

STEP 1: Getting Clear about Your Project

Here are some questions to get you started. Just start by jotting down your first thoughts. Some questions might not apply. Some questions you won't have answers for right now.

1. What's the need?

- *Issue & Impacts:* What problem are we trying to deal with? How does this impact our community & people here? What's happening/not happening that we'd like to change?
- *What do we know about this need?* Scale & scope: what is the extent of the problem here & now? What do local, relevant stakeholders tell us? What evidence do we have about this issue?

2. What's our solution?

- *Strategy:* What strategy or action is needed & do-able at this time in this community? How does this fit with a longer-term solution?
- *Project:* What's our project or action? How will it help? What do we want to accomplish? Who needs to be involved in this project? Who do we need as partners in this?

3. Is your organization right for this project?

- *Mandate:* How is our organization the 'right fit' for this?
- *Assets:* What resources do we have to tackle this issue? What partnerships do we have and how might they be involved? What support can we count on from the community?
- *On-Board:* How ready, willing, & able is this group? Is there Board support for this? Is there a strong commitment and a clear champion for this project?

4. What's the project? Things to think about & plan for—jot your first thoughts....

Goals: What are the 3-5 goals of this project? What do we want to accomplish here?

Project overview: What are main components of this project? What steps or stages do we have to consider and plan for? Who needs to be involved—what are their roles & responsibilities?

Costs & Budget: What costs do we have to plan for? Have we penciled out a rough budget? Where might the money come from? What do we have 'in the kitty'? What gift-in-kind or cash contributions might we access? What grant(s) might fit this & how much are we looking for?

Timeline: What are the action steps and sequence of activities in this project? What needs to be done from beginning to end?

Challenges & Contingencies: What problems or issues might get in the way of this project? What contingencies or factors should be considered?

Sustainability: Will this project continue beyond the grant-funded period? How much will it cost to keep this project going? Who/how will we continue to pay for this?

STEP 2: Starting To Think About A GRANT

1. What are the DELIVERABLES for this project?

Examples of deliverables: a new roof; an updated publication; a volunteer policy developed & implemented; a marketing plan created and implemented; number of participants in a new program; usage numbers increased; decreased numbers/reports of negative incidents; more hall bookings (as a result of renovating/upgrading the community hall kitchen facilities); user/participation satisfaction surveys, etc.

- *Outcomes:* What results do we expect? What products or activities will be created? What outcomes or changes to the issue do we expect from this project?
- *Tracking & success indicators:* what can we track, count, monitor or get feedback on to show this project is addressing the need or problem? What can we use as evidence of success and report to the funders?

2. Is this the right GRANT program for this project?

- *Grant mandate:* What does this grant focus on? What kinds of projects are they looking for? What types of projects have they funded in the past?
- *Doing our homework:* Have we checked out the grant website? Have we read the grant guidelines and application carefully? Do we know what projects they've funded in the past? Have we phoned the grant people for a first chat?
- *Grant details:* Does this grant have a current priority or focus? Is this project a good fit with this grant? Does this grant require matching funding? What specific information or documents does the grant application ask for? What has to be included?

3. What if we DON'T get the grant?

*The stark reality is that many applications don't get funded.
What will happen to the project if the grant isn't approved?*

- *Try again:* Will you revise this application & resubmit to the current grant program? Will you ask for critique/comment from the grant program coordinators?
- *Look for other sources:* Will you submit to a different funding program? Will you seek corporate sponsorship or embark on local fundraising?