



Grant Writing for Community Groups

Workshop Booklet

Workshop Date: Thursday 28 July, 2022
Venue: Glen Innes & District Services Club
Trainer: Fiona Adams, Ladybug Projects



Glen Innes Natural Resources Advisory Committee

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INTRODUCTION

Each year millions of dollars are given away to community groups in grants funding. The trick is in ensuring your group is one of the recipients!

Grants enable you to:



WHO CAN APPLY FOR GRANTS?

Grants are very rarely provided to individuals; however, organisations such as clubs, volunteer groups, school P&Cs, local government and non profit organisations are all common recipients of grants.

This toolkit will help you plan for your next grant application by:

- Conducting a grant ready health check to see if you have the right information on your group / organisation;
- Find out if your organisation is ready to tackle a grant funded project;
- Know where and how to look for grants; and
- How to respond to grant questions to ensure your application stands out from the competition!

Section 1: Develop a Project

PROJECT DESCRIPTION?

- What is the scope of the project - what is going to happen, where and when?
- Who will benefit?
- What will the project produce? (Outputs)
- What is the purpose of the project? (Objectives/Bigger Picture) e.g. community benefit, tourism development, economic development, employment creation, social or environmental benefit?
- What will it cost (project budget)?
- How long will the project take to complete (project schedule)?

DO YOU HAVE THE RESOURCES?

It's easy to get excited about grant funding, but it's important to consider whether you're actually gaining on the deal. The bare bones of running a grant take up some of your resources - writing applications, planning programs, running programs and reporting back to the grant body will take time and planning!

Don't go for a grant just because it's there; think carefully about your resources before making the decision to apply.

READ THE CRITERIA CAREFULLY

It's the oldest advice in the book but grant givers are constantly frustrated by how often it is ignored.

- Is your organisation an eligible type of entity to apply?
- What is the priority of that organisation/agency?
- How does your project fit with those priorities?
- What are some examples of projects they have previously funded?
- Is the amount you are asking for within the limit of the provider?
- Can you apply for 100% of your project costs or are you required to make a contribution?
- What's the closing date?



Be honest with yourself

Is your idea solid, or do you need to spend some more time on it before applying for a grant? Do you need to break the project down into stages rather than burn out your committee with one big project?

There will be future grants and future opportunities! If you need to fundamentally change your project to suit the grant provider, it is the wrong grant program for you. Leave it for another time or grant program.

Section 2: Making your Grant Application Stand Out

HOW TO WRITE A SUCCESSFUL GRANT APPLICATION

A strong grant application is one that makes it impossible for the assessors to say 'no'.

There are some basic characteristics of any good grant application:

- Make sure you are eligible to apply for the grant;
- Answer all the questions;
- Make your answers clear and easy to read (dot points are okay!);
- 'Paint the Picture' for the people who will assess your application for funding;
- Provide supporting documents to help your application stand out from the crowd;
- Make sure your budget is based on accurate costs (eg. quotes).

FREQUENTLY ASKED GRANT QUESTIONS

There are some questions found in many grant applications. This includes questions such as:

- ✓ Organisational background
- ✓ Summary of your project
- ✓ Experience and Capacity of your organisation in delivering projects
- ✓ Governance arrangements

GRANT-READY HEALTH CHECK

How well do you know your organisation?

Complete the table below and keep a copy handy to ensure you are one step ahead and save time without having to search for this essential information each time you're completing a grant application!

OUR ORGANISATION TYPE

This relates to the type of legal entity you are. Many clubs are classified as Incorporated Associations. Other types of entities are cooperatives, companies and non incorporated associations. Not sure of yours? Go to <https://connectonline.asic.gov.au> and search ASIC registers > 'Search Within' > 'Organisation and Business Names' and in the 'For' field, type in your organisation's name.

Different grants are available to different types of organisations. For example, a grant program may only be available to incorporated associations and local government, but not schools. Very few grants are available to individuals!

OUR ABN

Not sure of your ABN? Visit <http://www.abr.business.gov.au/>

ARE YOU REGISTERED FOR GST?

Note, if you have an ABN, it doesn't automatically mean you are registered for GST. Unsure? Visit <http://www.abr.business.gov.au/>

YEAR OUR ORGANISATION WAS FORMED / ESTABLISHED?

NUMBER OF MEMBERS

OUR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Tip: Also record how many years' experience they have on committees

LAND OWNER

Tip: If you lease your facility, keep a copy of the agreement attached to your toolkit.

OUR HIGHLIGHTS

Has your organisation claimed any special awards or have anything that sets them apart from other organisations.

Eg. Our president has been awarded the Services to Sport Award; we are the longest established golf club in the North West; three of our club members have competed at national level; we hosted the State Championships in 2015; our junior team won the regional championships 5 years in a row, etc.

OUR MEMBERS

Key stats on your membership such as:
Members range in age from 6 – 76;

25% of our members are under 18 years old

We have 43 female and 32 male members

Do you have any Aboriginal members?

Do you have any culturally diverse members?

Do any members travel a long distance to participate? Eg. A football club with a player who travels more than 80km to train and compete with the team.

BANK DETAILS

Bank name, Account name,
BSB, Account number

OUR STATE ELECTORATE

Northern Tablelands

Northern Tablelands

OUR FEDERAL ELECTORATE

New England

New England

OUR LGA

Local Government Area

Glen Innes Severn

Glen Innes Severn

OUR INSURANCE

What sort of insurance?
What level of cover?
Tip: Keep a copy of your Certificate of Currency handy. Many grant providers will ask for a copy.

- Public liability insurance.
Our level of cover is \$____ million
- Volunteer workers insurance
- Other: _____

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FINANCIAL STATEMENTS ON FILE

Keep a copy of your most recent financial year statements handy. Many grant providers will ask for a copy.

- Profit and Loss Statement.
- Balance Sheet
- Other: _____

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- Balance Sheet
- Other: _____

PLANS AND GOVERNING DOCUMENTS

Keep a copy handy and remember to reference these documents to show your organisation has sound governance.

- Constitution.
- Strategic Plan
- Other: _____

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- Strategic Plan
- Other: _____

HOW TO ANSWER COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Organisational background

This is not the place to write a long-winded history of your organisation but to describe the WHO, WHERE, WHAT, WHY and HOW of your organisation's operations. You have a very short window before an assessor's eyes glaze over.

Include information such as:

- When was the organisation established?
- Who are your stakeholders / who do you represent?
- Why does your organisation exist?
- What's special about your community?
- Staffing levels – either paid or volunteer
- Committee numbers

2. Summary of your project

- Mention your project benefits up front
- This is a summary, not a full-blown explanation of your methodology. Keep it simple.
- Use the following sequence:

❶ <Project name> will ❷ <deliver what benefits> by ❸ <how benefits will be delivered>. ❹ <Proof project is needed>

3. The Case for Support

This is where you provide an explanation to the funding body as to **why** do you need funding.

- Establish a specific solution to a problem or issue in a geographically identifiable area.
- What data exists to support your project need and your proposed solution?
- How do you know your solution will work?
- Refer to any attachments such as photos of the project area;
- This should be backed up by evidence of community support that outlines why the project will make a difference to the wider community.

4. Methodology

Methodology is the strategies for how the project will be achieved, by whom and by when. This should include why the particular approach was chosen at this time and for this community. It's your action plan for achieving your project, for example:

- Will your project be completed by a paid contractor or volunteers?
- How long will your project take, including start and finish dates?
- Will your project involve other organisations?
- Use actions that are Measurable and Realistic.

5. Your Organisation's Experience, Capacity and Governance

Capacity is your organisation's capability (experience and qualifications) to deliver the project. A grant assessor wants to hear about your organisation's relevant expertise, skills, qualifications and experience of your committee and those that will be involved in the project, for example:

- Broad structure of the organisation;
- Who is on your committee? Do they bring unique skills or experience?
- Has your organisation implemented a grant funded project in the past?
- Experience or examples of when you have worked with the community or partner organisations.

Governance is all about the structure of your organisation – the checks and balances that you have in place to make sure things are 'done right', there's accountability and systems are transparent. The prompts below will help provide details on your organisation's governance arrangements.

- Do you have a Constitution and / or policies and / or Strategic Plan which governs what you do?
- If the project involves working with youth / children, do you have a record of who has Working with Children Checks?
- Do you report each year to NSW Fair Trading or the Australian Charities and Not for Profit Commission (ACNC)?
- How often does your committee meet?
- Are you an incorporated association?
- Is your organisation affiliated with a peak body?
- Insurance arrangements – do you have adequate insurance in place for the project?
- Do you have your finances audited annually?



Tick Tock

If you see a grant that you may be eligible for but it is closing in just a few days, don't bother. Quality applications require plenty of time and attention. Even if you might be able to get the application together, it is usually guaranteed that you won't be able to obtain appropriate letters of support or even have it signed off by an authorising officer.

EVIDENCE & SUPPORTING INFORMATION

To support your application, it's useful to be able to quote information about your area which demonstrates your project is needed. Do a bit of research and search for statistics to support your application. Let the grant provider visualise your project and what could happen if you received the grant.



Drum up Support!

Drum up support for your project and get letters of support from organisations and others to submit with your application. Many funding bodies will ask you to provide a letter(s) of support for your grant proposal.

A letter of support is evidence that:

- a) Your proposal is sound and other organisations think it will have a positive impact on the community; and / or
- b) Your organisation has the skills / expertise to successfully get the grant completed on time and on budget.

Who can provide a letter of support?

- ✓ Community organisations involved with the project;
- ✓ Organisations who will benefit from the project;
- ✓ Organisations that have worked with your organisation in the past;
- ✓ Your local Council;
- ✓ Schools; and / or
- ✓ A Member of Parliament for your area (not always permitted with NSW Government grants).

Note: While it's helpful to have a template letter of support to provide to your supporters, encourage your supporters to write their own. It's more authentic and the assessment panel will notice!

BUDGETS

Having a realistic and detailed budget is crucial. It not only shows you have a realistic idea of what the project involves but shows the grant organisation you are someone able to manage practical detail.

Ensure your budget is detailed and include everything from stationery to promotion to equipment - anything that will be utilised for the project. When obtaining quotations for your budget, go to local suppliers wherever you can and get the quote in writing. Grant providers like to see the funds supporting the community wherever possible. Price all equipment, venues and human resources and make sure it balances!

Details	Applicant contribution <i>Cash or In-kind</i>	Grant funding required	Total
Rainwater tank – 22,500 litre poly tank as per attached quote from Landmark		2,800	2,800
Windows – supply and install 2 aluminium windows, as per attached quote from Thompson Construction		4,100	4,100
Granite for gravel pad under rainwater tank, as per attached quote from JP Earthworks. 50% funded by applicant.	405	405	810
Installation of rainwater tank – use of bobcat owned by committee member 3 hours @ \$110/hr (including operator)	330		330
Volunteer labour to install rainwater tank and plumbing to main hall Materials / fittings on hand \$100 4 volunteers @ \$41/hr x 4 hours = \$656	756		756
Host event to open the improvements: Morning tea provided by committee: 45 guests @ \$6/head = \$270 Promotion / advertising on Facebook = \$80 Use of committee's marquee = \$100	450		450
TOTAL \$	\$ 1,941	\$ 7,305	\$ 9,246

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

A grant assessor wants to know you have thoroughly planned your project, including what you will do when (if) things go wrong. Is there anything that will prevent the project from coming to fruition? The prompts below may help provide details on risks associated with your project:

- What will happen if there's a drought or a flood? Will your project proceed as planned?
- If your project involves a community event, what will happen if you don't attract as many people as planned to your event?
- What happens if one of your committee or project leaders leaves town mid project?
- What happens if there's a budget blow-out because your planned contractor who quoted for the works is no longer available to do the work?

EXAMPLE - RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN: HERITAGE WEEK BBQ & AWARDS

Version 1 | 23.4.2022

<i>Name of project:</i> Heritage Week BBQ, Concert & Awards <i>Project organisation:</i> XYZ Council <i>Project timeline:</i> 5.7.2022 – 12.7.2022		<i>Name of contact:</i> Joe Smith, XYZ Council <i>Contact number:</i> 02 67XXXXXX	
Area of Risk	Risk Rating	Mitigation Measures	Revised Rating
Financial overspend / underspend	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project costings based on current pricing, with quotations received valid for project period; - A qualified accountant will oversee financial management of project; - Full budget prepared at outset of project. Project Manager to oversee project implementation and ensure project tracks to budget. 	Low
Project lags behind schedule	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project implementation schedule developed at outset of project. - Project Manager meets with Heritage Committee fortnightly to ensure project tracks to schedule; 	Low
Loss of key personnel during project	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project Manager meets with Heritage Committee each month and provides reports. Written reports (including financials) ensure stakeholders are aware of project progress and all project data is accessible by the entire committee. 	Low
Injury to participants	Very high	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - XYZ Council retains insurances (public liability and personal accident) to ensure cover for activities involved in project implementation. - Risk assessment of venues undertaken prior to commencement – by Council's WHS Officer; - WHS briefing provided to all participants at commencement of event. 	Low
Event participation lower than expected	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Timing of events scheduled to avoid conflicting events; - Communications action plan developed at outset of project to ensure timely development of marketing and media engagement with lead times built in to delivery plan; - Re-visit engagement strategy, in consultation with project partners, to identify areas for improvement. 	Low
Difficulty with securing supplies for proposed events	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project plan developed at outset of project. - Orders and bookings made at project outset. - Project Manager maintains frequent communication with suppliers to ensure availability is secure. 	Low

Project struggles to attract media / publicity	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project Manager to meet with community owned and commercial media outlets at commencement of project to ensure media outlets are engaged and aware of project; - Communications plan developed at outset of project to ensure multimedia promotion of project. 	Low
Awards struggle to attract nominations	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consult Heritage Committee to identify barriers to attracting nominations; - Provide assistance with preparing nominations and submitting nominations; - Re-visit communications and engagement strategy to ensure widespread awareness of awards and pathways to nominating are streamlined. 	Low
<p>Plan prepared by: Joe Smith Position: Project Coordinator, XYZ Council Date: 23.4.2022</p>			



What to do if your application is unsuccessful...

Not all grant applications are successful. In fact, the majority of applications do not receive funding.

It can be disappointing to not be successful. If a project was worth an application in the first place, it may be worth reworking.

- If you can, learn why your application was not successful, and whether the program would accept a revised application in another round.
- Keep an eye out for more suitable grant programs.
- Ask yourself the right questions. For instance, are there partners you could be working with?

But it's also important to be realistic...

- Are you really the best organisation to be delivering this project/program?
- Are other organisations already doing this?
- Is your focus too narrow? Or too broad?
- Have you involved the right people?
- Do you have support for your project in the community? (Did you provide letters to prove this?)
- Was your application clear enough to others? Do you need help in revising the application?