SURVIVE & THRIVE

SUPPORTING BAME* COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS THROUGH COVID-19 AND BEYOND

**RESOURCE 3.2
APPLYING FOR FUNDING:
WRITING THE FUNDING APPLICATION**

December 2020

The UBELE Initiative

ABOUT THE UBELE INITIATIVE

The Ubele Initiative (Ubele), a civil society organisation based in London, works across the United Kingdom and Europe with disadvantaged communities; most notably black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) communities.

Ubele (taken from Swahili to mean 'The Future') is an African Diaspora led intergenerational social enterprise founded in 2014. Our primary mission is to help build more sustainable communities across the UK.

We have developed through a bottom up, community-based approach and although African Diaspora led, our culturally diverse team supports a wide range of communities and community-based organisations and groups through social action, community enterprise development and next generation leadership initiatives.

ubele.org
@ubeleinitiative
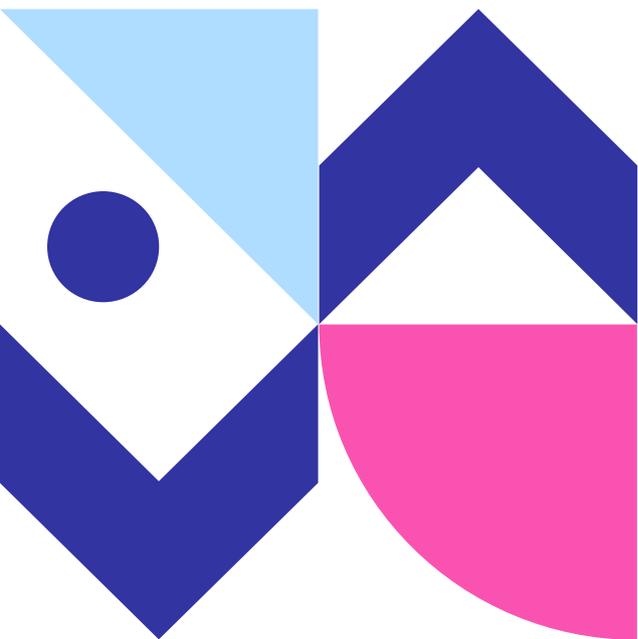
* We recognise the diversity of individual identities and lived experiences, and we accept that BAME is an imperfect term that does not fully capture the racial, cultural, and ethnic identities that experience structural and systematic inequality. Whenever possible, we attempt to name individuals as they themselves prefer to be named.

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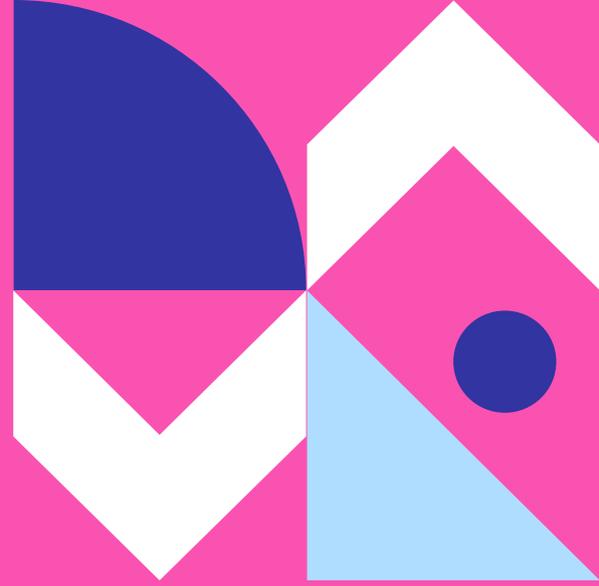
INTRODUCTION

Here you will find general guidelines for writing funding applications, how to write a letter of application and how to complete an application form. There is also a glossary to help you to get to grips with some of the jargon funders use.

BEFORE YOU START

You will be much more likely to write successful applications if you plan your activities well before applying for funding, and if you choose the right funder to apply for. See the separate the list of funding possibilities on the Ubele website or have a look at your local CVS website as a possible start point.

Always keep your project plan in mind. Don't get carried away and commit yourself to a project you won't be able to run even if it sounds better in the application.

Write in plain English. Use short sentences and avoid acronyms and jargon. There is no need to use formal or flowery language. Remember that you are describing your work to someone who has never met you or seen what you do.

Be specific about what you plan to do. For example, rather than saying '*we want to change our breakfast and lunch club to a takeaway service*', instead say *'pre-Covid we were a running breakfast and lunch club five days a week for 20 vulnerable people. Now we will provide 30 take-away meals per day, 5 days a week.'*

Focus your application on the funder's priorities. For example, imagine your group runs a dance project for local people: if you are applying to a funder that prioritises projects which help people keep fit and healthy, focus on the health benefits of dance. If you are applying to a funder that prioritises projects which promote arts and music activities, focus on the art and music element of the dancing.

Make sure you have gathered evidence that your work is needed. Do your research and be ready to include all the information the funder has asked for and any additional information or documents they require. Missing things out might mean your application gets rejected automatically.

Take extra care to meet the deadline. Late applications will not be considered, even if they are fantastic!

Make your budget as specific as possible. Get quotes for everything you will need to pay for, so that it is accurate.

Do not include any non-specific items in your budget, such as "contingency costs" or "miscellaneous".

Do not apply to more than one funder for the same costs at the same time. If you are successful in both applications you will end up having to turn down one of the funders. This could damage your chances of getting funding from them in future. The only exception to this is applications to very small trusts. It sometimes makes sense to write to several trusts for funding for the same costs, as each one may only be able to make a small contribution towards these costs.
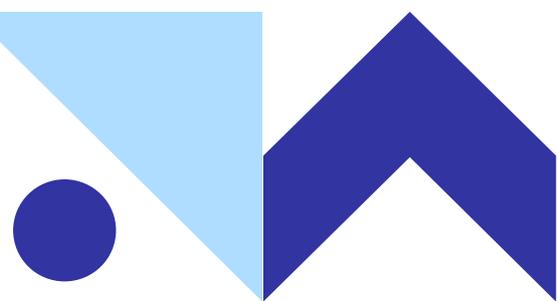
WRITING A LETTER OF APPLICATION

Before you start - Check you have all the documents and information the funder is asking for.

If a funder has a standard application form then use it. If not, you will need to write a letter.
There is a sample letter below. This can be used for funders and if writing to local businesses

Focus your letter on the aims and criteria of the organisation you are applying to, and how your project or activities fit into these. Do not send standard letters. Your letter should be:
- On headed paper.
- Addressed personally to the named contact for the funding body.
- Short and to the point. Keep your letter to two sides of A4. Focus on providing relevant information about your group, what you want to do, and why it fits into the priorities of the funder.
- Written in plain language. Do not use jargon or abbreviations.
- Signed by a member of your group who can be contacted for further information.
- Some funders will tell you what to include in your letter. If they don't, use the following list as a guide.
    - Your project title if you have one
    - A summary of the project, and how much money you are applying for
    - An introduction to your group including your aims, key achievements to date, support from other bodies
    - A clear description of the project or activities you are planning
    - Why the project is important and how it will benefit its users
    - A summary of how you will monitor and evaluate the project
    - Finish the letter with an offer for them to contact you for more information.

You should attach the following documents to your letter:
- Project budget including all the costs of the project, which bits you are asking them for funding for, and where the rest of the money will come from.
- Bank details for your organisation.
- A governing document (e.g. constitution / trust deed / memorandum and article of association).
- Your most recent accounts.

SAMPLE APPLICATION 'LETTER' (PRE-COVID)

Below is an example of a letter of application to a funder (pre-Covid). Most funders nowadays request online applications only with electronic signatures now the accepted format with many Covid-related applications simple online application forms.

However, whether it's an online 'letter' or a covering statement to accompany your online application – do remember that everything you write must be specific to your project and specific to the requirements of the funder you are writing to. The example given here is to give you some ideas about how to structure it.

This is an example of a pre-Covid letter supporting a funding request. It asks for funding for outdoor and indoor group activities for hard-to-engage children in the local area. Notice the structure of the letter which is useful even now for Covid-related funding requests. It includes:

- A summary heading (KidsClub application for AN-Other Fund)
- Vision and mission (inspiration for the club)
- Aims & objectives
- Details of specific activities
- Results including feedback from parents and numbers catered for (if you have any. Otherwise research showing the need)
- Specifically, what the funding will be used for
- How the activities will be monitored (feedback forms)
- Information on budget, current bank balance etc.

COVID-19 AND BEYOND

As it is unlikely that they would be able to run group activities before Easter 2021, this application would now need to detail what happened to the activities (suspended) and what they plan to do going forward– why, and how much it would cost. Some questions for them to consider include:

- Could they replace the swimming and Xmas ice-skating with after-school clubs for homework, activities, quizzes, keep-fit?
- Consider including Christmas food deliveries to families who are food insecure
- What expenses would this incur? Zoom calls, Instagram, Twitter, tablets for children in low-income families, volunteer expenses, food, takeaway containers etc.
- Consider applying for £1000 to cover the additional and different costs implicated by the new activities.

Your name and role
Your organisation's name
Address
Date

Recipient's name
Job title
Organisation
Address

Dear Yvonne Smith
KidsClub Application for AN-Other Fund

We would like to make an application for £1000 from the AN-Other Fund. We are a group of local people in Anytown, and, in 2019 we set up a community group who, pre-Covid, were running free sports activities for children in the area.

We were mainly inspired to start the club because some of our children often get into trouble at school, and don't find it very easy to make friends. We have 16 parents involved, plus 6 other local volunteers. Over the last four months we have run weekly activity sessions in the park, which have been attended by over 40 local children.

We formally adopted our constitution on 10th July 2018. This is enclosed. Our aims are:
- Provide a safe, fun environment where all local children aged 7-11 are welcome.
- Encourage children to take part in physical activity and develop healthy habits and lifestyles.
- Provide a fun focus for parents and children to play together and forge relationships with other local families.
- Provide support for particularly vulnerable families whose children struggle with school, or have difficulty making friends, by linking children up with individual one-to-one volunteers who support them to access the sessions and build friendships with other children.
- Provide a safe, fun environment where all local children aged 7-11 are welcome.
- Encourage children to take part in physical activity and develop healthy habits and lifestyles.
- Provide a fun focus for parents and children to play together and forge relationships with other local families.
- Provide support for particularly vulnerable families whose children struggle with school, or have difficulty making friends, by linking children up with individual one-to-one volunteers who support them to access the sessions and build friendships with other children.

We have begun our activities in the summer months. By borrowing equipment from a local primary school, and running our sessions in the park, we have kept our costs very low.

Our weekly sessions have become very important to those involved. One parent said *"Taking part in KidsClub means that my son has had a chance to make friends. He is sometimes bullied at school, and finds it hard to socialise. KidsClub has made him much happier and this has helped his confidence and he is now even enjoying school more."*

We want to provide a continuous experience for the families involved, and get more people involved. For this reason, we would like to run indoor activities from November 2019 – April 2020.

We are applying to Yet-AN-Other fund for £1000 to cover the costs of hiring a sports hall for weekly activities, plus three swimming sessions and one Christmas ice skating session.

We will provide feedback forms after every activity.

We are also requesting money to pay for printing leaflets, to publicise the project to more families. Our bank details are: Anytown Bank Account Name: Anytown Kids Club Sort Code 010101 Account number 09010901

We have enclosed a copy of our constitution, and a bank statement. Please see below a budget for our project, showing how we intend to spend the money we have asked for.

We do not yet have annual accounts, as we have not been running for long enough. We will get our accounts externally examined at the end of the year. Since setting up our bank account in August, we have received £147 in donations from supporters. We have spent £96 on equipment hire, refreshments and publicity. We have been able to access a free meeting room at a primary school. Our current bank balance is £51.

Please don't hesitate to get in touch if you would like any more information.

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours sincerely,
Your full name (Chair)

Attached budget

Hall hire (for 24 weeks, at £20 per week)	**£480**
Swimming sessions x3 (for 40 children £1.50 per child per session)	**£180**
Christmas ice skating (for 40 children, at £5 entry per child, and for 10 adult volunteers at £8 entry per adult)	**£280**
Printing and publicity	**£60**
TOTAL	**£1,000**

COMPLETING
AN APPLICATION FORM

When you complete an application form follow these basic guidelines:

- Take care to read each question carefully and make sure your answers include specific information that is relevant to the question. Use the jargon-buster (at the end of this resource) to help you understand the questions
- Give yourself enough time to do a bit of extra research to ensure you can answer all the questions fully
- Be clear, precise, and positive about your group and your proposed projectKeep in mind the funder's guidelines and criteria when you are answering the questions
- Do not include any attachments that aren't specifically requested by the funder
- If the form is online, write your answers in a Word document or similar, so that you can save them as you go along and share them with other people in your group
- Ask somebody else to check your form thoroughly before you send it off
- Keep a copy of your completed information.
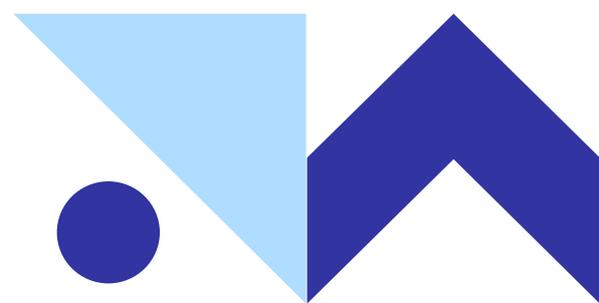
INCLUDE A BUDGET

Below you'll find a couple of simple budgets to give you an idea of the level of detail to include. The Funder may give you a budget template or maybe an idea of what, or what not, to include in your budget information – for example, do they want you to include details about your Core costs or not? If there is no guidance from them – then keep it simple and realistic!

These are two examples of budgets from The Henry Smith Charity. Thank you! Although these two budgets were written pre-Covid and therefore include such items as Hall Hire and Boat Trip, the structures are good and the listings themselves are useful.

What, now, are the items you might need to include?

For example: Zoom and internet costs plus Instagram and Twitter; mobile phone, Volunteer expenses; takeaway food containers (to replace Lunch Club crockery and cutlery).

Project Budget

Expenditure

Item	Cost
Accommodation	£240.00
Outdoor activities	£450.00
Boat trip	£70.00
Food	£400.00
Transport	£170.00
Parking	£15.00
Sundries	£35.00
Total expenditure	£1380.00

Income

Item	Amount
£25 x 15 from parents/carers	£375.00
Fundraising to date	£100.00
Total income	£475.00

Shortfall

| Item	Projected income
Application to Henry Smith Charity	£805.00
Supermarket bag pack	£100.00
Total to raise	£905.00

Organisation Budget

Money Advice Service
Budget 2017-20

Expenditure	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Salaries	£125,000	£128,750	£132,613
Staff Expenses	£413	£426	£439
Volunteer Expenses	£5,438	£5,602	£5,770
Recruitment	£608	£626	£645
Staff and Volunteer Training	£5,115	£5,269	£5,427
Rent	£6,949	£7,158	£7,373
Heat and light	£1,059	£1,091	£1,124
Room Hire	£1,462	£1,506	£1,551
Insurance	£2,568	£2,645	£2,724
IT	£4,539	£4,676	£4,816
IT upgrade / development	£0	£6,500	£0
Promotional Material	£284	£293	£302
Stationery, phone, post	£3,858	£3,974	£4,093
Memberships/subs/publications	£869	£895	£922
Evaluation	£2,500	£2,500	£5,000
Total	£160,665	£171,911	£172,798
Secured			
Named Funder	£74,272	£78,727	
Named County Council	£17,500		
Named Funder	£5,000		
Named Funder	£19,018	£38,249	£38,847
Total	£115,790	£116,976	£38,847
(Deficit)/Surplus	-£44,875	-£54,935	-£133,951
Henry Smith Charity (requested)	£40,000	£42,000	£44,000
(Deficit)/Surplus	-£4,875	-£12,935	-£89,951

WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE SUCCESSFUL

If you are offered a grant, the funder will often request further information or paperwork before they give you the money. Send this to them as soon as possible, and make sure you meet any deadlines they set for you. Failure to do so could mean you don't get the grant after all.

Read through the terms and conditions of the grant carefully. What items have they agreed to fund? Do they specify any other conditions of how the money is to be spent or handled? What kind of monitoring information do they want? How do they want it presented?

Make sure you have a system for monitoring, and start collecting data about who you are working with; how often and what difference your work is making as soon as your project or activities begin. If the funder asks you for a report, make sure you send it to them in good time, including all the information they have requested. Even if you are not asked for information, it is worth writing to funders to let them know how your project is going, and highlighting any particular successes.

JARGON BUSTING

Beneficiaries: people who will benefit from your project.

Capital costs: items or equipment you need to buy, build or repair. These might include items for your group to use, such as bicycles or computers, or repairing or renovating a building.

Evaluation: everything you do to consider how your project is going.

You can do it on an ongoing basis – for example, by having regular discussions at committee meetings about how things are going. You can also do it at the end of the project, by looking back and thinking about what went well and what you would improve next time.

It is important to remember what you were aiming to do at the beginning of the project when you are doing an evaluation, so that you can check to see whether you are doing what you set out to do. You can use information you gather as you are running your project, (monitoring), to help you to do your evaluation. This is why the two are often referred to together as monitoring and evaluation. Together they mean gathering information about how your project is going, and then looking at it and assessing what is going well and what could be improved.

Evidence: facts and proof that back up your claims. When applying for funding, evidence will be needed that the people your project is for are facing particular needs or problems which you project will help overcome. When reporting to a funder who has given you a grant, you may need to provide evidence that you have done what you said you would do. This could include survey responses, registers of attendance, photographs and receipts.

Indicators: the things you will measure to find out whether you are achieving your outcomes and outputs. For example, an indicator of whether you are achieving the output above might be 'the number of children attending online cookery sessions'. An indicator of whether you are achieving the outcome above might be 'responses to children's quiz about healthy eating'.

Match funding: funding from more than one source for the same project. Some funders will require this. For example, they might say 'We will give you half the cost of your project, but only if you can raise the other half from another funder'.
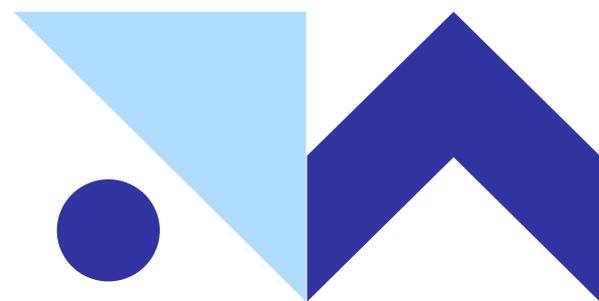
Monitoring: the methods you use to find out how your project is going. They might include taking a register of participants or doing a survey of your members.

Outcomes: the benefits that happen as a result of your work. They are the reasons for doing your project. For example, if you are running a children's cooking project, an outcome could be: 'local children have a better understanding of healthy eating and nutrition.

Outputs: what you actually do to achieve your outcomes. So, in the example above, an output could be 'running ten cookery classes for twenty local children'. When funders ask what your outputs will be, they are asking what you are actually, specifically, going to do.

Qualitative data: information about what people think/feel/experience etc., about your project.

Quantitative data: information that you gather through your monitoring about things you can count, such as the number of people attending.

Revenue costs: things you need to pay for that are not physical objects or buildings. They include salary costs, refreshments, volunteer expenses, venue hire and publicity.
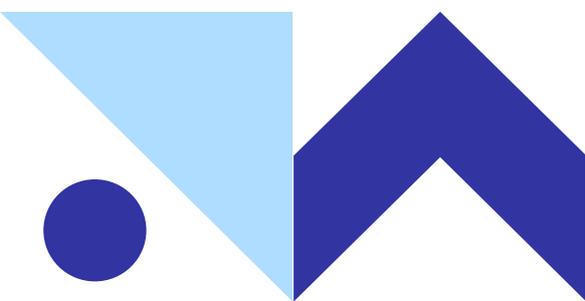
CASE STUDY

Interesting information
regarding funding during the Covid-19 pandemic

COUNCIL OF SOMALI ORGANISATIONS (CSO)

Operating since 2010, CSO is a national, second-tier member-led organisation which aims to build the capacity of Somali CVOs in the UK and represent UK Somali Communities at national level in raising their voices and working on policies that affect them.

As of September 2020, the organisation is expanding. We are currently operating as a team of three. However, five new posts are coming in: an Executive Assistant to the Director, Training, Digital, and Membership Operations Coordinators and a Communication Analyst posts.

Beyond that there is another pipeline with funding applications going in for another 10 positions. That would give a total of just under 20 new project staff. Once the new staff come on stream and settle, (there will be….) space and time to do more strategic work on supporting families and children in schools, mental health, youth employment support and criminal justice.

Currently, one of my biggest concerns is the membership being able to cope with this new influx of grants. I recognised that this 'emergency funding' had been made possible because of the killing of George Lloyd and the COVID-19 situation.

CSO's challenge will be to ensure that funding is continued and sustainable.

As CSO is a second-tier umbrella organisation, we rely on members adapting at ground level. Some recent funding applications have stated that organisations need equipment to deal with the current COVID-19 situation indicating that people are adapting their work and work areas. 75% of CSO's current funding stream is focused on capacity building COVID-19-related resilience by providing support in fundraising and budgeting, developing communication strategies, benefits law, housing law, money and debt as well as mental health awareness.

We have brought in the major funders to have direct dialogue with our members through our weekly Fundraising Workshops as a confidence building measure. We are also thankful to the NET & UK Communities for providing – at the start of the crisis – five, free, volunteer bid writers, and also the London Community Response Fund for funding free workshops and extra support in bid writing.

What has been noticed is that not having had funding like this before, many of the members are a bit scared to apply for the funding. £20k sounds like a lot of money if you've been making ends meet on nothing or very little. So we support them to tell us what they actually want from the funders, not what they think they would receive. It's both humbling and fulfilling at the same time.

Some organisations have, in fact, missed the different waves of funding because of the deluge of short deadlines but there will still be opportunity for 3rd wave funding and we will continue to support our member organisations to apply.

Thanks to Mr Kahiye Alim, Director of the Council of Somali Organisations (CSO).

The interview has been edited for length.
For the full interview please visit:
www.ubele.org/covid19-case-studies and look for Council of Somali Organisations under the Community Organisations section.

Find out more about the organisation
www.councilofsomaliorgs.com

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