

2021 Dressage NSW Clubs Forum

Grants and funding: Where to Look and How to Apply

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From – www.fundingcentre.com.au

Writing a grant application

THE TAKEAWAY:

There are questions that you'll be asked pretty much every time you write a grant application. Get good at answering those questions and you'll get more successful at grantseeking.

You have to follow whatever application process the funding provider has laid down. Have a good look before you start and make sure you know what's required.

The following provides a brief description of the sorts of information most grantmakers ask for but be aware that the questions may be different or differently expressed for each and every one.

- **A brief description of the organisation**

Here, the grantmaker wants your organisation to establish its credibility and qualifications for funding and get a feel for how your programs have been developed to meet identified needs.

They may ask you to include short, relevant descriptions of the qualifications and experience that your organisation (and its key staff) have in the area for which program funds are being sought. You should prepare a short version (around 25-50 words) of your organisation description and a longer version (100-200 words) to store as part of your [Grantseeker's Template](#).

- **The case for support**

It's vital to establish a specific problem or issue in a geographically (or interest-based – e.g., youth homelessness, rural depression, community building) identifiable area.

The problem needs to be one that you can prove your organisation can realistically address (or contribute to addressing).

Produce evidence:

Use up-to-date and accurate data based on objective research (see [this Funding Centre help sheet](#) for more details.)

- **The proposed project/program**

This is where you show that you've developed a clearly defined, creative, achievable and measurable strategy to address the issue/s previously described. Be as concrete as possible.

Include:

The objectives:

Clearly defined aims and objectives

The methodology:

How the objectives are to be achieved

Evaluation:

How the success of the program will be measured

• The Budget

The program budget can vary from a simple one-page statement of income and expenses to a more complex set of budget papers including explanatory notes. Be honest, open and realistic.

Many grantmakers allow not-for-profit organisations to claim the value of volunteer labour and other no-cost input as part of their contribution to the project, most often described as an “in-kind contribution”.

Your in-kind contribution might include volunteer labour, administrative support, rent-free accommodation or donations/discounts of materials, or equipment. These contributions should be given a dollar value and included in your budget as part of your contribution to the project.

In some cases, the monetary figure attached to your in-kind contribution of voluntary labour will be a standard rate regardless of the type of volunteer input (e.g. \$20 per hour).

Other grantmakers will allow you to estimate the approximate value of that input. For example, input from a professional such as a carpenter or an accountant might be valued at much more than \$20 an hour.

It's important that you read the guidelines to make sure that the value you claim is within the grantmaker's guidelines – if it isn't in the guidelines it's worth a call to make sure.

If you are allowed to stipulate your own value, do it carefully and fairly (the grantmaker will easily be able to sniff out a bogus or inflated claim).

While the in-kind contribution will be acknowledged by the grantmaker, it is important that you understand that it is not “paid” to you. It is simply counted as part of your contribution to the project. Normally you will only be able to “claim” a maximum of 25-30% of any project's total cost in-kind.

When you write your final report or acquit your grant, you will need to demonstrate that the amount of time and effort that you budgeted for in-kind has actually been contributed. A great way to show this is through a volunteer log, recording who provided the volunteer time, the type of work they did and when. It's always helpful to provide some photos too.

OUR TIP: *When you write your final report or acquit your grant, you will need to demonstrate that the amount of time and effort that you budgeted for in-kind has actually been contributed. A great way to show this is through a volunteer log, recording who provided the volunteer time, the type of work they did, when and for how long. It can be helpful to provide some photos too.*

• Proofreading

The most important part of any application is **READING THE GUIDELINES**, following them to the letter, and ensuring that you do actually meet the criteria for the grant – some grantmakers receive up to 30% of applications that do not meet the eligibility criteria.

Follow the application format that the grantmaker asks for, answer the questions that they ask and demonstrate how you are meeting their criteria.

At the end, have someone who hasn't been involved in the application process check it over to see that it meets the guidelines, nothing's been left out, and there are no typos. Ask them to provide feedback on whether they think you've made a compelling case for funding.

Get someone with an eagle eye to check the numbers in your budget.

Aim to get it in before the due date – the vast majority of applications arrive in the two days closest to the closing date. That leaves nothing up your sleeve for last-minute delays, either at your end (when the person who was going to send you that last essential quote gets rushed to hospital) or theirs (when an overloaded online application repeatedly crashes).

- **Are you ready to apply for a grant?**

Check your readiness by taking the quiz below.

- **Can you answer these questions?**

Who are you?	
What do you want to do?	
Why do you want to do it?	
What do you expect to achieve?	
How much will it cost?	
How much do you want from whom?	
How much (and what) will you contribute yourself?	
How long will it take and when will you need to start?	

Website references

Clearing House for Sport	https://www.clearinghouseforsport.gov.au/kb/participation-grants-and-funding
Community Grants Hub	https://www.communitygrants.gov.au/grants
Clubs NSW	https://www.clubgrants.com.au
NSW Bushfire recovery grants	https://www.nsw.gov.au/regional-nsw/bushfire-local-economic-recovery-fund?fbclid=IwAR2UKGVeBrJnqYwlik0w4dU81b8H3zi06vdizKc0fbh8CdZXL3Tp01iqeIQ
NSW Office of Sport Sport Facility Fund	https://www.sport.nsw.gov.au/clubs/grants/greater-cities-sport-facility-fund https://www.sport.nsw.gov.au/clubs/grants/regional-sport-facility-fund
Our Community	http://www.ourcommunity.com.au https://www.fundingcentre.com.au/help/grantseeking-basics
Sport Australia	https://www.sportaus.gov.au/grants_and_funding
Grant Connect	www.grants.gov.au