



10 Steps to Planning Your Project: Your Children in Need Application

There are four general grant deadlines each year. The GIO Project organised a workshop with Philip Jeffery (Regional Officer) Children in Need on 16th September 2009.

Philip outlined what Children in Need are looking for from your application and gave an overview of: 10 Steps to Planning Your Project.

1. Identify the need you want to address.

For any funding application you will have to show that there is a need for your project, and that your proposal represents a good way of meeting that need.

2. Identify the differences (outcomes) you want to make for the children and young people

Many voluntary sector organisations are familiar with describing what they do and who they work with. But you also need to describe the changes, benefits, learning or other effects that happen as a result of your work. These are your outcomes. Information on your outcomes can help you make your work more effective, by helping you identify what works well and what you might change or improve.

For more information on outcomes visit the Charities Evaluation Services website on www.ces-vol.org.uk

3. Decide what your project will do.

Children in Need will fund projects delivered by organisations working with disadvantaged children and young people, who must be 18 years and under, living in the UK, the Isle of Man or the Channel Islands. Children in Need will consider your project providing that you can demonstrate that the project is the best way of addressing the need.

4. Ask difficult questions: is this the right project?

Asking yourself difficult questions about your own project will make sure that you are planning the right activities to meet your outcomes and aim. It might be a good idea to predict questions that a funder may ask you to give yourself practice for the telephone interview stage.

5. Target your project.

Who will your project be aimed at?

Disadvantages experienced by children and young people include:

- Illness, distress, abuse or neglect
- Any kind of disability
- Behavioural or psychological difficulties
- Living in poverty or situations of deprivation

Also think about advertising or promoting your project to reach your target group: where can you best place information so that it gets to them? Will you use other organisations or agencies such as schools or health visitors to distribute information? If you are charging fees, are they affordable?

6. Involvement of children and young people.

Children in Need will look for evidence that Young People have been involved in the planning of the project. If this has been the case, make sure that you can demonstrate this with written information or evidence to support the planning process.

7. Plan what skills and resources you need.

This will determine how big/small the project really is. This step is the biggest downfall that applicants face when planning their project and is one of the most common reasons why Children in Need will not take forward your application. Once you have planned the activities and services that you want to provide, you need to work out what resources you are going to need to be able to make them happen. These are things like:

- Staffing (voluntary or paid)
- Equipment
- Premises
- Support costs e.g. management and administration
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8. Think about timing

When will the project be delivered? Does this clash with any key aspects of the curriculum? Will the project relation to any legislative changes?

There will usually need to be some preparation time first before your project is up and running. As well as running the project and working directly with children and young people, you will probably need to build in enough time for things like administration and evaluation, etc.

9. Write your project budget

A concrete and believable budget is paramount for funders to have confidence in your bid. Don't be tempted to round your figures, be as accurate as you can with your costings. If you're going to need equipment, research the costs and look around for the best deals.

10. Don't forget about monitoring your project

If you are planning to apply for this grant next year, ensure lessons learned reports are kept.

Evaluation is about using the information you collect to make judgements about your activities and whether they have met your aims. Keeping records and monitoring how many people have attended your activities and what they have learnt from attending will help you when monitoring your outcomes. **You may also find it useful to download our user-friendly Guide to Self Evaluation**

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/pudsey/grants/evaluation.pdf>