

Applying for Grants

Help Sheet

The aim of the help sheet is to provide information to assist groups in applying for a wider range of grants.

Before starting the grant application process, it is important to know full details of your organisation including, official name, ABN/tax file number (if you have one) details of incorporation, contact person and contact details. If it is not an incorporated association, have you made contact with a group who is willing to auspice the grant – eg Quilters' Guild of South Australia Inc.

Grant applications are generally completed online and take you through a step-by-step basis. Most applications can be stalled and saved to be completed later if there is a need to stop to source further information.

1. Establish why you want funding

Establish a problem/project that is fixable with adequate funding.

Projects that could require funding: (This is only a sample, there are many more possibilities.)

- Frames for exhibitions; either to cover hire, purchasing or buying materials for building them
- Materials for construction of a commemorative quilt
- Health and safety training/equipment, purchase defibrillator
- Building repairs/alterations, to accommodate people with disabilities or fix structures
- Host a community event, eg. Rural Roundup
- Run workshops with guest presenters to further the skills of members
- Purchase materials used for making items for the local community, charity quilts
- Run programs for the disadvantaged/at risk in the community, learn to sew, sit and sew for the lonely
- Promotion of events, banner advertising local exhibition, letterbox drop
- Training in doing leadership roles,
- Equipment purchases, Scan and Cut to make cutting pieces easier for charity quilts, ironing boards, irons, cutting table
- Promotion of your group to attract new/younger members
- Cost of travel to an event
- Establishment of a web site

The variety of types of funding that can be used to cover the activities from the above list is vast. Knowing where the different types of funding grants come from, and their eligibility criteria helps to establish where to look for a suitable grant.

2. Search for Available Grants

Thoroughly review your eligibility (e.g., individuals, not-for-profits, businesses), check the instructions, application deadlines and the timeframe of the grant program, and the required documentation to make sure the grant matches your needs and capabilities, as you don't waste time and effort in applying for a grant that you aren't eligible for. Other key elements to check for are that the objectives or outcomes the grant aims to

support match your project, the maximum amount of funding available covers your project, and you can fulfill the reporting and accountability requirements.

Search for grants:

- Government bodies or statutory authorities (federal, state or local government). **Local councils** often support local groups with grants
- Philanthropic or other grant-making organisations, **Local Service Clubs**
- Corporate bodies (businesses)
- **Online Databases:** Websites like
 - <https://business.gov.au/grants-and-programs?resultsNum=10>

3. Plan and Design the Project

Clearly articulate the need or problem your project will address and how it aligns with the grant funder's priorities. This link: <https://explore.fundingcentre.com.au/help-sheets/areyouready> walks through establishing a strong funding proposal. Grants will often ask for:

- **Project Description:** Briefly explain what your project is about.
- **Timeline:** with key milestones and deliverables.
- **Project Activities:** An outline of the steps that will be taken to achieve the outcomes.
- **Target Audience:** Who will benefit from the project? Describe the direct and indirect beneficiaries.
- **Sustainability:** Explain how the project's benefits will be sustained after funding ends.

4. Budget Preparation

A detailed budget is critical to demonstrate financial accountability and feasibility. It is best to outline specific expenses to show you have really thought about the project and aren't just after the maximum amount. Ensure the budget is realistic and aligns with the project's scope. Justify all expenses and explain how each item contributes to the project. Double-check that your budget matches the funding limits of the program.

5. Write the Application

Grants will often come with guidelines to follow and explain what they are looking for in each section of the application. Make sure you read and understand the guidelines. Keep your responses clear, concise, and directly aligned with the guidelines. Sometimes you can find copies of previous successful applications that give more ideas on what makes a successful application. The written part is what sells your application.

The following links goes into detail to support you in the writing process:

- <https://explore.fundingcentre.com.au/help-sheets/writing-grant>
- <https://explore.fundingcentre.com.au/help-sheets/using-evidence>

6. Review and Edit the Application

Before submission, thoroughly review your application to ensure clarity, accuracy, and consistency. Seek feedback from someone to review your proposal; to provide feedback or catch mistakes you may have missed.

- **Checklist:**
 - Ensure that all sections are completed and are formatted according to specifications, such as page length, font size, and document types (PDF, Word, etc.).
 - Double-check that you've answered all the questions asked by the funding body.
 - Review your budget to make sure it's realistic and in line with funding limits.
 - Confirm all necessary documents are attached (e.g., proof of eligibility, previous reports, financial statements).

7. Submit the Application

Follow the submission process as outlined by the funding body. Ensure you meet the grant's deadline. Submissions after the closing date are typically not considered.

- **Common Submission Methods:**
 - Online portals
 - Email submission (ensure all attachments are in the correct format).
 - Postal submission (check for mailing deadlines and required copies).

8. Post-Submission: Follow Up and Reporting

Once you've submitted your application, there are a few important steps:

- **Confirmation:** Check that the funding body has received your application (e.g., through an acknowledgment email).
- **Respond to Queries:** Be prepared to answer any clarifying questions or provide additional documentation.
- **Evaluation and Reporting:** If successful, you will likely need to report on how funds were used and the outcomes of the project. Keep accurate records and data to help with reporting requirements.
- **Financial acquittal:** Keep detailed records of expenditure and supporting documentation which will be required to acquit the grant at the end of the project or on the deadline date.

Common Pitfalls to Avoid

- **Failing to Follow Guidelines:** Don't assume the grant program's expectations; always stick to the provided instructions.
- **Lack of Clear Outcomes:** Be specific about what your project will achieve.
- **Underestimating the Budget:** Ensure the budget is comprehensive and realistic.
- **Missing Deadlines:** Ensure you submit the application on time.
- **Inadequate Evaluation Plans:** Demonstrating how you will measure the success of the project is essential.
- **Unspent funds:** be aware of the requirements for any unspent funds. Are they to be returned?
- **Unfinished Project:** what are the requirements for not meeting the deadline for finishing the project. Are there options for an extension?

Useful Resources

- Have you researched Grants? Do you have any suggestions/sources to share?