
FUNDRAISING FOR YOUR VOLUNTEER GROUP



Securing a small grant for your volunteer group is not difficult, you just need to know what funding is available locally and how to put the application together to ensure you get the money.

A FEW FUNDAMENTALS

- Your volunteer group must have a constitution (to describe what the group does and how it does it), along with a Chair, Secretary and Treasurer as a minimum. You can have more people and more roles but this is the basic requirement.
- You will also need a bank account set up just for the group with at least two agreed signatures from the group, usually the Chair and Treasurer.

WHERE CAN YOU GET FUNDING?

There is always help and support from organisations which are local to you and set up to provide advice to voluntary groups. These are usually the Council for Voluntary Services (CVS) and often provide funding in their own right as well as on behalf of other organisations such as trusts and Councils. They usually employ a Funding Officer whose role is to support local groups to secure money from all types of funds. Google your CVS to find out whom is available. Quite often the local CVS will provide funding workshops too so keep an eye on their website and register your interest.

Although often it may be a local fund that has caught your eye, you should

also consider some of the national funding agencies, such as Awards For All (A4A), which can provide up to £10,000 to voluntary groups.

There are often other national funding sources more aligned to the specific volunteering activities such as BIFFA, Tesco Bags of Help and Natural England, but it's best to use the CVS portal and search for funds for your particular project.

Often your local town, parish, district, borough, city or county council manages funds for community improvements, sometimes from their own budgets and sometimes on behalf of trusts. Talking to one of your local ward members or looking on their website can be helpful in identifying a fund which would suit you.

Even if you can't find a fund it is often worth writing to the appropriate council to ask for funding towards a project which will benefit their council taxpayers. Even if there is no obvious funding source this time they will be more aware of what you are doing and may find other ways to support your group.

Sometimes a local councillor can have funds that he or she can provide, usually up to around £500 which are devolved from their council to spend in the community. This tends to be at county level but is becoming more prevalent at district and borough council levels, so speak to him or her about funds.

LARGER GRANTS

Trying to secure small grants is not too difficult, but anything greater than £10,000 becomes a whole new ball game, needing a greater amount of time and documentation such as business planning and budget forecasts.

Help is available from your local CVS but an application for this level of funding will take time so plan for this. One of the best ways to move a project forward is to chat with the funding organisation about your ideas. They like to talk to groups about ideas that can make a difference to peoples' lives, and are often very helpful in suggesting ways forward for your group.

If the idea is not seen as a good one then at least you have not wasted too much of your time and resources. Discuss this with your Project Officer and we will help you develop the project.