



Effective Grant Applications

Writing a good grant application requires careful planning, attention to detail, and a persuasive presentation of your project or proposal. Understanding your organisation before you begin is the first step in the process.

Legal and Tax Requirements

Understanding your organisation's charity status is important when applying for grants. Some organisations are only able to grant funds to organisations that are registered with ACNC or hold a DGR status. For example:

- Some foundations can only fund organisations that the ATO has endorsed as a Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR).
- Some foundations can only fund organisations that are registered with the ACNC and endorsed for tax concessions by the ATO.
- Some foundations can only fund organisations that are both of the above.
- Some foundations can fund almost any not-for-profit entity provided that the funding is spent on activities which are legally charitable.

Some foundations can only fund organisations that have a certain kind of DGR endorsement. There are two main kinds of DGRs:

Item 1 DGRs, known informally as 'doing' DGRs. These are the organisations which carry out the hands-on work – health promotion, environmental, arts and welfare organisations etc.

Item 2 DGRs, known informally as 'giving' DGRs – which have no purpose other than to make or collect money in order to give it away.

The rule is that one 'giving' DGR cannot give to another 'giving' DGR. Most organisations that are seeking grants from foundations are Item 1 DGRs, 'doing' charities, but there are some entities which have been set up as fundraising foundations – often attached to a hospital or cultural entity – which are 'giving' DGRs. There are many funds, including Private Ancillary Funds (see Section 4), which cannot fund the 'giving' type of DGR. To ascertain an organisation's charitable and/or tax status go to:

ABR Lookup: <http://abr.business.gov.au>



ACNC: <http://www.acnc.gov.au>

The Cardinia Foundation holds item 2 DGR and those funds can only be distributed to an organisation that holds item 1 DGR status.

Application Process

Research the Grant: Start by thoroughly understanding the grant you are applying for. Review the guidelines, eligibility criteria, and any specific requirements outlined by the funding organisation. Ensure that your project aligns with the grant's objectives. Have a clear understanding of the terms and conditions of the grant if you are successful.

Plan Your Project: Clearly define your project or proposal. Identify the problem or need you aim to address, your objectives, the methods you will use, and the anticipated outcomes. Develop a detailed project plan, including timelines, milestones, and budget estimates.

Understand the Funder's Priorities: Familiarise yourself with the funder's mission, values, and priorities. Tailor your application to demonstrate how your project aligns with their goals and contributes to their desired outcomes.

Write a Compelling Summary: Start your application with a concise and engaging summary that highlights the significance of your project and captures the reader's attention. Clearly state your project's purpose, objectives, and expected impact.

Address the Evaluation Criteria: Grant applications are typically evaluated based on specific criteria. Identify these criteria and ensure that your application addresses them comprehensively. Pay particular attention to what status your not-for-profit organisation is as the Foundation may only be able to allocate a grant with the correct status. For example DGR1 status is required in most grant rounds at The Cardinia Foundation.

Provide a Strong Needs Statement: Clearly articulate the problem or need your project aims to address. Support your statement with relevant data, statistics, or research to demonstrate the significance and urgency of the issue.

Present a Solid Methodology: Describe your project's methodology or approach in detail. Explain how you will achieve your objectives, the activities you will undertake, and the resources you will require. Provide a clear timeline and explain how you will measure progress and evaluate the project's success.



Demonstrate Organisational Capacity: Highlight your organisation's qualifications, expertise, and track record in implementing similar projects. Showcase any relevant partnerships, collaborations, or previous successful initiatives.

Develop a Realistic Budget: Create a detailed budget that aligns with the project's objectives and activities. Be transparent and justify your expenses. Ensure that your budget is realistic, feasible, and well-documented. Ensure that the grant budget is not just based on the grant alone. Include other donations of funds of in-kind, other grant funds plus your organisation's contributions to the project.

Proofread and Edit: Carefully review your grant application for grammar, spelling, and formatting errors. Ensure that the document is well-structured, coherent, and easy to read. Seek feedback from others to improve the clarity and persuasiveness of your writing.

Include Supporting Documents: Attach any required supporting documents, such as letters of support, project timelines, or additional research material. Ensure that these documents strengthen your application and provide additional evidence of your project's viability.

Submit on Time: Pay close attention to the submission deadline and submit your application well in advance. Late submissions are typically not accepted, so plan your timeline accordingly.

Understanding the implication of changes: When applying for a grant, it is important to understand the terms and conditions of the grant, or the policy of the grant distribution. If your project changes or funds are not spent how you have described in the project, you may be asked to hand back funds if the organisation has not approved the changes to the project.

Remember that each grant application is unique, so tailor your approach based on the specific requirements of the funding organisation. Be clear, concise, and persuasive throughout your application, and emphasise the potential impact of your project.

After your application is submitted

Once your application is submitted, the foundation will start the process of assessing all grants applications and select based on different criteria. The Cardinia Foundation has a budget each year and may not be able to support all applications. Grant applicants will be notified of the outcome in a timely manner and funds will be allocated to successful projects.



Acquittal process: A timeline will be given for grant rounds and you will be required to submit an acquittal form. The purpose of an acquittal form is to show proof that you have undertaken your project as per your application, giving accurate details of the funded activity outcomes and expenditure details of the grant. Keep in mind along the way you will be asked to talk about the impact of your project, think about how this will be documented and explained at the end of the project.

If you would like any further information, please send an email to admin@cardiniafoundation.org