

Finding Funders for your project or activities



There are a huge number of organisations that provide funding, and they all have different priorities, geographical coverage, application processes, management regimes, timeframes and grant sizes. Finding your way through this maze can seem daunting. However, by taking a practical, step-by-step approach, you will be able to identify those funders most likely to be supportive of your organisation, and set up systems so that you can keep up to date with changing opportunities.

For smaller groups seeking smaller grants, it may be easier to look for support locally. Local funders often have simpler application processes, understand local needs, and take less time to decide on an application.

Local Funders and sources of information

1. **Council** (County, District, Town, Parish)

Your county, district or borough council will almost certainly provide grants to community groups. They should publish details on their website. Many councils also employ specialist officers to support the voluntary and community sector. These may be *Community Development Officers*, or *External Funding officers*. They will have a good knowledge of their own grants and other funding opportunities locally. They may even be able to provide your group with support in writing funding applications.

Within the Council, *Social Services Departments*, *Community Safety Partnerships*, *Housing Departments*, *Youth Services*, and *Education Departments* may provide grants. *Local Primary Care Trusts* may also do so, alone, or in partnership with other Council departments. There is an increasing emphasis on local delivery of services by community groups and many local authorities and primary care trusts are working together to engage the voluntary and community sector by "commissioning" services from them.



Most districts in the UK have a Council for Voluntary Service. These are charities, independent of the Council, who have the purpose of supporting local community and voluntary activity. In rural areas there is often a Rural Community Council. They will be able to provide information about local funding opportunities. They may be able to provide development support to your group and provide funding information in their regular newsletter. They should also have a library containing information about how and where to obtain funding. Details of your local CVS can be found at www.navca.org.uk and Rural Community Council at www.acre.org.uk/zRCCNETWORK.htm

2. Local regeneration programmes

Many inner city areas have on going regeneration programmes. There should be some sort of community network involvement so that the local community is involved in developments and kept informed. Community Chests often exist to enable local community groups to be active in the regeneration programme itself.

3. Community Foundations

There are 56 community foundations in the UK covering local geographical areas and providing smaller grants. You can find details about your local foundation at www.communityfoundations.org.uk

4. Local Trusts and Foundations

There are a large number of smaller Charitable Trusts and Foundations which give grants over a relatively small geographical area. The Directory of Social Change publishes regional Trust Guides which identify these smaller trusts by their area of benefit. Your local CVS or Rural Community Council should have a copy.

5. Local Business - many of our well known stores have corporate social responsibility programs and, as part of these, give grants to local community groups. e.g. Tesco, B&Q, Building Societies and banks. They often give greater weight to applicants who have some connection to one of their employees. So it is worth asking everyone connected with your organisation whether they work for a company with such a scheme. Similarly, some towns and cities have a large employer who operates a local grants scheme. For example the Boots factory in Nottingham gives grants locally, as do Nestlé whose head office is in Croydon.



6. Landfill Communities Fund

Landfill tax was introduced in 1996 to help mitigate the environmental impact of landfill. The landfill operators can use some of the tax collected to support projects that benefit the local environment. Details of the scheme and ways to access the funding can be found at www.entrust.org.uk/home/lcf

7. Regional Development Agency's (RDA's)

RDA's have five statutory objectives:

- To further economic development and regeneration;
- To promote business efficiency and competitiveness;
- To promote employment;
- To enhance the development and application of skills relevant to employment,
- To contribute to sustainable development

They may provide a variety of grants to support these objectives. Each region has its own voluntary sector network which can provide details of funding opportunities relevant to the voluntary and community sector. See the Sources of Information page (below) for information on these networks.

8. **The National Lottery** provides funding for community, heritage, arts and sports activities the web portal www.lotteryfunding.org.uk provides access to all of the current programmes from the major lottery funding distributors.

For smaller groups the easiest way to obtain funding is through the Awards for All programme www.awardsforall.org.uk This provides grants of up to £10,000 and has a relatively simple application process. For larger grants the Big Lottery Fund runs a number of programmes and details can be found at www.biglotteryfund.org.uk. Demand for Big Lottery funding is high with only about one third of applications being successful. It is worth taking time to put in a high quality application. In general, the more money you are asking for, the higher the quality of the application needs to be.

The other main Lottery distributors, are

- The Heritage Lottery Fund
- Arts Council (England, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland)
- UK Sport



9. **Trusts and Foundations** There are over 4,200 grant-making trusts in the UK distributing over £3 billion a year. They fund a wide and varying range of activities and have different application processes. Because there are so many, the best way to find those trusts most likely to support your activities is to use one of the computerised databases that exist. These are:

- Trustfunding.org.uk - published by the Directory of Social Change
- Funderfinder
- Grantfinder

These databases allow you to do a search based on your location, services or activities to be provided, details of your beneficiaries and size of grant.

Unfortunately all of these are subscription services so you will need to access them through a subscriber. Some Councils make Grantfinder available to local voluntary and community groups through their website. Most CVS's and RCC's have Funderfinder and will do a search for you (often for a small fee). It is a good idea to do a search covering all of your groups activities and then keep the results and trust details for future reference. Then you will only need to put systems in place to keep up with new developments. (See sources of information below)

10. **Central Government** - information about government funding opportunities can be accessed through the website www.governmentfunding.org.uk

This site is an online portal to grants for the voluntary and community sector from the following funders:

- Cabinet Office
- Department for Children, Schools and Families
- Department for Communities and Local Government
- Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
- Department of Health
- Foreign and Commonwealth Office
- HM Revenue & Customs
- Home Office
- Ministry of Defence
- Ministry of Justice
- Government Offices for the Regions



11. Europe

European funding is a complex and ever changing area, and is not necessarily appropriate for small community groups. However, the advent of Global Grants (called Direct Grants in Scotland and Wales) does make accessing European funds easier for small organisations. These are to support access to the labour market and many smaller organisations are well placed to deliver relevant services. Much EU funding is now delivered through co-financing as part of Learning and Skilld Council, and Department for work and Pensions funding. There are regional support networks to help voluntary organisations access EU funding. These are:

ESFVON - North East www.esfvon.org.uk

LVSTC London www.lvstc.org.uk

Merseyside Network for Europe - North West www.mersey-network.com

North West Network www.nwnetwork.org.uk

SAVAGE (South East, South West) www.savage-europe.org.uk

West Midlands Euronet www.wmeuronet.co.uk

Yorkshire and Humber Regional forum www.yhregforum.org.uk



Sources of Funding Information

Local CVS Newsletter - find details of your local CVS at www.navca.org.uk

Local RCC Newsletter - details from www.acre.org.uk

Regional voluntary sector networks - most provide funding information on their website. They also link in with Regional Development Agency funding covering unemployment, learning and skills, regeneration, economic development.

Engage East Midlands www.engage-em.org.uk

Community and Voluntary Forum for the Eastern Region (COVER) www.cover-east.org

London Voluntary Services Council www.lvsc.org.uk

Voluntary Organisations Network North East (VONNE) www.vonne.co.uk

Voluntary Sector North West www.vsnw.org.uk

Regional Action and Involvement South East (RAISE) www.raise-networks.org.uk

South West Forum (SWF) www.southwestforum.org.uk

Regional Action West Midlands (RAWM) www.rawm.org.uk

Yorkshire and the Humber Regional Forum www.yhregforum.org.uk

Scotland www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/15300/funding/funding

Wales <http://new.wales.gov.uk/funding>

Northern Ireland www.volcomgrantsni.gov.uk

National Umbrella Organisations - some provide funding information. Should also be able to provide details of their other members' activities that could provide a basis for your own development. A Directory of National Umbrella Organisations can be found at: <http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/askncvo/directory/>

The Directory of Social Change www.dsc.org.uk provide practical and affordable information and training to meet the current, emerging and future needs of the voluntary sector. Their main activities include:

- providing practical training courses
- running conferences, seminars and briefings on current issues affecting the sector
- researching and publishing reference guides and handbooks, CD-ROMs and online information, and journals
- organising Charityfair, the biggest annual forum for the sector
- encouraging voluntary groups to network and share information
- campaigning to promote the interests of the voluntary sector as a whole.

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