of the project?	How would we recognize the possibility of it happening?	What would we do if this risk did happen?	What should we do to avoid this risk happening?
After some weeks or preparation, we learn that the chosen date clashes with another Community event			
Key supporters cannot continue their involvement			
Lack of appropriate and adequate insurance cover			
Target group loses interest in the total project			
Community begins to question the target group's abilities			

Stage 3: Project Management – implementation and evaluation of Stages 1 and 2

The following checklist is a useful guide as your organisation enters the implementation stage and moves through the life of the project:

1. Project Manager

Ensure that one person is appointed as Project Manager, responsible for the supervision and monitoring of the entire project. A number of people may be responsible for individual stages or components of the project, but one person needs to oversee the total project.

2. 'Live' documents

The Project Manager should note that the following documents are 'live' documents through the life of the project:

a) the Grant guidelines,

b) your grant application, and

c) the contract or agreement signed as a basis for receipt of funds and commencement of the project – and any partnership or auspice agreements or arrangements.

3. Working documents

All of your planning documents and calculations become working documents for the Project Manager, for example:

a) **the total project plan**, including major stages, activities, tasks and details such as milestones, monitoring points, service or service-user outputs and quality or service standards,

b) **the total project budget**, including all cost and income projections,

c) **the total project time-schedule**, showing anticipated progress on a monthly basis, and

d) **reporting requirements** to the funding source.

6. **Internal acceptance and performance** refers to the environment within your organisation as the project is being implemented. This includes the attitude and behaviour of people who may have little or nothing to do with your project.

Keep your people informed of progress and enable them to feel some degree of ownership and responsibility, as this project is part of your total organisation.

7. **External acceptance and performance** refers to the processes and procedures associated with the project and with the Stakeholders identified in your planning stage.

Careful monitoring is required to ensure that what you are expecting to happen is actually happening. If not, then you have re-working to do, which can be costly and could threaten your carefully won credibility and reputation.

8. Recognise new opportunities resulting from this initiative

Be constantly on the lookout to see how this project can lead to new or different opportunities.

9. Avoid mistakes and conflict

As the project gets under way, it is possible to intentionally vary, or accidentally stray from, the original purpose or focus of the project. Examples are to introduce items, activities or procedures that are different in quality or content from those specified, or to slacken off on the monitoring of cost, quality, delivery, scheduled milestones or service or service-user outputs and outcomes.

10. Don't compromise this project due to over-commitment by your organisation

It doesn't matter how well or not so well everything else is going within your organisation, this project should not be compromised in any way. Always present yourself, your project and your organisation as being in control and feeling confident about progress. And, of course, make sure that everything **is** under control and that you **are** making progress.

Stage 4: Post-project review of Stages 1, 2 and 3, and impact on your organisation

On completion of the project, the Project Manager should examine and review all key perspectives to see:

1. the nature and effect of both anticipated and unanticipated activities, events or influences associated with the project:
   - these apply to both operational and financial aspects of the project,
2. whether the nature or effect is positive or painful; temporary or permanent,
3. the most obvious effects of identified change (either positive or painful), and who or what was responsible, and
4. how you can celebrate or capitalise on positive changes, and address or remedy not-so-positive changes.

While you have been busy working on the project, there will almost certainly be other people and organisations watching your progress. Some may have been doing this with a view to submitting an application at the next round of grant funding: others may be interested to work with you, and some may just want to observe and learn from your experience, efforts and achievements.

One thing is certain. Before you complete the project, your organisation will be deciding whether to submit for the next round or to other funding sources, and whether there should be any changes in the way you go about applying.

You'll notice that there is very little mention in this checklist about the needs, interests and aspirations of service-users. It is assumed that these will have been well and faithfully represented in objectives, processes and procedures, and carefully monitored through the life of the project.

Discussion Worksheet No. 8

Please write your questions or comments against the Four Stages in Project Development

Topics	Your questions or comments
Four Stages in Project Development: **Stage 1 – Needs Assessment** **page 34**	
Stage 2 – Project Development **page 36**	
Stage 3 – Project Management **Page 47**	
Stage 4 – Post-Project review of Stages 1, 2 and 32, and impact on your organisation **Page 48**	

This is the stage at which you move from developing your project to drafting your grant application.

All discussions, notes and working documents gathered to date – particularly through Project Development Stages 1, 2 and 3 – will enable you to draft clear and concise responses to the questions or requests for information and details in the grant application form. This form is usually down-loaded from the Funding Source website – so print out a copy and use it to draft responses.

Examples of information needed to prepare responses to assessment criteria

Relevant information to take into account when responding to assessment criteria – these may not all be relevant to each grant application, so you will need to select those that are relevant.

Examples:

The suitability of the organisation to satisfactorily provide the service for the duration of the contract period

1. legal status and proof of same
2. board membership and professional/skill base of board members
3. organisational chart showing the position of the relevant department or unit that will be responsible for this project
4. explanation of current (and proposed) policies and procedures for the management and implementation of the proposed project
5. financial viability – latest annual report and audited financial statements – and evidence of financial management skills and methods
6. details of any relevant networks or partnerships, and evidence of the agreement underlying any formal partnership relationship or auspice arrangement
7. details of preparation needed to commence the project
8. current organisational strategic priorities
9. service-user or target group profile and catchment area
10. details of current activity (eg facilities, equipment, personnel, policies and procedures – including quality system) related to the grant guidelines, and how the standard of such activity will be either maintained, improved or appropriately amended through the funding period

The ability of the organisation to deliver the service/s within the funding requested, within the quoted timelines and according to quality specifications through the contract period

1. details of all costings per unit of service or activity through the funding period
2. assurance of continuing availability of key personnel
3. assurance of the continuing financial viability of the organisation
4. recruitment and development of relevant staff
5. assurance of the continuing effectiveness and efficiency of relevant facilities, equipment, procedures
6. details of project management – the person and position responsible to manage the funded project through to completion
7. assurance that this project will not be compromised by other projects or activities

The ability of the organisation to continually satisfy and comply with mandatory conditions of the funding agreement

1. assurance that the mandatory conditions are understood, confirmed and that compliance is not only possible but assured
2. details of how the reporting requirements will be met: examples include reports on operational, financial, evaluation/review, quality activity, data collection, etc

Discussion Worksheet No. 9

Topics	Your questions or comments
<u>Introduce your 'organisation', eg:</u> • independent autonomous legal entity, • unincorporated program, auspiced by a legal entity, • unit in the organisational structure of a legal entity, or • cost centre in a large organisational structure.	
<u>Current state of this project's life-cycle, eg:</u> • pilot – with intention to refine after this trial period, • continuing, • new initiative, • expanding, or • under review due to changing circumstances.	
SWOT analysis of your organisation in relation to this project • 'Strengths' are qualities and features that must be retained and expanded • 'Weaknesses' are features and factors that require immediate attention • 'Opportunities' are potential initiatives if this project succeeds • 'Threats' are factors which, if not addressed, will threaten achievement of this project	

Technical aspects of your grant application

Type-face

- Use bold, underline or italics only to emphasise an important point: don't confuse your reader by over-using all three or using them inconsistently, eg: use italics for your organisation's name, or bold for your project title throughout the document.

- Use a point and font that is easy to read and not overly-decorative.

Language

- Ensure consistent terms throughout the document – use the same name, title or reference for a person, position, function, task or activity.

- Ensure that you fully understand and appreciate the meaning and intention of any terminology, jargon or excerpts that you intend to quote direct from the grant guidelin

- Use capital letters only for names of people, places or titles.

- Place an active verb as close to the beginning of the sentence as possible: this makes your sentence more powerful and positive.

Layout

- When starting to list any 'dot points', have an introductory paragraph to explain the nature and reason for including items in the list

- Ensure that all text within the document refers directly to the headings in the application form and is not included just to fill space or add volume to the document

- Use indenting, point-form, tables or columns to present information clearly

Use concise and clear paragraphs

- each paragraph should feature a separate point
- introduce the point in the first sentence of a paragraph
- follow your introductory sentence with separate sentences to expand the point, eg
- qualifications and modifications, explanations and examples
- the final sentence in the paragraph should round off the point

Shorten long sentences

- start each sentence with the main point of the sentence
- use active rather than passive tense
- check paragraphs, punctuation, spelling, grammar
- remove any unnecessary words or graphics
- check for flow, accuracy and consistency of information right through the document

Ensure that all headings and page lay-outs are consistent through the document and that there are no spelling or grammatical mistakes

Think carefully about using graphics, and always explain their purpose in the document

- use graphics to emphasise or illustrate an important point, never just to fill a space
- where you introduce a series of graphics, make sure you introduce the series with text to explain why you are including them, what they individually illustrate, how they relate to each other and why it is necessary to include them all

Punctuation

Use punctuation carefully. It is easy to over-use or mis-use commas, parenthesis, apostrophes and semi-colons

Focus
Follow instructions on all matters relating to the grant application format, length and content. When you have completed your first draft, review the application form headings and guidelines once more and ensure that what you have written actually addresses and allows for the criteria or requirements given.

Writing for the reader/assessor
Always remember that you are writing the grant application document for the reader or assessor, not for yourself. Put yourself in the shoes of the grant application caller at this stage and consider what you would be looking for if you were assessing your own grant application document.

- don't assume that the reader or assessor knows as much about your project as you do!

Is the funding source reputable, credible and viable?

- do they offer proof that their organisation is reputable, credible and financially viable
- are they likely to remain reputable, credible and viable for the duration of the funding period and beyond?

Details of project management

- who will be accountable for managing and monitoring the project through to completion?
- what process is there for accountability?
- who will take responsibility for staffing, expenditure, reporting on progress, checking quality, etc?
- how is the project to be administered, monitored and evaluated?
- how much involvement is required from either party's management or staff?
- is there to be a project or reference committee?

Realistic budget

- can details within each budget category be validated or verified against the project plan and schedules?
- are there any discrepancies, inconsistencies or oversights in the budget?
- is the budget within or above the anticipated limit?
- have you checked your figures and calculations twice?

Adequate proof of statements and claims

- are all calculations, formulae, assumptions, etc, correct and verifiable?
- is this a credible and professional document from an astute organization that should be seriously considered for funding?

"Added-value"

- what is your grant application offering over and above any other applicant, or over and above what is requested in the guidelines?
- in practical terms, how valuable to the funding is your added-value?

What happens at the end of the funding period?

- what happens if the project, or any aspect of the project, is unsatisfactory?
- what happens if the project is exceptionally satisfactory?
- do you have the capability to service any on-going requirements or opportunities?
- what is your likely availability in the event of time over-runs?
- have you given sufficient guarantee for post-project contact or involvement if needed?
- if this is an establishment or R&D grant, what happens at the end of the R&D stage?
- would it be wise to offer a post-project de-briefing with or report to the funding source?

Why select this submission?

- why choose this grant application above another submission, ie your organisation above another organisation?
- remind yourself that the application will have to stand on its own merit once it is lodged. Therefore, make sure it contains all the necessary facts and information. Your application should be a positive, powerful and persuasive document.

Editing

Language, accuracy, consistency, clarity

Are you confident that:

- the language you are using in your application is compatible with the language in the guidelines?
- your information and facts are accurate or based on accurate and tested assumptions?
- the flow of your application is consistent in fact, language, style, format?
- that your intentions and undertakings throughout the application are expressed clearly and concisely?

Brevity

Have you:

- carefully used words that exactly convey your meaning?
- avoided boring your reader or wasting her/his time?
- been courteous in adding sufficient explanation to avoid unintended brusqueness and to convey consideration to the reader?

Adequate and appropriate information

Have you provided sufficient information to persuade the reader to examine your application a second time rather than flip through and discard it after a quick reading?

- don't risk your chances by offering too much or too little information
- always be as strong on fact and detail as you are on assumptions and opinion

Letters of support, or Referees

- Take great care to ensure that this level of support for your application genuinely addresses your project, and supports your organisation's application for funds
- Provide a list of letters in your attachments, and explain that these are available on request: and insert appropriate extracts in your application responses
- There may be a section in the application form to list your referees

Confidentiality

- Have you respected any and all confidentiality requests?
- Have you covered your own intellectual capital by claiming 'confidential in confidence' or other wording to ensure your organisation's ownership of critical content?

Carefully check:

1. that you have adequately responded to all requests for facts, information, detail or agreements to comply with the guidelines and instructions
2. that you can either avoid or manage risk and thereby ensure the required service-user or target group benefits and outcomes
3. that you have included the position of project manager
4. that you have included qualifications and credentials of key project personnel
5. that your application is as reader-friendly as possible – have answered questions, followed instructions, and provided sufficient information to make your application stand out from others.
6. That you have included ALL information specifically requested by the funding body: they often require copies of legal status documents, organisational chart, reporting procedures, annual reports, annual accounts, etc.

7. That you have explained your budget items

8. That you have listed voluntary contributions, such as labour, time, travel, expertise or pro-bono professional support – if appropriate

9. That you have filed and retained all drafts, working papers, quotes for supplies and costing, contacts, meetings, decisions, alternative strategies from your preparation work – and most importantly of your final application and funding source guidelines. These will be invaluable when funding is granted, and to guide further grant applications.

Lodging or uploading your approved grant application

The most important factor to keep in the front of your mind is the closing date and time for applications to be received. If you have a legitimate reason for not being able to meet the deadline, contact the funding source beforehand to see if it is possible to make a late application – and if so, how late is acceptable.

In some cases, a closing date is advertised for `Notices of Intent to Apply'. On examination of these, the funding source may then select a small number of organisations and invite them to prepare detailed application by a later closing date.

When lodging your application electronically, be sure to follow the instructions given in the guidelines, and keep a copy of the acknowledgement of receipt from the funding source – usually forwarded to you by email.

Consider sending copies of your application to people you feel may be contacted by the funding source to support your case.

In brief – fulfil all requirements regarding your application, lodge it before the deadline, and prepare for interview.

Recommended format if there is no prepared or proforma application form

Cover:

Title of your organisation
- registered address, phone/email

Title and name of contact person, title/position, phone/email
- the contact person for enquiries or negotiation

Title of the funding source
- name of contact person, title/position

Grant identification
- reference number or project title

Date lodged
- date and, if appropriate, time of day

Covering letter

Briefly introducing:
- your organisation
- format and sequence of your grant application document
- your intended project
- your project budget
- expressing willingness to enter into discussion

Contents page

Contents of the grant application should be listed, with accurate page references:
- you might think of showing a glossary of terms on this page to show how you are using particular terms in this application

Section 1 Introduction to your organisation
Relationship of your organisation to the project
Process of preparation of the application, eg
- needs analysis and resource identification
- consultation with others, including intended service-users or target group

If the guidelines require establishment of a strategic alliance, partnership or network, evidence should be given here that the alliance, partnership, or network has already met. Evidence would include minutes of the initial meeting, overview of the relevant forward plan, copy of the formal agreement between all parties as to their contribution to the forward plan, and agreed procedures relating to risk, disputes or grievances. The same applies if your project is to be auspiced by a legal entity (if your organisation is not yet incorporated)

Section 2 Evidence of your knowledge and familiarity with the problem, need, idea or opportunity to be addressed by the project
- this would include statistical evidence as well as anecdotal observations

Section 3 Introduction to your project plan
- how your project plan will unfold
- why your project plan is the best opportunity, with details of your added value, ie something over and above the expectation or requirement of the funding source

Section 4 Details of your project plan with:
- service-user or target group profile
- service outline
- implementation plan
- evaluation model and process
- milestones (key points for reporting)

Section 5 Budget details with validating or supportive statements and cross references to your project plan
- include schedule for receipt of funds

Section 6 Monitoring, reviewing and evaluation procedures, eg
- anticipated benefits, outputs and outcomes
- quality or service standards
- legislative and contractual requirements

Section 7 Project management details, including risk management

Section 8 Expected action or direction at close of the funding period

Section 9 Attachments
- names, organisations and contact details of referees
- copies or lists of documents which validate or expand claims within the core grant application document

Note: if any attached document is critical to your case for funding or sponsorship, include a reference to the appropriate section/s of such a document in the text of your application, ie cross-reference.

Don't assume that the assessors of your grant application will closely examine every attachment.

Discussion Worksheet No. 10

Topics	Your questions or comments
Technical aspects of your grant application	
Editing	
Lodging or uploading your approved application	
Recommended format if there is no prepared or proforma application form	

Action Plan to improve grant applications within your organisation

Action 1:

Tasks	Why	Who and When	At what cost

Action 2:

Tasks	Why	Who and When	At what cost

Action 3:

Tasks	Why	Who and When	At what cost

Action 4:

Tasks	Why	Who and When	At what cost