# Fundraising

## Section five Identifying and demonstrating need

Showing funders that there is a need for your work is very important. There is so much competition for funds that you must be able to:

- prove that your community needs your service (and not have made assumptions)
- show that your project will make a real difference and that you have a true understanding of your community

These, and demonstrating to the funder that your project is the best solution to the problems that you have highlighted, is key to getting the funds you need.

### 5.1 Identifying needs – consulting with your community

If you do not consult with your beneficiaries at the planning stage of your project, you may well encounter difficulties at later stages of project planning and delivery. Consultation also allows different groups of people and other local organisations to get involved with the project and offer support.

Consultation can be conducted in a variety of ways. You could invite comments through a monthly newsletter, workshops, one to one discussions or a consultation day. The methods of consultation and who you consult will vary depending on the type of the project proposed and the potential service users. For example, if you are planning to run an after-school club for children in secondary education, then local mainstream schools should be consulted as they can advise on the academic needs of the children. Or, if you are fundraising for an additional advice worker to cope with increasing demand, you should consult with the users of the advice service to see if they also think an additional worker is needed.

### 5.2 More ideas on how to consult

*[Adapted from Barking and Dagenham CVS' fundraising toolkit]*

The following ideas will help you to decide the most appropriate way to collect information about what your supporters/users/community really think:

1. **Questionnaires**

   Keep the questions clear and focused.

2. **Strategies that exist in the area you are working from**

Look at other local organisations' funding strategies.

3. **Statistics**

   Using research that details the number of people affected by a problem will have more impact than just quantitative information [see **further information** at the end of this list].

4. **Research**

   Check to see if any reports and surveys have already been conducted that would relate to your proposed project and community.

5. **Focus groups**

   A focus group works by bringing a number of people together for a timed discussion led by an experienced facilitator, who can help to guide the discussion and record the results (you could get someone to take notes).

6. **Outreach work**

   This can be done by selecting random addresses and doing door to door interviews. Or you could visit community centres and youth clubs.

7. **Mapping**

   Using a map of an area you want to research, ask people to place coloured stickers on to the map to indicate their views about areas where they feel safe or unsafe (places where a community centre should be?). You can adapt this participatory method to suit your particular needs.

8. **Stalls**

   You could set up a stall in your local shopping centre, at an event or at a youth club – this would be an opportunity to informally chat to people.

To help you, here are some useful contacts that have been used to provide back up statistics and facts for successful funding applications in the past:

Census Customer Services
Office for National Statistics
Segensworth Road
Titchfield
Fareham
Hampshire
PO15 5RR
Tel: 01329 813800
www.statistics.gov.uk

**http://neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk**

This provides statistics for an area or a neighbourhood summary.

Note: The Office for National Statistics holds information on where you can find data about your region. For example, you may be able to find detailed information for an ethnic group and an economic activity. The census is carried out every ten years, so the next census will take place in 2011.

**http://neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination/datasetList.do?Expand11=1&$ph=60&updateRequired=true&step=1&CurrentTreeIndex=-1#11**
You can use this web link to find the topics with statistical data attached to them – topics include age, gender, country of birth, economic activity and information related to health.

**http://www.communities.gov.uk/archived/generalcontent/communities/indicesofdeprivation/**
This web link provides statistics on deprivation. These cover a range of issues like unemployment, health, income, barriers to housing and services, and crime in local areas.

### 5.3 Be clear about your project

It is very important to show any funder that you are clear about why your organisation wants the money and what it will do with it. Below is a list of questions that most funders will ask you. If your organisation is uncertain about any of these areas, then you are unlikely to be able to convince a funder to fund your project.

**Checklist of typical funders' questions:**

| Questions | Responses |
|---|---|
| How do you know that there is a need for your project? | You should make use of any research, monitoring forms or user feedback forms to show that the need is a real one. |
| How does the project meet the aims of your organisation? | You need to show how the project links to your overall aims and objectives. |
| Who will benefit from the project? | Your project may benefit a particular category, that is, the young, elderly, mentally ill, or people in a specific borough. |
| How many people will your project benefit? | Numbers will also give you an indication as to the size of a project. This can be worked out per week, per month or per year. This is important when working out the budget, so that costs can be worked out according to the number of people you are targeting. |
| How is your project different to similar existing services? | In other words how is your project different to similar projects in your area? Maybe your |

| | |
|---|---|
| | methods or your client group are different. |
| How will you make your project accessible? | You need to explain how your project is easy to access by your users. Funders want to know that potential users will hear about your service and can make use of it. |
| How will the project benefit those that use it? | Here you will need to be specific and list all the benefits you think the client will receive. It is important to be realistic and not to exaggerate the benefits, as you will need to report back to the funder later on. |
| How will you monitor and evaluate the activities of your project? | How will you measure the progress of your project and assess this progress? Also, a funder may want to know how you intend to make use of this information. |

### 5.4 How will your project make a difference?

As we touched on in **section four**, some funders will ask you to demonstrate the differences your project will make by explaining the outputs and outcomes. These are briefly defined below:

Outputs: the quantitative results of your project that should relate to the objectives of the project/activity.

Outcomes: the qualitative changes/results that the project will have for the users and should reflect the aims of your project/activity.

### 5.5 Gathering evidence to support your application

Some funders will ask for evidence to support your application in addition to your completed application form or letter. This could include your organisation's latest annual report, audited financial accounts, budget breakdown or latest bank statement and job descriptions.

Funders may also ask for the results of surveys carried out that show the need for your project, or research that supports the statistics you have used in your application. However, do not enclose every piece of information connected to your application, as funders will not have time to read everything. For example, send a one-page summary of your research findings instead of the whole report.

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