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**The Grant Winning Success Formula**

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**GET THAT GRANT**

Learning and Action Plan   
Workbook 5 – On the QT – The secrets of Quality and Trust

The Community Entrepreneur

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# Module 4

Reduce your risk and measure your success

You’ve got this far, you don’t want carelessness to undo your careful and meticulous planning.

Here and some simple but effective strategies to lift your application off the page and impress your potential funder.

Funding Body

Reasons why a funding body should trust you?

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How will you demonstrate these reasons:  
  
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How to impress your funding body?

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3. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
   1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
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On the QT – what the funder is looking for and how to stand out from the rest

* Experience in managing projects
* Experience working with target customers/clients
* Track record – achieving results

How involved is your senior management or Board?

* Linkage to strategic and business plans
* Involvement in project planning and monitoring (governance)
* Sign off on application, funding agreement and reports

How will funding this project assist the funder with achieving their outcomes?

* Show you understand what their objectives and outcomes are and that what you’re proposing to do fits
* Clearly demonstrate the ‘need’ for your specific project – data, letters of support, case studies

Are you going to deliver on time, on budget and on specification?

* Realistic detailed project plan with resources, timeframes and milestones
* Evidence and experience of similar projects you’ve delivered
* Descriptions of the roles of key project staff – required experience and qualifications
* Budget matches the project plan
* Realistic budget – not the smell of an oily rag
* Evidence of real participation by project partners
* Good risk planning

How to impress the funding body

1. Catchy title (up to 50 words) and description (up to 150 words) – will be used in their promotions and website as well as your own  
     
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2. Clear, concise answer to the questions within the required word limit – use bullet lists
3. Don’t try to impress with big words
4. Previously successful projects – good track record

So by now, you should be confident in putting together your grant application. Use these lesson guides to support your funding applications. The bigger the application, the more detailed planning you’ll do.

# Zero to a million dollars in 18 months – you can do it to!

Want to know how we took one organisation from zero to a million in 18 months? Here’s how you could also achieve this goal for yourself:

1. A series of small grants (under $10,000) that very much depended on volunteer resources. Funds were to organise events, recompense travel or to assist with organisational overheads.  
   In most cases the funder’s priority was to approve as many applications as possible which meant that we didn’t get as much as we had asked for, BUT we did get more than double the ‘average’ grant as indicated in the guidelines.  
   In a couple of cases we did get $10,000 as requested. These were new grants and we expected not to get the second grant because we were successful with the first (grants over two years).  
     
   Funding bodies that try to spread funds out as far as possible don’t really offer any favours. Restricting the amount of money offered means that events have to be cut back and much needed resources are foregone. Small grants are useful but don’t depend on them.
2. Along came three grants between $20,000 and $50,000. At this level we begin to see ‘projects’ with part-time staff costs. The organisation was ticking over, still with volunteer support.
3. Then the big one. This organisation had been successful with grants in the past, including a large grant for $200,000, which failed to collect evidence of performance and further need and had not been successful with a further application. We had the opportunity to apply again and this time we approached the grant with a ‘professional eye’. This was a change from the accustomed ‘smell of an oily rag’ approach – the keep costs low so we’ll get funded even if we have to deliver on the cheap, approach.   
     
   We costed salaries at rates that would attract qualified staff, included the lease of cars and focused on a realistic budget. We had a comprehensive plan, identified risks and proposed our evaluation framework.  
     
   We were rewarded with a project more than three times the value of the previous project. Instead of reliance on volunteers, the project was set up for better management and control.  
     
   A project of this size brings with it a requirement for stronger governance. Suddenly an organisation is responsible for staff. Policies and procedures must be in place to support the Board and the staff. Health and safety issues must be addressed. The Board is responsible for a much larger financial commitment than it is used to. Measures must be put in place to ensure the project doesn’t take over the organisation. It must fit within a strategic framework and the Board must be able to resource and support other activities.
4. The large grant provided us with the breathing space to focus on a strategic plan that would put the grant into context. The Plan identified opportunities to apply for grants for other activities and was submitted as evidence to support a grant for $150,000, which was also successful.
5. Add to these, smaller grants on a bi-annual basis and within 18 months we had achieved success of $1,000,000 in grant funding.

Before you go, here are nine tips for success

1. It’s about their agenda as well as yours
2. Evidence the need – data is king
3. Technology is your friend – use it to put your applications together, attend online briefings and research guidelines, FAQs and previous successful applicants online
4. Get the timing right – make sure you can get your application in on time and that your project can be delivered entirely within the dates specific in the application guidelines
5. If you have partners, make sure they have an active role – show why you can’t do whatever you’re doing without their input – what value are they adding to the project?
6. Be selective about the grants you apply for
7. Don’t skip on the plan and resources
8. Realistic budget – get funded for success
9. Don’t become grant dependent

Welcome to the world of grant writing!

BONUS – to reward you for getting through the program, we are including our Grant Winning Success Checklist for you to use for planning your projects. In return we ask that you let us know your funding successes (support@thecommunityentrepreneur.com).

Grant Winning Success Checklist

PROJECT: GRANT/FUNDING BODY:

1. **Unpack the guidelines:**

* Funding Body objectives and outcomes identified
* Checked out successful grants – previous rounds
* FAQs read and up to date
* What funds are available and what they can be spent on
* Timeframe for funded projects fits with when we want to do this project
* Submission deadline is achievable
* Organisation is eligible to apply
* Can we deliver (staff, resources, P&Ps, volunteers etc)?

1. **Project Planning**

* Fits with our organisational Purpose and Plans
* The need for the project is clear
* Attended a briefing and/or spoken to a funding body representative
* The project is not normal business
* Mapped out who, what, where, when and how the project will be delivered
* Project plan broken down into stages
* Work carried out by volunteers identified / hours estimated
* Organisational contribution identified (resources and infrastructure)
* Partners in place (if needed) with roles/contributions clearly identified
* Risks considered and acted on
* Plan checked with colleagues

1. **Budget**

* We are clear about what the project will fund and what costs need to come from elsewhere
* All budget items reflect actual costs (not discounted)
* Quotes obtained
* Organisational overhead costs identified
* Match funding (cash and/or in-kind) identified if required
* Budget income and expenditure balanced

1. **Application development**

* Top level support is in place (ie Board/Committee is aware of, and supports, the application)
* Application kept within word limits
* Responses answer the questions they relate to
* Application checked for typos, formatting, logical flow, gaps etc
* Letters of support in place
* Catchy title?
* Application signed off by person with the authority to apply on behalf of the organisation