

Read a Funding Bid Service

Information for organisations

Our free 'Read a funding bid' service is designed to provide a constructive critique of applications that are 90% bid ready. This service brings a fresh, neutral and experienced pair of eyes that will highlight strengths, glaring mistakes or omissions and provide top level suggestions for change that would improve the chances of success. This may include 'back-to-the-drawing-board' advice.

The service is delivered by Community Works staff, supplemented by a pool of volunteer bid readers. Delivery of the service is dependent on the skills and capacity within that overall pool. Therefore, whilst best efforts will be made, there is no guarantee that we will be able to match every bid with a reader. To most fairly distribute resources we will limit the number of bids an organisation may put forward to 3 across a year period and will prioritise the service to our priority groups.

The read a funding bid service may inevitably surface other support needs for you or your group and we will signpost you other support services where we can.

Criteria

1. Bids must be 90% ready i.e. well developed, mostly complete. This service is not about developing ideas for fundraising
2. Bids must be submitted to Community Works with a minimum of 15 clear working days before the funding bid deadline. This allows sufficient time for the bid to be reviewed, feedback given and changes incorporated where appropriate

How does the service work?

- You submit a request for Read a Funding bid service to info@bhcommunityworks.org.uk including a copy of the bid you would like reviewed
- We will check you meet the service criteria, answer any questions you have and seek clarification on any queries we may have
- If your bid meets the criteria you may be allocated a Community Works staff member immediately OR an outline (not the full bid itself) of your request will be circulated to our pool of bid reading volunteers or a specific match identified by us
- Volunteer bid readers will notify us if they are able to read and report on the bid
- We will let you know the outcome of this matching process and ask your permission to proceed further
- If you are happy to proceed, the full bid information will be forwarded to the volunteer bid reader and you will be put in touch directly with them to complete the remainder of the activity
- We ask the volunteer bid reader to let us know when the activity is complete

What we expect from you

In order for the support to go as smoothly as possible we would ask that;

- The earlier you submit your bid/book your Read a Funding bid space with us the better. In any event, you must submit bids for reading with a minimum of 15 clear working days available before the funding submission deadline. This allows time to find a reader, for them to read and report, and for you to make any changes
- You let us know of any concerns promptly so we can help and support

What you can expect from us

- We will be clear about whether your bid is suitable for this service and if not why not
- We will do our very best to find someone to read your bid – although we can't guarantee this may always be possible
- We will be available for help and support on any issue as it arises
- We will ensure that volunteer bid readers engaged in this service will be sufficiently experienced to undertake the role and be clear on their task

Who are our volunteer bid readers?

Our bid-readers are Community Works staff and volunteers who have sufficient insight into fundraising within the voluntary and community sector to understand funder expectations and the key elements of a strong funding bid. Within that, individuals may also have areas of strength or specialism and this will be taken into account when suggesting a match to a bid reader.

Confidentiality and conflicts of interest

We understand that fundraising activity can be inherently sensitive. We therefore ensure that all those providing the bid reading service are signed up to work within Community Works Equalities, Data Protection and Confidentiality policies which would include not sharing funding bid detail outside of this activity nor as a means of gathering intellectual property for other purposes.

Bid readers are asked to declare any conflicts of interest at the point a bid detail is circulated. Should it be deemed by Community Works that any conflicts can't be suitably managed then they will be withdrawn for consideration for that match.

A note on responsibilities and liability

This service intends to bring good fundraising practice to the bid-writing process and in doing so aims to strengthen the chances of a bid being successful. Feedback provided via this service is advisory to the overall content and does not guarantee a successful outcome. This service does not replace the due diligence and responsibilities of an organisation's trustees or designated staff with whom bid 'sign off' resides. You are free to amend or discard feedback as you see fit and at all times remain responsible for your bid¹.

This service also does not provide advice relating to legal or technical matters pertinent to fundraising such as tax implications and gift aid for example. Organisations are advised to seek suitably qualified advice in these areas as appropriate.

¹ Those providing feedback within this service are covered by Community Works Professional Indemnity and Public Liability Financial Loss Extension.

Nov 2017