



20 steps to successful bid writing...

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Who are Idox Information Solutions?

2

- > Europe's leading publisher of funding and policy information: **GRANTfinder; Open 4 Funding; GRANTnet** and **POLICYfinder**
- > Working with funders and grant seekers for **over 25 years**
- > **CPD-accredited training** on bid writing, European funding and tender writing



Your experiences – straw poll

3

- > Submitted a grant application?
- > Been successful with an application?
- > 100% success rate?



Step 1: Is your organisation fund ready?

4

- > Efficiently run?
- > Clear vision?
- > Long-term plan?
- > Resources and appetite to carry out the project?



Step 2: Decide on a project

5

- > Projects: A beginning, middle and end
- > Clear activities and beneficiaries
- > Something old, something new,
something borrowed, something ~~blue~~ green



Step 3: Where to identify funding?

6

- > The Web
- > Funding databases like GRANTfinder
- > Local press – under-subscribed funds
- > Missed the deadline? Cuttings file



Step 4: The right opportunity for us?

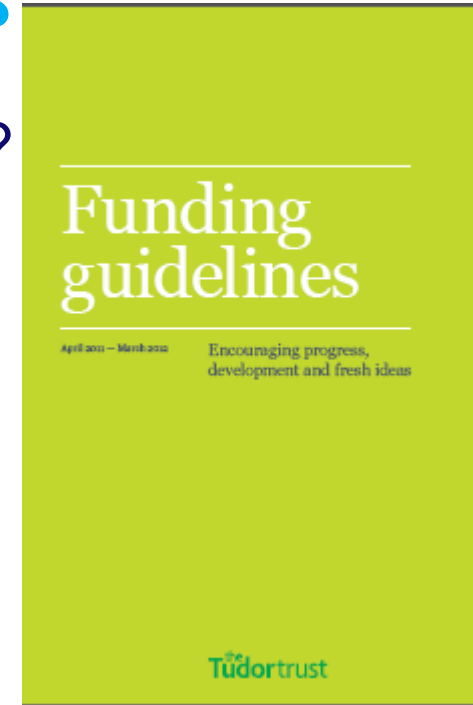
7

1. Apply to the right programme!
2. Can you demonstrate you can deliver the funder's needs and values well?
3. Do the benefits outweigh the cost?
4. Do you have internal buy-in?



Step 5: Scrutinise the guidelines

- > Key dates? Deadline? Project launch date?
- > Delivery format – maximum word count; font size; electronic and/or hard copies
- > Required legal and organisation info
- > Highlight ‘hot’ words (eg delegates, learners or trainees?)
- > Authorisation – whose signature?



8



Step 6: Plan your bidding process

9

Decide on bidding team

Circulate opportunity

Plan approach

Determine timeline

Circulate bid plan - who's writing what

Circulate a first draft

Review

Circulate final draft, edit and proofread

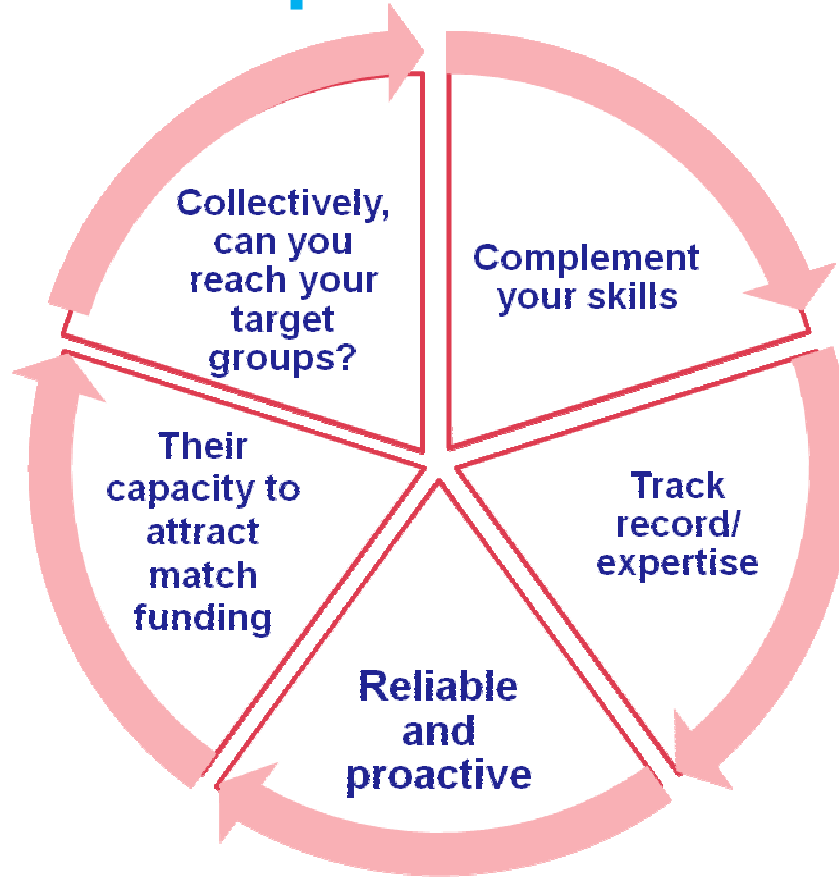
Submit



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Step 7: Choose partners carefully

10



Step 8: Understanding funder motivations

11

- > Published information – annual reports; case studies; personal interests of the decision-makers
- > Policy – is there any mention of a White Paper, Strategy or other policy driver?
- > Events – fund briefings and conferences



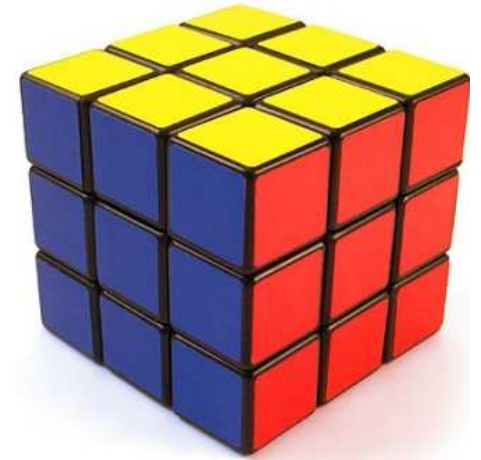
Step 9: Show your project's most relevant side

12

> Funder benefit statements...

“Our project will provide all members of the local community with recreational facilities.”

“**Young people at risk of offending** will have access to recreational facilities such as cookery classes and music workshops.”



Step 10: Structuring Your Application

13

- > **Label** – 1-sentence intro – your “grab”
- > **Chunk** – introductory paragraph
- > **List** – Bullet points; white space/ not text heavy
- > **Draw** (if allowed) – graph; photograph; diagram; quotes in a box



Step 11: Be persuasive

14

- > What's the Need or Problem?
- > What's your Solution?
- > Is this solution **wanted**?
- > How will you deliver your solution?
- > Evidence – how are you going to prove what you've done?



In short, what makes **yours** the best project?



Step 12: Bring the project alive

15

- > A catchy name, eg Teen Cuisine
- > Service user testimonials
- > Photographs
- > Active voice and positive language



Step 13: Differentiate Between Outcomes and Outputs

16

Project: Training older people in IT skills

- > **Outcomes** = Improve confidence; engagement with other members of community
- > **Outputs** = No of learners, qualification level
- > SMART: Specific; Measurable; Achievable; Realistic; and Timely



Step 14: Your Writing Style

17

- > Answer the question
- > Be clear and explain any jargon
- > Avoid long words or sentences
(15 words maximum) – Plain English
- > Be credible – spelling and grammar; make sure your budget adds up and is realistic



Step 15: A fresh pair of eyes

18

> Your critical friend will be able to spot:

- Assumptions about knowledge
- Areas not described well



Step 16: Avoiding failure

19

- > Ineligible
- > Incomplete applications
- > Lack of consultation
- > Concerns about contingency planning
- > Dissemination



Step 17: Success!

20

- > Win = pressure is off but you still need to impress!
- > Thank the funder
- > Maintain good working relationships – submit on time, updates on progress, think of the future



Step 18: Learning from failure

21

- > Ask for feedback
- > Which projects were supported?
- > Discuss amongst the bid team:
What worked? Didn't work?
How to improve for next time?



Step 19: Looking ahead

- > Raise your profile through lobbying and networking
- > Be vocal about what you're trying to do



- > Apply for awards



Step 20: Improve your skills

23

How Idox can help....

- > Funding and policy products
- > Training courses on bid writing
- > Bid review service



What else?!

24

...Tips from the floor!



Thank you!

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