

Your grant application

How-to guide

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:

[1. Finding grants](#)

[4. How a grant is assessed](#)

[2. Be prepared – how to be grant-ready](#)

[5. Managing and acquitting your grant](#)

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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.

Your grant application

Communicating what your project is about, why you are doing it, who it will benefit, and what it will cost is the most important part of your grant application.

Every grant program is different, with specific guidelines and application forms. Most application forms can be completed online.

This simple guide highlights important points about your grant application. An [application checklist](#) has also been developed to help you.

Key points

Before you begin your grant application

- Read and re-read the guidelines. Guidelines clearly describe activities that are eligible. Make sure that you meet the criteria to avoid wasting time and effort on a grant you do not qualify for.
- Once you have read the guidelines, make a list of all of the grant application requirements. What does the grant maker need to know?
- What information and evidence will you need to support your application? Do you need to obtain quotes? Do you need statistics and data? Do you need letters of support?
- Do some homework on the grant maker and grant program – what is the purpose or goal of the funding? Tailor your application for different grants – keeping the purpose of the grant and the grant maker in mind.
- Check if you need to show support for your application. This might mean a letter of support, or a letter of evidence to say that you have matching funding from another source. Allow enough time for these letters to be written.

Letters of support

- Contact the organisations and individuals you would like to support your application at the outset of your application process.
- When requesting support, be clear about what your project is, who it will benefit, what grant you are applying for, and when your application is due.
- It is also useful to be clear about the sort of support you need to help with your application – is it a letter in a certain format, or is it contact information only? This will help people supporting you respond in a timely way.

- Helen Haines MP can provide letters of support for well-considered projects in Indi. Contact Helen's Office in the early part of your application. You can also apply for a support letter using the Indi Funding Finder www.helenhaines.grantguru.com.au.

Evidence of need

- Accessing and providing up-to-date and accurate information is vital to establish a clear need for your project. This might include relevant statistics for the group of people who will benefit from your grant, or data about your geographic area and the specific needs your project is aiming to address. Gathering evidence at this stage is very useful.

Preparing your grant application

- Put someone in charge of the application, so they can be responsible for gathering all relevant information.
- The grant writer should be someone with a sound understanding of your organisation, a passion for your project, and good writing skills (some organisations outsource grant writing to professional grant writers).
- The style of language used in grant application forms can vary. You may be asked for Project Description (what do you want to do?), Project Rationale (why does the work need to be done?), and Project Beneficiaries (who will benefit from your project?).
- Funding agreements are contracts – know what you are signing up to and be realistic about what you can achieve.
- Some applications are filled in online and often have word limits for each section. Hint: complete your application in a separate Word document first – count the words and tidy it up inside the Word document (editing, wording, accuracy check). You can then copy and paste into the online application form. Save as you go!

In your application:

- Be clear about what your project is and what it will do
- Identify the need (why does this project need to be done?)
- Provide evidence for the need and demand (evidence could be statistics, reports, surveys)
- Show that you can create a beneficial outcome from the work of your project
- Talk about the positive impact your project will make.

Budget

- The budget is a critical element of your project and your grant application. Identify the total budget for the project. Identify the total funding you are seeking. Is there a gap and how will you fill that gap? This [example grant budget](#) can help think through all elements of the project.
- Many grant makers allow you to put a value on how much your volunteer labour will contribute to the project. Be sure to show how you have arrived at your figures. Here is a guide to [valuing volunteer labour](#) which can help you with these calculations.
- Match the budget to your activities, and be realistic and well informed. Seek quotations where necessary.
- Match your project timelines with the budget, and within the grant requirements.
- Explain unusual items of expenditure.

Tips

- Pay attention to detail and accuracy – have someone else read over the application to make sure the language is clear, there are no typing or spelling mistakes and that the budget adds up!
- Spread the load – even though you may have a wonderful grant writer in your organisation, be prepared for when they are not available.

For more information

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