

Tips on writing successful funding applications

Before you start – things to consider

The idea:

- What (event / activity / project) do you want funding for?
- Who is the applicant? (organisation or individual)
- Who are the participants?

The benefits and outcomes:

- Why is the project needed or important? (rationale)
- What will the project achieve or change?

Things to consider

- When is the best time to hold your project and how long will it take to fund and organise? (lead time and 'turnaround' time)
- Who is going to do all the work? (Project team)
- How much will it cost? (budgeting expenditure) and where is the money? (budgeting income)
- Addressing the guidelines
- Finding and demonstrating support for your project.

QUICK TIPS

Start with an idea, not a desire to get a grant

- Define your project before you look at the forms
 - Be brief, clear and make it sound exciting!
- Plan ahead – give yourself plenty of time
- Research funding agencies and their closing dates
- Read the guidelines and the aims and objectives
- Is your project right for this grant and agency?
- Does it fit the guidelines?
- If it fits, address each criteria

Reality Checks

1. Are you eligible? Do you need an ABN? Do you need an auspicing body? Check the eligibility criteria.

2. What projects were funded in the last round? Is your project of similar quality / importance / relevance to guidelines/ Is your idea innovative or has it been done?

Reality Checks

3. How much funding did approved projects get the last round? How much are you likely to get from the agency and budget accordingly. Does the project require a funding partner?

4. Have you contacted the agency? Contact the staff of the funding body to discuss the proposal, take notes of the discussions to incorporate in your application.

5. Do you have the capacity to deliver? Don't promise too much! Prepare a project timeline, including acquitting the grant.

Writing the application

Aim to finish a week before the deadline to allow time to edit and review

- Do a step by step project plan, then budget to match it
- Address each and every one of the selection / assessment criteria – imagine you will get a score out of 10 for each one.

Support material

- Find out what you need and don't do overkill!
- Images / CDs, DVDs – check limits
- Include up-to-date CVs and other material asked to provide
- Make sure you have time to collect letters of support – and make it easy for the people you ask!

RECAP

- Defining your project
 - conversion of an idea into a project, try 150 words
 - Be clear about project objectives / aims
 - Benefits
 - professional, artist, audience, community
 - Partnerships
 - community, business, local government, other agencies
- ‘Partners’ refer to individuals or organisations that will help make the project happen. The partners will work in collaboration with the applicant towards a shared vision and may contribute financially or in-kind to the project.

The view from the other side

Find out how funding applications are assessed

- Talk to the Program Manager or Program Officer
- Talk to the staff of your local Regional Arts Board, your Library Manager and / or relevant Council staff
- Get a colleague to read it – can they understand what you want to do?
- Find out who is making the decision
- Get experience assessing projects yourself
- Imagine yourself as an assessor
 - Is your idea clear and simple?
 - Does it fit the guidelines?
 - Is it special? Does it stand out?

Grant and Funding Sources

Regional Arts NSW www.regionalartsnsw.com.au/grants

- **Regional Arts Fund**

This is an Australian Government initiative supporting the arts in regional and remote Australia. It is designed to support arts and cultural activities that are sustainable, have long term cultural, economic and social benefits, develop partnerships and cultural networks and provide skills development opportunities.

Examples of relevant projects – supporting significant programs at Literary Festivals, children’s and youth based activities as part of wider Council or community event

- **Country Arts Support Scheme (CASP)**, funded through Regional Arts NSW. This is an annual small grants program that supports community cultural development in regional NSW. Through CASP you can apply for things like artists fees and expenses for workshops, arts activities as part of a community festival or event, writer-in-residence programs, public art and design projects.

Grant and Funding Sources

ArtsNSW (State Government)

- Project funding
 - New Projects
 - Regional Partnerships
 - Young People – look at opportunities to work with local schools and other community, cultural and educational opportunities.

Australia Council for the Arts (Federal agency)

- Festivals Australia

National Library of Australia

- Community Heritage Grant

State Library of NSW

- Library Development Grants

Grant and Funding Sources

Small Grants

- Science Week
- Adult Learners Week
- Law Week

EXERCISE

Choose a Project idea

- **Project description – one sentence**
- **Who is the audience and how will the project increase audience participation?**
- **Who benefits from the project? Describe three outcomes for the project**
- **How will the project engage the community?**
- **How will you show community support?**
- **Who are the potential partners?**