



**Quick Guide To Successful Funding Applications**  
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# **Quick Guide To Successful Funding Applications**

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Need Help?  
Contact Us  
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# Pre Application

**Key Principles:**      ‘Proper Planning Prevents Poor Performance’  
                                 ‘Success Occurs When Opportunity Meets Preparation’

### ***Step 1 - Develop ‘Plan of Attack’***

*‘Failing to Plan is Planning to Fail’*

#### 1 - Identify & Prioritize the Projects

Conduct relevant consultations to **identify and prioritise your project development goals.**

Identify projects for which funding is needed/desired (probably all of them).

#### 2 - ‘Flesh Out’ the Projects

Develop a basic outline of each key project: *‘Who, What, Where, When, Why, How & Whatever’.....*

#### **Who**

- Who is the project for?
- Who are the beneficiaries - are they a disadvantaged group?

#### **What**

- What is the project about?
- What are the project’s **‘angles’** – e.g. community benefit, tourism development, business development, innovation/best practice, employment creation?.....

#### **Where**

- Where will the project occur? (Shire, the town, the site, the office).
- Where will its impact extend to? (nationally, state, region, shire, local area, office).

#### **When**

- When will it start?
- When will it finish?
- How long will it take?

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### Why

- Why is it needed? - What is the problem trying to be overcome, the benefit trying to be achieved?
- Why is it important in the context of the area? (e.g. economic dependency, population losses, insufficient employment opportunity, difficult socioeconomic conditions).

### How

- How much will it cost?
- How much funding is needed?
- How much cash and in-kind resources are available?.
- How will it be implemented and/or operated (e.g. steering committees, management structures)?
- Are there any special skills or resources needed?

### Whatever

- Any other pertinent information needed?
- Anything that needs to be checked?

## **Step 2 - Identify Funding Sources**

### Literature

#### Examples

- *Commonwealth Assistance for Local Projects Directory*
- *Directory of Financial Assistance - State Administered Programs*
- *The Rural Book - Handbook of Commonwealth Government Programs & Services*
- Newspapers - tenders and announcements sections - The Australian, The Courier Mail, Local Papers
- Newspaper Articles - scan for articles relevant to grants on other projects. Ring the group up.

### Websites

Government department websites.....

1. [www.queensland.gov.au](http://www.queensland.gov.au)
2. [www.commonwealth.gov.au](http://www.commonwealth.gov.au)

### Political Offices

Ring your local Member's office.

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### Use Your Networks - ring around

Ring around and follow the trail '.....I am trying to get some funding for.....do you know of anything that might help?'

Examples:

- Other Councils
- Community groups
- Development agencies
- State and Federal political offices
- State and Federal Departments

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# Doing the Application

### **Step 1 - Before You Write Anything!**

**Read** all the material sent to you –

- Read all the guidelines and all the questions on the form.
- Get a 'feel' for what they are looking for.
- Note of key words or phrases (highlight them or write them down).

**Ring** up the contact person and....

ask questions about:

- What type of projects they are looking for (it can be useful to get a list of those already funded)?
- Whether they think your project fits (if they do not, then ask them whether they know of any other funding sources that may assist)?
- What the selection process is?
- Who is involved in the selection process (think about any potential influencers)?
- Find out if the person you are talking to is a key decision maker.

**Sell** your agency/organisation and the project, tell them

- how you have read the guidelines and think your project most worthy;
- how important your project is and how badly your organisation or your community needs it.

**Establish rapport** with the contact person

- If they are a key decision maker get their number and ring them up again later with any questions.
- If possible, get them (or other appropriate party) to commit to evaluating sections of your 'draft' application (it is hard for them to criticise something they have helped develop – sometimes they can become your champion)

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### ***Step 2 - Writing the Application***

#### Content

#### Key Principle - The Alien Principle

Write the application as if you were writing it to an alien.

- Assume the reader knows absolutely nothing about your organisation, the project, the area.
- Include photos, maps, and diagrams in the body.

Include relevant extra information in attachments e.g.:

- regional or Shire description (relevant basic statistics and information);
- maps clearly showing the location of the town in reference to an easily identifiable large centre;
- organisational charter/mission and description;
- quotes from relevant documents and reports (especially those from the department concerned);
- audited financial statements and/or bank statements;
- letters of support;
- excerpts from plans and other documents relating to the project (or complete copies of whole plans and reports).

#### Key Principle - Answer, Answer ALL, Answer RIGHT

- **Read the questions and completely answer them** (surprising how often this does not happen). Include additional information on related key points BUT do so *after* the key information is presented.
- **Never leave a blank** – always put something in or put ‘Not Applicable’. Even if you have addressed the question elsewhere include an answer again.
- **Short then Long** - short sentences and dot points on key points at the start (*followed* by eloquent description on important or complex points).
- **Use ‘Alienspeak’ (Key Words)** – use EXACTLY same key words as in the guidelines and link your application to the key words and phrases contained in the material.
- **Highlight Key Statements** - underlining, italics or bold type.
- **Talk it Down & Up** – Always point out the truly severe problems driving your need for the funding but always put a good ‘spin’ on the project in your answers.

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- **Link to Attachments** – where additional relevant information is included make a statement linking your answers to the attachments – e.g. For further information **see Attachment 1 – ??????**

### Key Principle - Remember to Include 'In-Kind'

- **Value in-kind contributions** – donations of labour and materials, venue use, expert advice etc should all be valued at normal purchase rates.

### Key Principle - Get Letters of Support

- **As many as possible – the more the better** - particularly target key groups of relevance to the application. Individual community members can also be relevant (e.g. children writing about how hot their classroom is in relation to an application seeking funding for air-conditioning...).
- **Avoid compromising the application** by using people who are 'too close to the assessment process' for letters of support or as referees.
- **Always send a Briefing Note to prospective writers** - People are busy and are not necessarily informed of your projects. This will ensure that the letter of support contains relevant statements about your application.
- **Write 'sample' or 'pro-forma letters** of support if required.
- **Always include relevant information in your request** – date by which you require the letter, person to whom it should be addressed, mode by which it should be sent (e.g. fax back to me by ?????).
- **Always include your contact details** – they cannot respond if they do not know where to send it!.

### Key Principle - Good Presentation

Check the quality of presentation required – usually, the better and more professional the presentation the more credible you appear and the greater the chance of success of the application.

- typed/printed;
- bound;
- right number of copies;
- spiffy cover page;
- covering letter (addressed to the *right* person or group).

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### Key Principle - Sending Early and Sending Good

- **Right Place, Right Time** - Always get the application to the relevant place *before* the deadline – better to be safe than sorry. Some agencies will give you leeway if you ring first and fax or email a copy. Some will not accept faxed or emailed copies.
- **NEVER send a half finished or a 'botched job'** – this will severely undermine your credibility and future success in that program or even other programs administered by that agency. Better to delay and get it right for a subsequent 'round'.

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# Following Submission but Before Assessment

### Key Principle - Copies to all Relevant Parties

To all:

- parties who supplied letters of support (include a thank you letter or note);
- potential Influencers (include a letter or note stating 'copy for your information').

Why?

- Polite – maintains relationships.
- Demonstrates professionalism – maintains relationships.
- Informs them – so they can answer questions about the project (by assessment agency or by general community).

### Key Principle - Lobbying

Depending on the importance of the submission, this is the time to ramp up your lobbying.

Go 'all out' for really important applications:

1. **Contact all relevant influencers** - Ministers, senior and middle departmental managers (called, visited, or written to). Take reinforcements – try to get as many of the key stake-holders to assist you as is possible.
2. **Start a media campaign** and send copies or transcripts of media releases and articles to key influencers.
3. **Ring (and/or visit) the contact person** for the applications for friendly 'chats' before the assessment date – ask them how the assessment is going and keep selling the virtues of the project.

For less important applications #3 is probably sufficient.

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## **Following Assessment**

### **Successful Applications**

Ensure:

- project completed in accordance with the application.
- the requirements of the funding agency are satisfied in a professional and timely manner (reporting, acquittal of funds, and auditing).

Very important:

- If you blow it here you can say goodbye to any further funding from that source.
- If you get it right you will reinforce your relationship with the agency and will enhance your chances of future success.
- You really do NOT want the Crown Solicitor or Attorney General to develop an interest in your organization because you failed to get this right!

### **Keep Copies**

Makes a great Pro-forma or Template for future applications to the same source!

### **Unsuccessful Applications**

Always contact the relevant agency to find out exactly why it was unsuccessful so you can learn from the mistakes.

If possible modify the application and try again next round. Otherwise, look for other potential funding sources.

Never give up –

- many applications can take more than one round of assessment to 'get up';
- the work you have already done is not wasted – it can greatly assist in future applications.

*It is better to have tried and failed than to have never tried at all....*

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*‘For better is it to dare mighty things, to win glorious triumphs even though checkered by failure, than to rank with those poor spirits who neither enjoy nor suffer much because they live in the grey twilight that knows neither victory nor defeat.’*

*Theodore Roosevelt*

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**GOOD HUNTING!**

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