

# Managing your grant

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Your grant application has been successful, now it's time to put your plans into action. This factsheet aims to help guide you through the process...

## Step 1: Plan of action

When you applied for your grant, you would have described your project and how you are going to deliver it. You should now draw up an action plan (including a list of what tasks need to be completed, who will complete each task and when it will be completed by). If there are a few of you running a project, meet up regularly to check that tasks are being completed on time.

It is important that you deliver the project or activity in the way you described on your application form. If you need to change the delivery or project you must contact the funder to discuss this **before** you change anything. Below is an example of how the action plan might work:

Action	Who is responsible	Date to be completed
Establish which volunteers are available	Jonathan	20th February
Plan the training sessions	Jonathan	27th February
Buy equipment	Anna	5th March
Develop publicity and advertisement	Harriet	12th March

## Step 2: Managing your finances

Managing your finances is simpler if you can agree who can spend your money (for instance picking one person responsible for finances who can track the spending) and what level of authority they should have (for instance, you might agree that this person can spend up to £50 without needing permission from the committee or chair).

Ultimately, your management committee is responsible for your funding and how it is spent. So it is important that your committee receives regular reports on the project's progress and spending.

If you are the one looking after the finance, make sure you keep a written record of your budget and spending (include dates and details), check that your spending is in line with your grant application, and keep all invoices or receipts in case you need them later on.

## Step 3: Volunteers' expenses

If you have applied for volunteers' expenses in your application, you will need to decide in advance what expenses you will reimburse. These expenses usually

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include travel costs (to, from or during the volunteering placement), cost of meals while volunteering, child care costs, any protective or specialist clothing or equipment).

You can only reimburse volunteers for the expenses they have actually incurred, so volunteers should always keep receipts for their expenses and any reimbursement should be recorded in your financial records.

## Step 4: Monitoring and evaluation

Most funders require some kind of monitoring and evaluation of your project. Monitoring and evaluation might include: what you spent the grant on (expenditure), what you delivered (outputs) and what difference your project has made (outcomes).

**Monitoring and evaluating** your activities is also a vital part of your project in order to help you to track how you are doing and how you can improve along the way. It is also much easier to collect information as you go along, rather than for you to try and find the information after your project has finished.

You might not need to collect every bit of information, but think about your grant application and the **outcomes** that your project hopes to achieve – how will you measure the difference you have made and how can you evidence this impact? For example, if you are aiming to help young people to gain confidence you might want to keep a record of volunteer activities or events that you have arranged, how many young people attended and any feedback you have received from the young people. You could use signing-in sheets, photographs of events, surveys or feedback forms, interviews, and so on in order to keep a record of your activities.

Once you have the information, it is good practice to **evaluate** it at regular intervals. This could be in line with your funder's requirements or more frequently. The important thing is to look at all the information you have collected and examine what it tells you about your activity or project. Are you achieving your aims and are there any ways you can improve your activity or service? Your conclusions can then be written into a report for your funders and used to inform your planning.

## Further links:

- **For your first steps in monitoring and evaluation**, visit the Charities Evaluation Service – [www.ces-vol.org.uk/about-performance-improvement/about-monitoring-evaluation/index](http://www.ces-vol.org.uk/about-performance-improvement/about-monitoring-evaluation/index)
- **Volunteering England** – [www.volunteering.org.uk](http://www.volunteering.org.uk)
- For any further information, guidance and support, please visit [www.gmvss.net](http://www.gmvss.net)

## Key Words

**Expenditure** – money spent or paid out

**Outputs** – the activities or services delivered as part of a project

**Outcomes** – the changes and effects that happen as a result of your work

**Monitoring** – regular information and data that helps to track the progress of a project

**Evaluation** – analysing your project after it has been completed to review any successes or learning

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