Be prepared – how to be grant ready
How-to guide

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This How-to guide is one of a series produced by the Office of Helen Haines MP, Independent Federal Member for Indi, to help constituents find and apply for grants.

The topics in this series are:

The full series is available at https://www.helenhaines.org/resources/grants. On this website you'll also find six short videos to help you through the grant process.

Be prepared

Grants can become available at short notice and will usually have a strict deadline to lodge applications. Being grant ready and putting into place some simple record keeping can save you having to scramble for information at the last minute.

There are several ways that grants open to applications:

- Some grants are open all the time, with no set closing date
- Some grants are cyclical – that is, they might open for a set period of time each year
- Other grants are open for defined windows of time (e.g. four weeks)
- Some grants are open for very short windows, and could be on a 'first come, first served' basis with the grant availability running out when the funds are exhausted.

Whatever the case, it is worth being prepared and having the most commonly required information at your fingertips.

The Indi Funding Finder www.helenhaines.grantguru.com.au advises the application status of grants.

If you register on the site, you will receive an email advising you when a new grant that suits your saved details becomes available. The Federal government grants website (www.grants.gov.au) also provides information about current grants and forecast grants.

You can also sign up for Helen Haines MP Indi grants newsletter:
www.helenhaines.org/resources/grants.

Key points

Who, what and why?

- It is important to be able to define who you are as a business or organisation. This means that you can clearly describe who you are, why you exist, and what you do. You can often find clear statements in your constitution, on your website, or in previous written information about your organisation including a business plan or strategic plan. Aim to capture the essence of your business or organisation succinctly.

- In applications, you are required to use the legal name of your organisation, and provide details about:
    o Your Australian Business Number (ABN)
    o Your registered address

- o Whether you are a not-for-profit organisation, or a registered charity
- o You legal status – e.g. incorporated association, company limited, partnership, trust
- o Your tax status – are you registered for GST; are you income tax exempt?

- You may find this information in various ways:
  - o Search the Australian National Charities and Not-for-profits Commission website www.acnc.gov.au
  - o ABN Lookup www.abr.business.gov.au
  - o Through your accountant/organisation secretary
  - o From your records

- It is also useful to have some history – e.g. when your business or organisation commenced, access to annual reports, list of awards or outstanding achievements, past track record of successful grants.

- This information can be kept together for easy access when you are ready to write your grant application. This saves time and duplication of effort. You can use this handy *Grant-ready information template* to help you keep this information in one place, ready to copy and paste into your grant application.

Project ideas

- When you do your annual planning, think about projects or ideas that will help you deliver your vision and your organisational purpose. Develop a list of those ideas and keep them handy for when grants become available.

- Not all grants will suit your organisation. It is important to focus on your purpose and be ready to apply for suitable grants, rather than applying for any grant that is available.

- When thinking about your project, also consider who the project will serve (the beneficiaries), what impact grant funding would have, and what success looks like.

Other useful information to have handy

- Your previous annual report, including financial report. If you are required to be audited, a copy of the auditor's report is most useful.

- Insurance information and certificates of currency. Be aware of exactly what is covered and the period of time you are covered for. Keep a history of previous insurance claims, if any. You are unlikely to be asked about previous insurance history in an initial grant application form but may be asked to provide this information if your application progresses further.

Tips

- Keep records about your organisation in a well-known place for others in your organisation to easily access – details like your ABN, whether you pay GST, your organisation's purpose, and key beneficiaries.

- Keep records about what grants you have applied for in the past (successful and unsuccessful). If you were unsuccessful in a previous application, did your organisation request and receive feedback? This is invaluable information to help you improve. Keep a note of that feedback.

- Don't leave all of this information in one person's head. Teach others – build succession. Who else could do this? Who would love to do this?