



# SMALL GRANTS

How to answer the questions on the Bolton's Fund application form

## **Introduction**

The guidelines and score criteria here relate to Bolton's Fund Small Grants Programme (for grants up to £5,000). The guidelines and score criteria are very similar for the Medium and Larger applications so these guidelines are a useful guide for all of Bolton's Fund application forms.

## **Section 1. About your Project**

In this section you need to provide a **clear description** of exactly what you plan to do with the money you are applying for.

**Do:** Tell us in no more than a couple of lines, what you do as a group or organisation. For example, "*we specialise in running outdoor activities for young people across Bolton*". You can always provide a link to your website/social media if you like.

**Do:** Spend most of this question telling us about **WHAT** you propose to **DO** with the money you are asking for. Make sure you include **WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN** and **HOW** you will deliver the project. You could include information about **what days and times your work will run, who will be involved in your project, who will benefit from your project (and some information about them), how volunteers will be involved, any relevant qualifications and experience** of any paid staff. You will be scored on how well your project is planned.

**Don't:** Use all your word count telling us about everything your organisation has done in the past and what it does now. **You need to focus on what you will be doing with the money you are asking for.**

**Extra tip:** Your application will be scored on how well planned your project is. If you have spent time working out exactly what you plan to do and how you plan to do it, you will find it much easier to clearly explain what you plan to do in the application. A badly explained proposal can indicate a badly planned piece of work and if work is badly planned its chances of success are less likely.

**Extra tip:** Make sure your description matches your costings in the next question. For example, if your costings include expenses for four volunteers, explain here what those four volunteers will be doing.

## **What you will be scored on for Section 1**

The grant assessor will consider how well your project has been planned. The assessors will consider how clear the project details are in regards to:

- What activities will take place
- Where will it happen
- When and how often
- Who will take part

**Extra tip:** The budget information you give in Section 2 needs to relate to the activities planned in your project and give a good indication of how you plan to spend the money. If you are applying for funding for equipment, you need to be clear about how it will be used and why it is needed.

The grant assessors will award a score from 0 – 3 for this section on how well they think the project has been planned.

0 = Not at all or very poorly planned

1 = Moderately or below average planning

2 = Mostly or above average planning

3 = Excellently or very good planning of the project

## **Section 2. Your Project's Budget**

It's very important that you provide a clear break-down of how you have calculated your costs. This demonstrates that you have planned your work properly.

**Do:** research your costings and be thoughtful about what is needed for the project

**Don't:** make your costings up

You will need to show the details of how you have arrived at the costings for your project.

### **Example 1**

**Acceptable costings:**

Support Worker - 20hrs/wk @ £18.75ph x 20 wks = £7,500

**Not acceptable costings:**

Staffing - £7,500

### **Example 2**

#### Acceptable costings:

1 x HP 14" Laptop - Intel® Core™ i3, 256 GB SSD = £379.00

#### Not acceptable costings:

Laptop and equipment - £1,000 (you must list each item separately if they are not the same)

**Extra tip:** The grant assessors will check that your costings all relate to **WHAT** you have said you will do in Section 1 of the application form. If you have included costings that don't relate to what you've said you'll do, you may score lower. For example, if you've included specialist training for volunteers but not explained what the volunteers will be doing in the first question then the grant assessors may feel that these costs are not needed.

### **What you will be scored on?**

Your budget is considered when the grant assessors are looking at how well planned your proposal is. See above (Section 1. About Your Project).

### **Section 3. What is the need for your project?**

Tell us about the specific community need you want to address with your project, **and** tell us what you have done to find out if this project is needed and who has been involved in the planning/decision making process.

When your application is assessed, the grant assessors will score the application on how well you have explained the need for the project you are asking for funding for and how your group/organisation has come to this conclusion.

The need for your work may relate to:

- Where people live or the local environment
- A health issue, disability (physical, mental or learning disabilities) or caring responsibilities
- A lack of skills
- A lack of local facilities or opportunities to meet other people or take part in affordable community activities or voluntary roles

**Do:** find out if there is a genuine need for your project. Below is a list of the sorts of things you can do to find out about the need for your project. Ideas include:

- Hold a meeting or an open day for people who are interested
- Carry out a survey or questionnaire with people that you already help or might already use your service
- Keep a waiting list of people that want to get involved
- Find out if there is a currently a lack of similar services/activities in the area you want to work in
- Tell us about previous evaluation or feedback from previous projects you have run or pilot projects you have been involved with
- Find out if the project links in with local statistics, relevant strategies or plans (e.g. Bolton State of the Sector report, Bolton 2030 Vision or the Bolton Joint Strategic Needs Assessment)

**Extra tip:** Even if there is a need for your work and you have clearly demonstrated this, it is also important to demonstrate that what you are proposing to do is wanted by the community you will be working in and with.

### **What will you be scored on?**

For this section you will be scored on ‘Does the application explain the need for the project and how the organisation knows this?’

The grant assessors will award a score from 0 – 3 for this section and how well you have demonstrated a need for the project.

- 0 = Not at all or very poorly demonstrated the need for the project
- 1 = Moderately or below average demonstration of the need for the project
- 2 = Mostly or above average demonstration of the need for the project
- 3 = Excellently or very good demonstration of the need for the project

## **Section 4. Your Project Outcomes**

Make sure you refer to the **Funding Priorities** in the guidelines for the particular round you are applying for. The guidelines will say something like, “successful projects must achieve one or both of the following outcomes...”

## What do we mean by project outcomes?

What we are looking for here are the **BENEFITS, CHANGES, IMPROVEMENTS** you will achieve as a result of the project or piece of work you are asking for funding for.

**Do:** explain what positive difference your group or organisation aims to achieve for the people you will be working with.

**Do:** make sure this relates to the **Funding Outcomes** on the relevant fund guidelines when you answer this question (please note that the funding outcomes vary for each round).

**Don't:** tell us what you will do in this question. You have already told us what you will do and how you will do it in question 1.

For example, if the funding outcomes are more improved digital inclusion in Bolton, the kind of outcomes we will be looking for are more people feeling confident with digital technology, more people having access to digital technology or more people using digital technology etc.

**Extra tip:** In question 3 we ask you to tell us about the **need** for your project. Check that what you tell us about the need, relates to your project outcomes.

For example, if you tell us you are working with older people and they've fed-back to you that they don't feel confident using an android phone because they are worried about having their information stolen, your project outcome may be something like: "... *as a result of our workshop sessions, older people will feel they have a better understanding of android phones and will feel more confident about using this technology.*"

### **Example 1. Funding priority is "improved engagement with digital technology"**

#### Acceptable Outcome:

- *By the end of this piece of work people will feel confident enough to start using at least one form of digital technology. For example, shopping online or talking to family using skype.*

You can also tell us how you will monitor this to demonstrate you have achieved what you said you would achieve for example, "*We will monitor people's levels of confidence and use of digital technology before and after our project*".

#### Not acceptable as an outcome:

- *We will run five workshops on how to use tablets and by the end of the project 30 people will have received training.*

This is not acceptable because it only tells us **what** you plan to do; it doesn't tell us **how** people / the community will **benefit** from your activity.

## **What you will be scored on?**

You can potentially score up to **five** marks with this question so it's important you have a strong answer.

You will be scored on '**How well will this application achieve the funding priorities?**' Does the application explain how the project will help people in Bolton?

Assessors will refer to the funding priority for the particular funding round. Assessors will score applications against this criterion from 0 – 5:

- 0 = Very poor or not answered at all
- 1 = Poorly answered or not very well
- 2 = Below average or needs a bit more work
- 3 = Above average or satisfactory answer
- 4 = Good or mostly good answer
- 5 = Very good or excellent answer

## **Conclusion**

Once we have received your application we will complete initial checks to ensure:

- That you meet our minimum standards for eligibility
- Your application is eligible to apply for the fund
- That you have completed all outstanding monitoring for any other applications you have that are managed by Bolton CVS
- That you have answered all the questions

If you meet all the above your application is then passed for assessment. Each application will be assessed separately by a minimum of three trained volunteer grant assessors who will score your application according to the set criteria. It is very important that your application is as accurate and thorough as possible about your project. The information you provide will help the assessors to accurately score your application.

The total scores are then collated and presented at a panel meeting where the assessors meet together to make the decision. Other factors, such as the total number of eligible applications and the total amount available for investment are considered by the panel.

The assessment process will take between six and eight weeks. You will be notified by a member of the funding team to let you know the outcome. The funding team may also contact you if they require any more information about your application.

**Please contact the Bolton CVS funding team if you require any assistance. Email [funding@boltoncvs.org.uk](mailto:funding@boltoncvs.org.uk) or telephone 01204 546010.**