

GETTING THAT GRANT

The secret to getting a grant

There are not secrets and certainly no guarantees of success for any grant application. There are however some things that you can do to improve your chances.

1. Decide What Your Project Is or What You Want The Grant For

This is the most important place to start. Before you do anything else, make sure you or your club committee are clear in their own mind about what type of project or program you want to undertake.

2. Decide if You Are Able to Do It

Make sure you are able to manage the project that you are planning. Here are just a few of the points you will need to consider:

- What is the deadline for applying for the grant
- Is there enough time for the project to be planned and the application to be submitted
- Does the grant require progress reports
- Are there deadlines for spending the money and completing the work.
- You will need to have a work schedule.
- You will need to draw up a budget.
- You will need to monitor or evaluate the progress your project.
- It will probably take more than one person to complete application and the project. Ensure you have a team of people who have committed to work together on the project.
- Ensure you have the support of your committee and from others before you embark on the application.
- Talk to other agencies (e.g. Local Council, architects, Football NSW and other services).
- Talk to other parties involved (e.g. other sports or community groups) that may also use the venue or facility, if it is a facility project.
- Make sure you have allowed enough time to manage the project.
- The grant process sometimes takes quite a few months so allow plenty of time for the grant to be considered and processed.

3. Identify Alternative Sources of Funding

Don't just rely on one grant application for your funding, there are a broad range of organisations that offer grant opportunities. Check with your local Council about other funding that might be available or approach them regarding a joint project if it is improvements or development of facilities on Council owned land. Search the internet and remember to check major and local newspapers as grants and funding are also listed here from time to time.

4. **Meet the Criteria**

Some applications need to be submitted electronically either by email or through an on-line application system, while others may require hard copies to be posted as well. Some applications also have strict word lengths so you need to be concise with your details.

Different types of applications or submissions require different information, plans, supporting documentation and means of presentation.

- Obtain a copy of the guidelines and application form and read through them thoroughly before starting to fill them out. It's no use getting half-way through a submission and discovering that your project doesn't meet the criteria, or that you do not have the proper information available to complete the application.
- Make sure you are in the right region or are the right type of applicant for the grant - some grants only apply to certain areas or certain types of sports or community groups.
- Check to see who the target group is. (e.g. is it sporting clubs, volunteers, athletes)
- Contact the funding provider and seek advice or clarification on their requirements or the application process. This is very important!
- Make sure your application meets the criteria or guidelines as set down.
- Check what the closing date is and allow time to ensure the application arrives in time.
- If there are any doubts, send a hard copy of the application as well.
- Contact the funding provider to check that your application has arrived and find out when successful applicants will be notified.

5. **Community Research**

Talk to the community and gain their support

- Surveys of your club members and the local community can often help in identifying community needs and the benefit the project will have to the community.
- Source additional information from council and other agencies such as the local Football Association, Branch, Football NSW, Community organisations and NSW Sport & Recreation. Contact the planning sections of government and your local Council who may have already assessed the community needs or who may already have plans in place for development.
- Obtain letters of support from other organisations and groups to include in your submission.
- Seek local political support by contacting your local MP and Councillors.
- Contact the local media to see if there are any opportunities that they may promote your organisation in a positive light.

Information and Data:

- Your own club or organisation often has more information than you might think. Take time to talk to committee members or go through the information you already have.
- Check the documentation submitted with any previous grant applications.
- Check other local organisations such as councils and libraries.
- Check with your local Association or Football NSW to see what data might be available.
- Search the internet or contact Data and Research Organisations such as Australian Bureau of Statistics, Government departments and Universities.

Project Costings:

- Be realistic.
- Don't cut corners to be more competitive.
- Obtain multiple quotes and in writing and don't forget additional overheads.
- Include any additional or co-contributions to the project.
- Include costs associated with administrative support and other requirements.
- Be aware of any costs associated with preparing your application or project plans.

6. Application or Submission Content and Quality

- Be focused on what you/your club wants to achieve.
- Be clear and concise on your aims.
- Don't use jargon, be clear and precise in your details.
- Only include relevant supporting materials and ensure they are clear and easy to follow. (e.g. plans, drawings, tables, graphs etc).
- If you are including plans, ensure they are detailed plans.
- Structure your document so that it is easy to follow (include table of contents, index, list of attachments, etc).
- Ensure someone proof-reads the application/submission.
- Ensure you keep a full copy of the application/submission and any other documentation or attachments submitted.

7. Follow Up on Your Application

- Check to make sure that your application/submission has been received.
- If the funding provider wants to meet to discuss your submission, make sure there are ground rules for these discussions or negotiations.
- Establish your bottom line before the meeting and determine how far you are willing to compromise if that is what the meeting is likely to involve.
- Find out who you are meeting with in relation to your application/submission.
- Take a notebook and keep a record of who you meet with, the discussions and any further requirements or agreements that are reached. Ask for confirmation in writing of anything that is agreed upon.
- Ensure that your financial records and project plans are all in order and provide a copy of your annual report if appropriate.

8. Keep your Fingers Crossed!

Now that you have done all you needed to do for your application to success, the decision now rests with those responsible for assessing the applications.

9. What now?

Wait for the response time to pass, you should soon receive contact from the funding provider. If you are successful, then great, but this means full steam ahead so make sure that you comply with everything in your application. If you were not successful this time, don't be put off, use this information again and again to apply for other grants or for these same grants next time round.