



Funder's perspective: Common mistakes – Bexley Covid Giving Scheme

Filling in the Application Form:

- Ensure that all information is **consistent** (e.g. total cost of the project on the application form matches the total cost of the project on the project breakdown)
- Make sure that the application hangs together and makes sense as a whole
- Put the information against the correct question i.e. be careful that you are answering the question that has been asked
- Read the question carefully - break it down
- Use spell check before you copy and paste the information into the application form (grammar and spelling) otherwise the application can look sloppy
- Be sure to clearly explain your reserves (restricted v unrestricted) so that funders do not think that you are loaded and don't need their money!

Filling in the Application Form:

Specifics:

- Make sure that you select the correct grant (i.e. grant request for £12,000 is a large, not medium grant) – shows lack of attention to detail
- Ensure that each of the 'breakdown of beneficiaries' is less than the total number of direct beneficiaries.

Be Smart and sell, sell, sell:

- Having a good track record of working in Bexley was emphasised in the comms as a priority for the funder, so really sell what you have done in Bexley. The funders were not so interested in your work elsewhere!
- You must SELL YOUR PROJECT. You cannot assume that funding panels will know what you do and its value. You must make a case for them funding you, rather than someone else!

Associated documents:

- Ensure that you send the associated documents at the same time as the online application form
- If you are scanning documents, please don't send them in upside down or sideways
- Policies and governing body documents – send the signed and dated version, if possible

Project Costs: Budget breakdown

- Make sure that the totals add up!
- Do not forget to include fees and other income for your project. The funder wants to see the total cost of the project and how much you need from the funder
- Where there are examples shown in the budget breakdown, please delete them so that the final version shows your project information only
- Do not ask for more than your project costs. Use the template supplied - small things but for a big funder it might be the difference between getting the grant or not.

Due diligence:

- **Funders do check!**
- Website – make sure that it is **up to date**. Also one of the TNLCF priorities was 'having a good track record of working in Bexley' so you need to ensure that your website is up to date and there is Bexley related information on it!
- Charity Commission/Company House registration details – funders will check that the governing document is the same as the one that you submit with the application; that the trustees are the same; that the accounts have been submitted on time etc.

Due diligence: cont'd

- Governing documents – funders will check that the governing document is compliant and that the organisation is following its own rules! (note: CEO that is also a trustee)
- Feedback from panel members 'Some groups seem unconcerned that their governing document either does not allow them to do what they are asking to do, or at least it is not explicit, or some of their practice is in breach of their own document e.g. trustees not being paid, or they are just badly written and not reviewed regularly. More serious attention should be paid to the importance of the governing document'.

Due diligence: cont'd

- Policies – funders will check that you have up to date, signed policies that include relevant info such as named Safeguarding Designated Officers
- Bank statements – funders will check that the bank account is in the name of the organisation and active
- Annual Accounts – some were very old (i.e. at least 2 that are dated 2019). Groups should all have more up to date accounts by now and should be able to send in a draft if they are not quite signed off yet. It is very difficult to assess an organisation's finances and operational management costs when their latest accounts are 2 years old, especially with the impact of Covid.

Where to go for help

- Sign up to BVSC's Funding ebulletin www.bvsc.co.uk/newsletter
- Speak to one of our team at BVSC – telephone 01322 524 682
- Engage with your local infrastructure support e.g. regularly attend training; networks; share resources and info – it was noted that most of the good applications who engaged in this way

BVSC Training

Lots of the Impact training will help with funding applications. Here are some training sessions that BVSC offer <https://www.bvsc.co.uk/events/training>

One – one Funding feedback Sessions (bookable)
Karen will look through an application you have made that has been turned down and provide her feedback.
<https://www.bvsc.co.uk/events>





Thank you for watching!