

**Social Enterprise Funding**

Most people who come to us at Brag are looking for some sort of advice on funding. Whilst it’s true that there is money out there for social enterprise, it’s a limited pot and is highly competitive. Therefore it’s really important to get it right. Most funders will tell you that they have around a 50% success rate. Most of the unsuccessful bids are down to either being ineligible or being badly written.

If you have written a detailed and robust business plan, then you can usually just copy and paste from that, making sure that you are answering any specific elements that the funders have asked for.

Some handy tips

1. Make sure you are eligible, don’t waste time filling in applications to the wrong organisations. Give the funder a ring to check whether your work is something they might be interested in. Most funders will be happy to hear from potential grantees in advance as there’s nothing more disheartening than reading through a really good application for funding that just doesn’t apply
2. Remember to sell yourself. Funders don’t want to think their money will get squandered so tell them how important your project is to the community and how it is making people’s lives better
3. Make sure that your application is easy to understand to someone who has never heard of your project. Work on an elevator pitch (Brag Social Enterprise Advisors can help with this). Also, don’t assume the other people understand what your abbreviations and acronyms are – spell them out!
4. Tell them how you will spend the money
5. Demonstrate why your community needs your project
6. Highlight stakeholders such as local business, partner organisations, MSPs and local councilors
7. Have a clear budget xxxx
8. Tell your funders how you will measure success
9. Check the application deadline and don’t submit it late
10. Read the guidance and follow it
11. Have someone (Brag SE Advisors are happy to help) read over your application before submission to check spelling, make sure that it is easy to understand and can give honest constructive feedback.

Remember that if a project is worthwhile, someone will want to support it, so remain positive and believe in your goals. If you’re getting rejection after rejection, it is worth examining your goals, and if you and your stakeholders still believe in them, keep at it. A big mistake that many groups make is trying to fit their project into the needs of a funder. This could mean you end up doing something that doesn’t suit your community at all, and in the long run this won’t be right for you or your funder.

Some funding websites

Your best ports of call for a pre-start social enterprise are either Firstport or Scotland Unltd. Both of these organisations work with individuals with a great idea. It is important at this stage to have a good quality business plan and an idea of how you can make this happen, who you will need on board etc.

<http://www.firstport.org.uk/funding> up to £5k and <https://unltd.org.uk/> up to £4k

After you have been trading for a while, both these organisations have larger funds to help your project develop to the next stage.

Fife Council have a dedicated team to support you with funding and can help you find the right fund (local or national) for your project. Visit the link for more information.

<https://www.fifedirect.org.uk/topics/index.cfm?fuseaction=subject.display&subjectid=31C9D369-AEBB-46ED-BABE-5AE516541980>

Awards for All is a great lottery fund that is designed for smaller, newer organisations, again it isn’t a massive amount of funding - up to £10k but gives you the opportunity to put an idea or project to the test. The lottery are really helpful and will generally tell you on the phone if you are likely to be eligible.

[https://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/funding/programmes/national-lottery-awards-for-all-scotland](https://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/funding/programmes/national-lottery-awards-for-all-scotland%20)

The Big Lottery Fund also have bigger pots of funding for organisations who wish to grow.

<https://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/scotland/funding/funding-finder>

A great general portal for searching funding in Scotland is:

<http://fundingscotland.com>

And Fife Voluntary Action also keep an updated funding search tool:

<https://www.fifevoluntaryaction.org.uk/news.asp?category=Funding%20and%20Finance>

Others worth a check:

<https://www.therobertsontrust.org.uk/what-we-fund>

<https://sportscotland.org.uk/funding/>

<http://www.creativescotland.com/funding/funding-programmes>

<http://www.fifeenvironmenttrust.org.uk/>

<https://www.coalfields-regen.org.uk/what-we-do/investment-programmes-and-practical-help/coalfields-community-futures/>

Your Brag SE Advisors are here to help, so call us on 01592 860296 for any funding advice