

FUNDRAISING

¹ Which approach to take?

DIY: For groups forming their own organisation. Many groups have found their own funding but if you are a start-up the main problem your group will have is credibility. Who are you? It is reasonable for a funder to be cautious with an unknown, newly-formed group with no track-record – even the biggest small grants funder Awards For All waits until you can send your first three months bank statements. The best start might be to approach people or organisations who do know you and to look for a few hundred pounds. Larger funders will take note of local people/organisations having faith in you. Help is more likely to be given to those who help themselves including getting commitments from the members. For how much you might need see the helpsheet on ‘the Shed Economy’. Go to ‘Funding sources’ below.

Have it done for you: If the above seems daunting another way is to seek the support of an existing organisation that has a track-record of raising funds. The most likely successful outcome of this approach is that they will adopt you as a project of their organisation and raise the funds which will be paid to them and for which they will remain responsible. This would mean them having to agree and oversee any spending and making sure the Shed achieved the outcomes specified in the funding bid. How they then work with your group will be down to the people involved. Initially very little responsibility may be given to the group but as trust grows controls might become quite ‘arm’s length’.

Funding sources

There are a wide range of possible sources including the public and voluntary sectors, businesses and trusts. In a 2015 survey Men’s Sheds reported receiving local funding from the following sources which should give you ideas for your own area:

Business and business-related

- Local companies –wood, tools, free signage, building materials, property, cash.
Local bank branch, supermarkets (Waitrose, Co-op etc)
- Rotary, Women’s Lion Clubs, Roundtable, Lions,

Public organisations and related

- Local Authority, the Health Board, the Police Crime Commissioner, Dalbeattie Community Initiative, Durham Health Trust, Dunhill Medical Foundation, Community Foundation of Surrey, Kent High Weald Partnership, a Housing Association
- Local and county councillors (individually they each have access to a fund), the Mayor’s Fund, Parish Council and local community council

Voluntary Sector

Church Urban Fund, the Stroke Association, Travel Smart, the Change Fund, the Climate Change Fund, Age UK, Mind SE Herts, Diocesan Mission Development Fund, 3rd Sector 1st , Sefton Community Fund, Resident’s Association

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Grant-giving Trusts

Small local trusts plus larger ones like Sobell, Garfield Weston.

For advice on small-scale fundraising e. g sponsored events etc see <http://fundraisers-uk.co.uk/>

There are several online sources aiming to inform you of every source.

www.fundingcentral.org.uk free funding website developed by NCVO with the support of Office of the Third Sector.

Regular free mailings.

www.j4bcommunity.co.uk You can register and carry out FREE grant searches

www.grantsonline.org.uk free trial

www.fit4funding.org.uk/sample-newsletter subscribe to this highly recommended funding newsletter

It's sensible to contact your local authority's officer with responsibility for the voluntary sector to get a picture of local grants (they may have their own Community Fund) as well as your local Council of Voluntary Service (voluntary sector support agency). Public Health Departments of local authorities are beginning to show more interest and have funded work in Kent and W. Sussex. One Shed founder received start-up funding from UnLtd.org.uk, a fund for social entrepreneurs.

Applying for Funds: Sheds can appeal widely: look for sources with objectives in health, social welfare, elderly people, unemployed people, or the environment. One Shed has even been funded for carbon reduction!! Public bodies usually set out clearly what their objectives and criteria are but trusts each have their own 'personality' and ways of working which you will need to research. The most important actions are to understand what the fund managers want to fund, read their questions very carefully and be honest. You'll need to show that you are going to fulfil the funders objectives, that you have a well-thought out plan and that you have the capacity to deliver.

For a no-nonsense introduction to fundraising from trusts and foundations look at

<http://www.knowhownonprofit.org/funding/fundraising/grants-funds-and-corporate-fundraising/trusts-and-foundations>