



NEWCASTLE  
COUNCIL FOR  
VOLUNTARY  
SERVICE

# DOs and DON'Ts

- **DO** remember writing applications = 80% preparation + 20% writing
- **DO** research funders: use directories (NCVS library), web sites, annual reports
- **DO** get a current contact name and address and use it
- **DO** spell names correctly
- **DON'T** send a standard letter - funders may receive hundreds each week
- **DON'T** write a begging letter - you're offering a proposal
- **DO** avoid jargon and stick to plain English
- **DO** keep it short and simple; but make sure you get all your points across - no waffling
- **DO** get to the point in the first paragraph: **What** do you want to do? **Why?** **Cost?**
- **DO** ask the funder for a specific amount of money to fund a particular area of work
- **DO** use the appropriate funder for the level of grant required
- **DO** ensure your named contact can confidently answer questions about the project
- **DO** allow enough time between sending applications and the start of the project
- **DON'T** become money-led
- **DO** think about the project as a package - include salaries and running costs
- **DO** use facts & figures (don't generalise) - as evidence of need
- **DO** make sure you answer the questions asked on application form
- **DO** make sure the application is completed in full and signed
- **DON'T** send anything the funder hasn't asked for
- **DO** get someone not connected to your organisation to look at your application critically before sending it in (with the correct postage)
- **DO** mention if you've previously applied (and whether or not you were successful)
- **DO** show how service users are consulted / involved
- **DO** show links to relevant projects / services locally - give evidence of any joint work
- **DO** include realistic budget - avoid round figures
- **DO** include a project plan which should include ideas about what will happen at the end of the project. Will it still be needed? Will it have changed? What will happen when the funding ends? A good project plan also thinks ahead about any problems there might be and gives some thought to how they might be overcome

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