



# Grant Seeking Tips with Kerry Anderson

## Be smart about it!

Like most people I've done my fair share of fund-raising and grant seeking for community groups over the years. In the 1990's I got my first taste of professional fundraising with a hospital undergoing major redevelopment.

Over a six year period our community worked really hard to raise \$5 million for the hospital, a fabulous effort that resulted in a national award. More recently, as a grants manager of a national philanthropic organisation, I gave away \$5 million in a mere six months!

I'd like to say that it is easier giving away money than it is raising it but the sad truth is that it isn't. There are so many worthy causes to support and only so many slices of the pie to share.

While there are huge amounts of grant \$ available, your group is competing with 600,000 not-for-profits (Australia wide) so it is in your interest to use your time wisely and properly plan projects before putting pen to paper for a grant submission.

Please don't apply for a grant just because it is there. Make sure it is for a well thought out project that is a high priority for your community. By planning carefully and consulting widely you can achieve greater benefit.

Of course, no matter how worthy the project and how well written the submission, there are no guarantees but by paying attention to a few golden rules, you can improve the odds.

Here are a few suggestions that may assist. Good luck!



## 1: Be Organisation Ready

- How well is your organisation conducted?
- Does it have an ABN? Almost without exception it will need one to qualify for a grant.
- Is it incorporated? If yes, does it submit an annual financial statement to the Australian Not-for-Profit & Charities Commission (ACNC)? This is one of the most overlooked community group tasks. Check out who is listed as the Secretary (public officer) and make sure an statement is submitted annually.
- What tax status does it have? Many grants require charitable status in order for an organisation to be eligible. In some cases, a few simple amendments to your constitution can make your group eligible.

[www.acnc.gov.au](http://www.acnc.gov.au)  
[www.abr.gov.au](http://www.abr.gov.au)  
[www.consumer.vic.gov.au](http://www.consumer.vic.gov.au)

**TIP:** Scan or copy important certificates so they are readily available to executive members of your group.

## 2. Be Project Ready

Forward planning and partnerships help strengthen a project.

Apart from being good practice, collaboration is important to demonstrate in a grant submission so talk to the wider community and other groups in your region to include their thoughts, ensure they are supportive, and avoid duplication of similar activities. Work together if you can!

Is your project listed on the Community Plan? If not, make sure it is so that it is clearly deemed to be of benefit to the wider community.

Have a project outline, timeline and budget prepared so everyone is clear on what the project is aiming for and how it will be achieved.

Please note that a project will NOT be funded retrospectively so don't start a project and hope for the best unless it can be progressed in stages.

**What:** does the project involve and how much will it cost?

**Why:** is it important to your group and the wider community?

**Who:** (1) will benefit and (2) will manage the project?

**When:** will it take place?

**Where:** will it take place?

## 3. Be Grant Ready

Grants can be accessed through the Government, Philanthropic and Corporate sectors.

Here are some useful websites:

• [www.business.gov.au](http://www.business.gov.au)

[www.philanthropy.org.au](http://www.philanthropy.org.au)

[www.ourcommunity.com.au](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au)

Keep the Community and Economic Development Officers at your local council informed on your project.

When you have achieved everything that you possibly can under your own steam, then it is time to ask for a helping hand.

Use a catchy title. Mirror the terminology in the questions. Don't waffle and get to the point. Be specific about what you need and how it is going to be of benefit to the wider community. Get your submission in on time!

**TIP:** Read the guidelines and answer these three questions to ensure you are eligible before starting to write your submission:

1. What **organisational** requirements are there? (ie. charitable status / geographic)
2. What **project** requirements are there? (ie. special interest / target audience / exclusions)
3. What **timing** is relevant to the grant? (ie. when is the earliest that the grant will be available and when does the project need to be completed by)

## 4. Be Acquittal Ready

A project is NOT complete until the grant acquittal is submitted. By not doing so, your group has very little hope of receiving future support.

Upon receiving a grant usually a contract or grant acquittal form is provided so you will know exactly what is expected of you.

Celebrate each milestone starting with the grant announcement.

Take photographs, keep copies of media clippings and gather information at every step of the way to make the acquittal process a simple one.

Be honest about things that don't go to plan and keep your funding partners and the wider community regularly informed on the progress of the project. Most important of all, keep a record for future reference.



Kerry Anderson conducts practical and engaging workshops for communities, not-for-profits and businesses across Australia.

She is also available for one-on-one training & mentoring.

M: 0418 553 719

[www.kerryanderson.com.au](http://www.kerryanderson.com.au)