A recent survey that was carried out to inform this Toolkit, showed that applying for grants is the most common way that third sector organisations raise funding for their core costs, projects or to start something new.

Applying for grant funding isn't easy. It takes time and hard work but can be a very productive way of securing funds, if a good proportion of your grant applications are successful.

Grant funding opportunities range from small grants of around £500, up to major capital grants of over £1 million, with everything in between. This means application forms and processes vary from relatively short and simple, to complex and very time consuming, depending upon the amount of money you are looking for. This Toolkit aims to provide detail that is useful for large scale, capital and public sector grant applications, as well as smaller ones. Don't be overwhelmed if you are just looking for small amount of money to start with, you can pick and choose which sections are most relevant to you!

If you haven't applied for grant funding before or are looking for a relatively small amount of money, the quick start summary link below will guide you

If you are looking for core funding for running your organisation then think of your whole organisation as a 'project' when you work through the Toolkit. This will help you to make sure you

These will need time and patience, as funders must carefully assess whether you are offering them the best way of achieving the outcomes they want to buy. This Toolkit covers all the main

1. Clear summary of what your project will achieve
2. Clear links with identif ed needs, and wider policies and strategies
3. Good support from a wide range of people and organisations (evidenced)
4. Clear aims, objectives, outputs and outcomes
5. Clearly thought through project delivery plan and realistic timescales
6. Clear capital costs, including professional fees, contingency and VAT
7. Financial tables to show projected income and expenditure
8. Evidence of risk awareness and good management
9. Relevant marketing to the right people
10. Realistic and well thought out funding strategy

All delivered by a strong organisation with good governance and clear policies and procedures.

Each one of these points is covered brief y in the following pages, with more information provided in links.

It is useful to have a clear summary of your project that can be used as a start point for most funding applications. Keep sentences short and to the point. The aim is to get as much key information across in as few words as possible! See below for a quick guide to summary points.

- ⊘ **What** – what will your project do?
- ⊘ **Where** – where is it based?
- ⊘ **Why** – why is it needed?
- ⊘ **How** – how does it fit with funder outcomes?
- ⊘ **Who** – who will it help / who will be involved?
- ⊘ **When** – when are you planning to start / finish / run
- ⊘ **How** – how will it happen? Are you building a facility, employing staff, running and event?
- ⊘ **What** – what will it achieve? What outcomes are you aiming for? What will the result be?
- ⊘ **How much** – how much will it cost?

Clarifying your aims and objectives at the outset and making sure that everyone involved is signed up
to them, will help you to explain what your project is going to achieve to a wider audience.

The aim is a one liner that gives a flavour of what you are doing and for who. The objectives are then the key aspects that you

The project delivery plan will capture everything that must be done to make the project happen and the order things need to be tackled in. It will also highlight any critical dates or timescales. Funders will expect to see that a clear plan has been thought through and that timescales for delivery are realistic.

The tasks will vary depending upon the project and could be quite simple for an event or activity programme for example. At the other end of the scale, an example of a high level delivery plan for an asset acquisition and build project is provided in the link below.
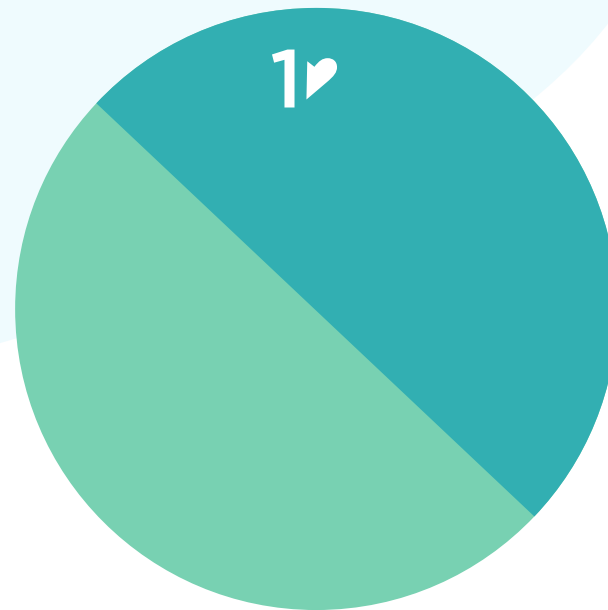
You need to research and present how much your project will cost. These f gures will change as your project develops,

Communicating what you are doing clearly to everyone that may be interested is vital to gaining support. Stakeholders - the people that you want to engage with and keep informed, can be divided up into groups that
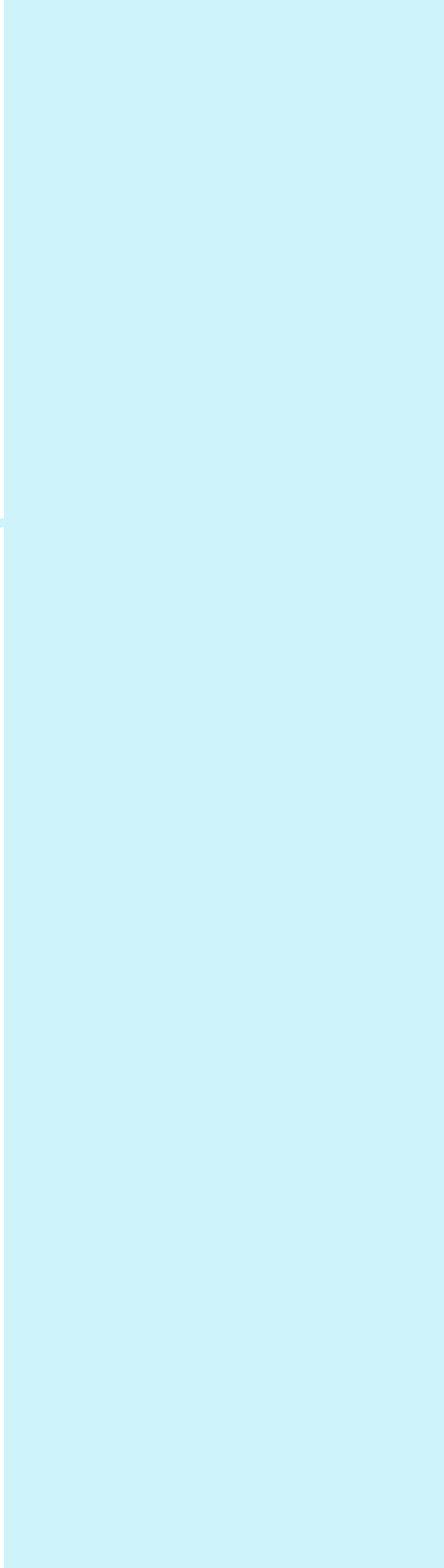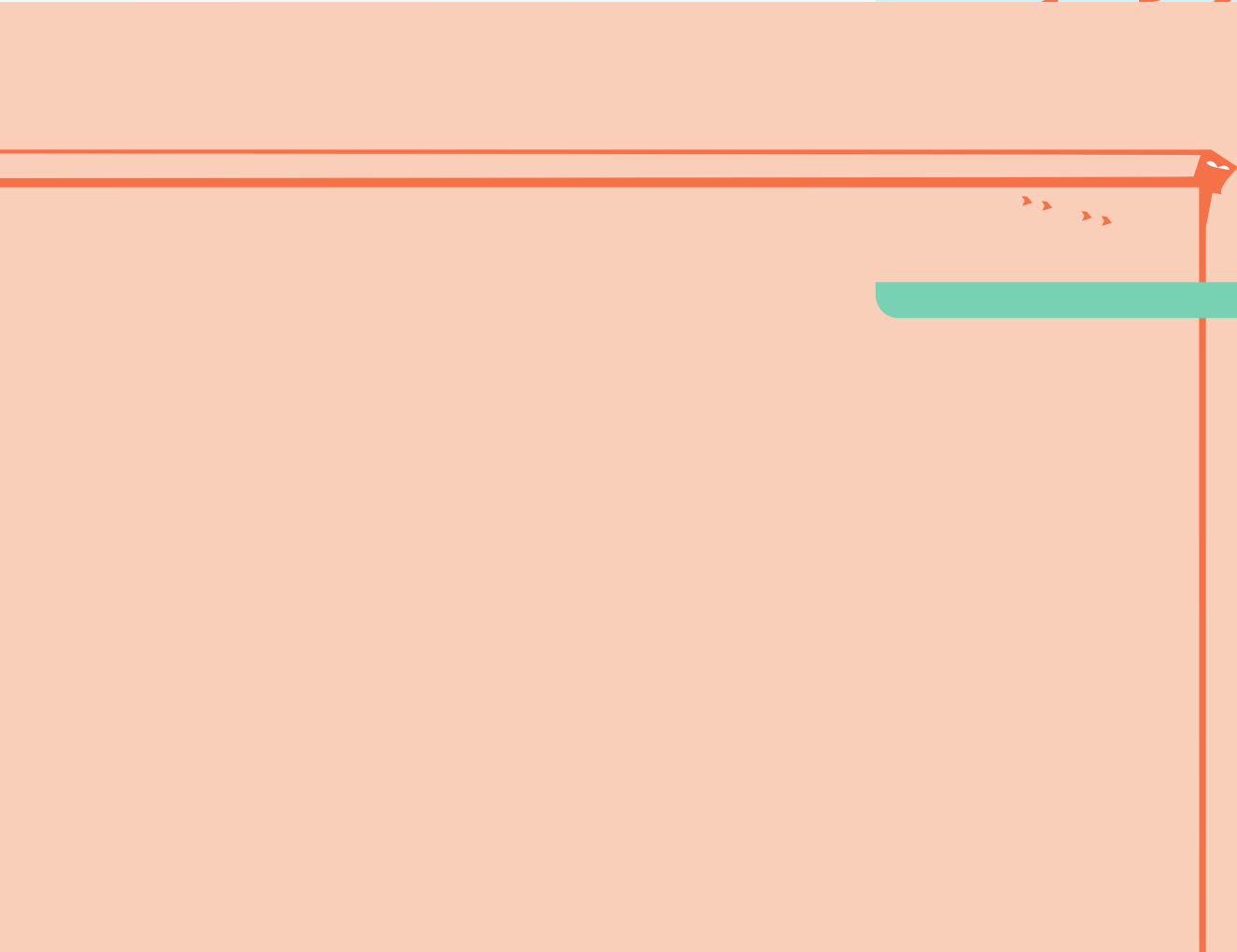
It can be useful to draw all the information you have gathered together into a single Business Plan or similar document. This explains all aspects of your project and provides information about how your organisation functions. Some funders will ask for a copy of your Business Plan, and others will expect that you take relevant information from it to complete your application form. The Business Plan needs to be useful to you and your organisation and can be updated regularly as things change.

Funders are looking for a strong organisation when they are assessing funding applications. This means having a skilled Board or Committee and good governance in place.

For this, it is useful to identify the skills needed to run your organisation effectively and to deliver specif c projects. These can then be matched to the skills held by the Board. Ideally, your Board or Committee will have good representation across all skill areas required. Examples of skills to be found within a strong Board are given in the link below.

Good governance of your organisation can be illustrated by showing that you areOr

Good management of the organisation can be illustrated by showing that key skills are in place. You may identify skills gaps and want to recruit new Board Members to strengthen your Board.

Following one to one interviews with key stakeholders across Argyll and the Islands, the following case studies have been provided to examine current practices and share learning.

Running your organisation – SCVO – a wide range of relevant and helpful information

Community-led Action Planning Argyll & Bute

www.mycommunity.org.uk – useful links and info on wider funding options

Tools and resources – Community Right to buy tools and guides

Scottish Rural Network – sharing rural development information, ideas and good practice

Rural Social Enterprise Hub – peer support network with a wide range of learning resources

Specific current Scottish Government priorities that your project may address will also be important to highlight, for example:

If you are developing services, then f nding out what people want and whether there is market for what you are proposing, will help you to show that your proposals are viable. You need to know who will use your services, and also you could ask how much people will pay for what you intend to deliver. If you are planning a capital build project, then your architect or landscape architect will be able to help consult widely on the options you are considering. The f ndings from this consultation will help you to evidence local support for your project, using statistics and quotes from your research. It will also evidence markets and potential income streams.

You will benef t from providing updated information to the wider community regularly. Consider using social media, local drop in events, leaf ets, newspaper articles and a website to make sure everyone is engaged with the process. You may also want to gather letters and comments of support from the local community and relevant stakeholders such as key partner organisations and politicians.

Depending upon the project and funders, you are likely to be required to provide three quotes for capital items and works. For a small project, this could be done by researching the cost of play equipment online and by asking three local tradesmen for a price to f t the equipment for example.

Capital cost estimates (all costs inc VAT)	Capital inc VAT	Source
Groundworks (foundations and landscaping)	£20,000	three quotes from local trades
Play equipment purchase	£15,000	website links
Play equipment delivery	£1,000	website link
Planning fee	£500	Council link
Fitting play equipment	£2,500	three quotes from local trades
Subtotal	£39,000	
Contingency (usually 10-15%)	£3,900	
Total capital costs	**£42,900**	

A larger project will require a clear specif cation for construction and a full tender process. The f rst step would be to tender for an architect, so your project would need to be phased to fundraise for and appoint the architect in the f rst instance. Once appointed, the architect would then develop the clear tender brief and Quantity Surveyor (QS) estimates for the construction work, which would in turn be tendered to secure three quotes from construction companies. This process is laid out in the project plan in section 4 above.

You need to be clear whether costs include VAT or not, and the VAT status of your organisation must be stated. For capital projects, independent VAT advice will be needed to establish what VAT can potentially be reclaimed. You will also need to allow for professional fees and contingency once you have an initial capital cost for the work from a construction company.

Each line of this table would be informed by detailed market research or previous
costs and desk research which could be evidenced if requested.

Cashflow		£1,500	£3,045	£4,636	£6,275	£7,915

Notes

Annual 3% increment added
All figures based on previous accounts and market research

Estimated earned income will need to be based on market research and clear rationales illustrating how
the numbers were arrived at (x customers per week paying x for a coffee for example). Costs will need
to be researched and best estimates arrived at by looking at similar projects and premises.

Risk	Mitigating Action	Responsible / timescale
Not able to secure funding for the project	Develop a strong project and funding strategy and write comprehensive funding applications	Project group. Ongoing
Timescale for delivery of equipment slips	Order equipment as soon as funding is secured. Mange expectations for project completion date.	Project group. Once funding secured
Volunteer fatigue	Recruit a number of volunteers to oversee project, so work is shared out between them	Project group. Ongoing

Identif ed areas of risk

Larger or more complex projects could require a detailed risks table like the one shown **here**

The following outline gives headings and a structure for a marketing plan. Although writing a marketing plan is often seen as an unnecessary, time-consuming process, it can be used as a working document to help you reach your objectives - including your funding goals by providing useful groundwork prior to preparing a funding strategy and when talking to potential funders. It will help you articulate a strategy for promoting your organisation / product / service, providing insights into your market and your audience (and how to engage with them). It also ensures everyone in your organisation is on the same page and knows what the common goals are, helping it to operate more efficiently.

This should be written after the main body of the plan has been produced. It will summarise the plan's main points, elements and conclusions, enabling the reader to read the main headlines quickly at the outset.

Explain your organisation, giving a brief background of its history to date and what your marketing plan will achieve.

- Carry out desk research to find any existing documentation which will help you evaluate what your audience is likely to want (ie best way of them accessing it, likely buying habits, trends in your market etc). Look up organisations that carry out similar work to yourself on the internet and understand what they provide and how they promote it. Are there are 'competitor' organisations that might be operating in the same marketplace, vicinity or with a similar audience? Make sure you differentiate yourself and provide something different (eg think of a Unique Selling Point: USP).

- Speak to potential customers / service users etc. What do they want / need? How much would they be willing to pay? How would they like to access what you are offering?

These will guide you to build on what you do well,

A SWOT Analys

These might include:

- your branding / logo – do you have a logo/branding device which gives your organisation a professional, unif ed appearance? Can it be improved?
- your website – is likely to be the f rst port of call for existing and potential customers / service users to look at what you do. Does it give up to date and relevant information? Does it portray the right image of you?
- Social media – like your website, many potential and existing customers / service users will form opinions of your organisation through social media; it is a cost effective and relatively easy way of accessing a target market, giving information and impressions of your organisation to your audience. Regular, interesting posts will enable you to access as many people as possible. Unlike advertising, social media is 'free' and can be very targeted and effective.
- PR – do you have contacts at your local paper? Find out who the local journalists are and develop a relationship with them. Most local papers are keen to support third sector organisations.

It is helpful to create a simple timeline to organise your projects and provide a clear structure, usually making things look more straightforward and not as daunting! An example of a simple timetable is:

Activity / Week Commencing	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4	Month 5	Month 6
Create new logo	■					
Update website		■	■	■	■	■
Create social media calendar/schedule			■			
Regular social media posts			■	■	■	■
Contact local press					■	
Open day						■

Most of the above tools can be undertaken extremely cost effectively, but if you anticipate costs it is important to obtain quotes for any work and devise a budget so there are no unexpected surprises. It is worth remembering that many companies

Work through funding opportunities systematically and check that your project and your organisation f t the eligibility criteria in the f rst instance. Does the fund cover capital or revenue costs? Is your project activity listed as something that will be funded, or a focus for the grant? Are there specif c areas of activity that the funder is looking for such as training or environmental outcomes. List all the funders that you are likely to be able to apply to, based on eligibility criteria.

There are many templates and advice documents about producing a business plan.

- *Read the application form and guidance and questions carefully!* Many funders have specif c expectations regarding the way in which information is provided and what you cover. Most will expect that you complete their specif c application form rather than attaching generic documents.

- Make sure that your organisation and project is eligible for the funding that you are applying for.

- Check what accompanying documents are required and gather them all into one electronic folder in good time. Check dates and signatures are all in place and correct (signed accounts for example).

- Aim to complete and send the application form well within the deadline, allowing for last minute information or internet issues.

- Make sure your project is eligible and focus the application on the grant requirements by clearly showing how your project f ts the grant priorities that are laid out. This

- Draft out your answers first to help you work out which information is best presented under each question, trying not to repeat yourself.

- Keep a copy in a word document if it is an online form.

- Stick within the word counts provided. They will give you an indication of how much information the funder is expecting in your answer.

- Prepare a clear spreadsheet for your costs and budget lines, with an explanation of how you came to each figure and the total. Gather as much detail as you can for each cost line, with quotes and internet research. All this information may not be included in the application, but it will be invaluable if the funder comes back with questions, or later for claiming your grant. Keep a note of any calculations you make to complete the application form lines accurately.

- Work out how your project will be sustainable in the medium to long term. Explain to funders what your plans are and highlight how they can help.

- Ask someone who doesn't know the project or organisation well to read your application to check it explains everything clearly and they understand what you are asking for.

- You are likely to need to attach evidence for your estimated project costs e.g. three quotes or price comparisons at application stage. (NB – when you claim you are also likely to be required to provide evidence of the actual purchase costs using the invoices you pay out against, see below).

- Keep evidence of when you sent the application to the funder and ask for an acknowledgement.

- Keep a note of when you can expect a response.

⊘ Keep a spreadsheet to record which grants you have secured, read all terms and conditions carefully and note all the requirements of the funder. These may be split into claims, publicity and legal. Having a document which you can refer to quickly to see what is required when will be helpful as you start to deliver the project and claim the funding.

⊘ Some funders will pay against invoices (before you have paid them), whereas most will need to see evidence that you have paid the invoice (e.g. a receipt or bank statement). You are likely to be required to provide evidence of the actual quotes received when you purchase goods and the invoices you pay out against as part of your procurement evidence. Check the requirements carefully and make sure you have the correct documents to include with your claim.

⊘ The time that a funder will take to pay out against a claim can vary from a week to a month or more.

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- Knowledge of roles and responsibilities of a Board
- OSCR reporting requirements
- Companies House reporting requirements
- Strategic planning
- Meeting management (plan meetings regularly, chairing, minutes)

- Financial management
- Budgeting
- Gra0/LBody ᴀMCID 18 15 • •

Written policies and procedures will help an organisation to run day to day operations. They make sure everyone knows and adheres to relevant laws and regulations, and keep internal processes simple and systematic, so everyone does things in the same way where it matters.

Policies tend to cover regulations that need to be met and put in place internal structures so that everyone, Board, staff and volunteers, knows what is expected and how things will be done. They can include policies on:
- Complaints
- Conf ict of interest
- Assets
- Data and GDPR
- Equality and diversity
- Financial control
- Home and lone working
- Recruitment
- Volunteering
- Health and Safety
- Food and Hygiene

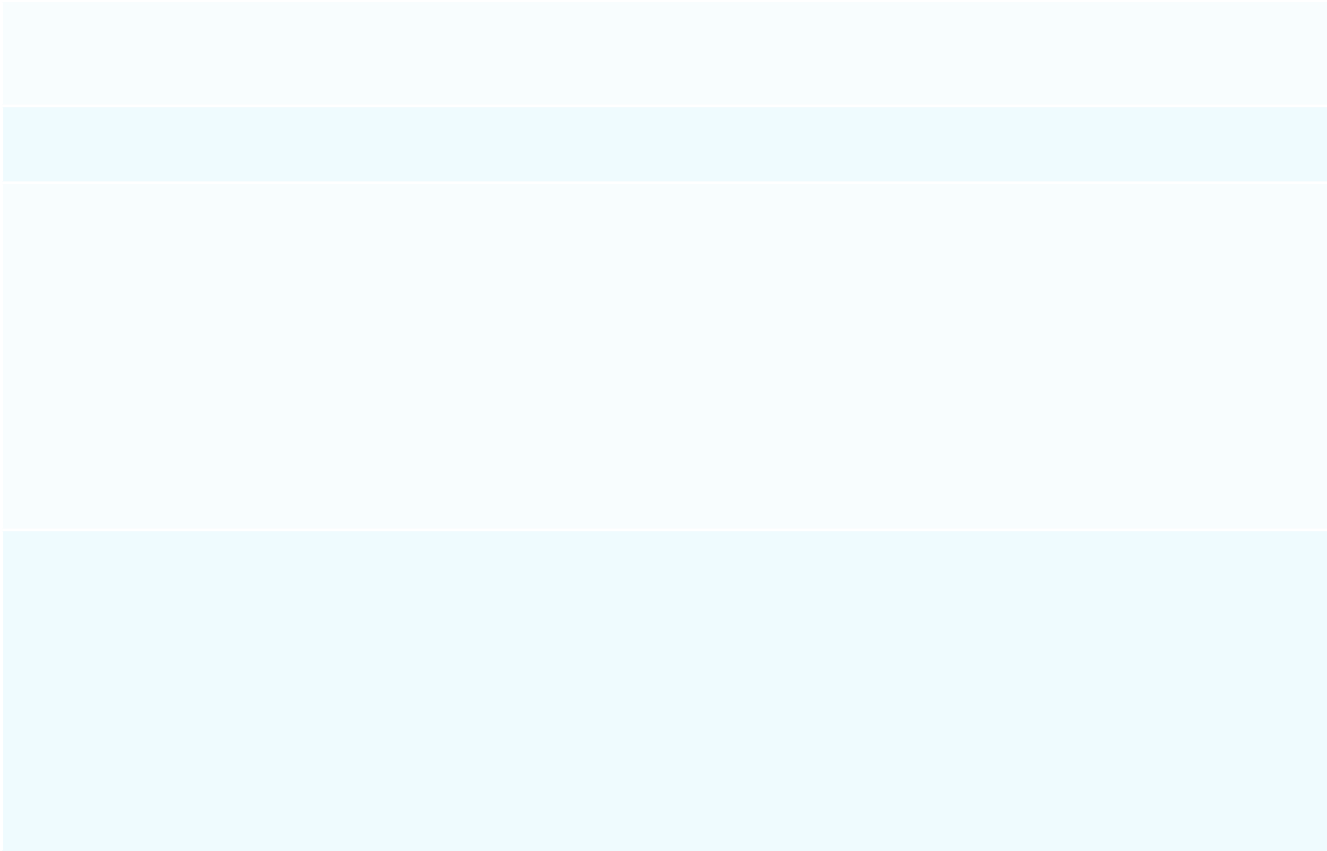**<u>Some examples of template policies</u>**

Procedures are also useful written down, so everyone knows how to do things. They may cover things that are useful for people to know like maintenance of a building or piece of equipment, f nancial processes such as approval of spend or ordering, booking systems or induction of volunteers.
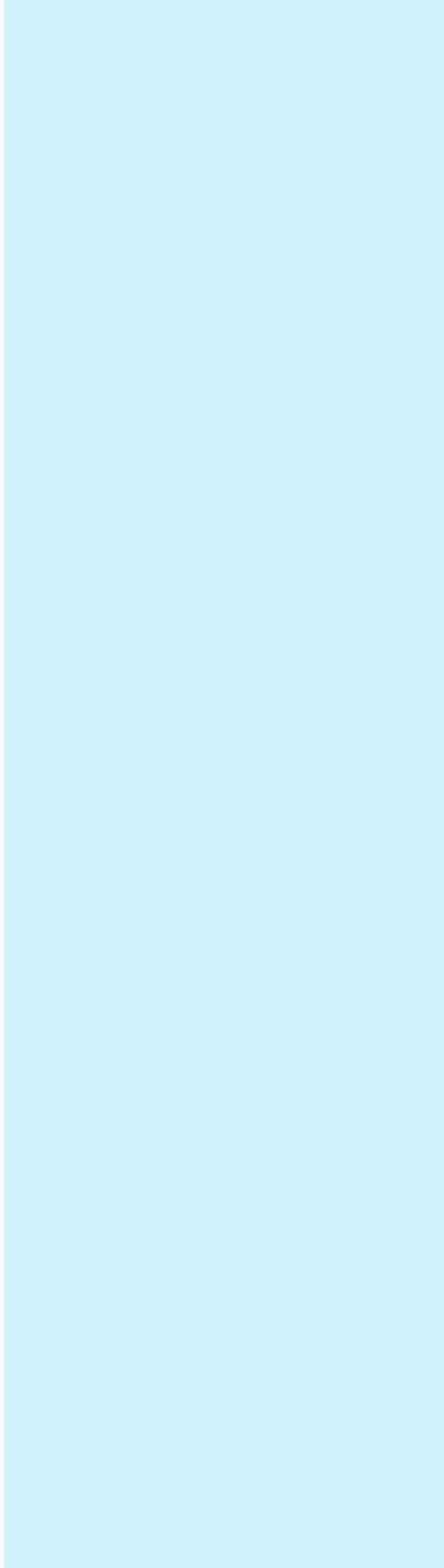
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Background	(2 different organisations with shared learning funding experiences). **Friends of Hermitage Park** started life in 2011 with a vision for a restored park. **Helensburgh Community Hall Ltd** took ownership of Helensburgh Community Hub in December 2020 with the plan to turn it into a community hub for future generations.
Specific Projects	Regeneration of Hermitage Park. Use of Hall for and by the community aiming to become totally sustainable.
Main Funding Avenues	(All f gures approx.) **Friends of HP:** Working in partnership with A&B Council they were awarded a Heritage Lottery Fund grant of £2.33 million in 2016. Further funding has come from A&B Council (£280+k), Sustrans £300k, Armed Forces Covenant £253k, War Memorial Trust £60k and the Friends have raised £70k. Many smaller grants have also been secured for specif c projects such as a wildlife hotel in one of the old trees. (Total project cost is c. £3.7m. Volunteers have contributed in excess of £140k of volunteer hours at HLF rates since 2017.) **Helensburgh Community Hub:** Scottish Land Fund £190,000, Robertsons Trust grant for a part time Community Dev't Manager. Local fund raising £10k, Co-op fund £8k and Town Centre Fund grant (via A&B C £40k).
Learning Points	• Be able to demonstrate community support. Have partners if you can. It is useful to have counsellors/MSP's on your side. • A Project Manager will really help push a project on. • Write down your vision and mission. Use key words to describe what you want to create (e.g. a word cloud). This helps everyone understand the project, including funders. It also helps with future funding applications and marketing materials. • For the Hub, tenants were in place; the business plan showed the project could be sustainable, which gave funders conf dence. • Funders tell you what they want to see in your application and the types of projects they will support. Make sure your project/application matches this closely. Use the key words/language they use (use a highlighter pen to emphasise what they are looking for in the application pack, so that you can echo the key words etc). • Be concise and communicate effectively what you are trying to achieve – they have lots of applications to read through! • Often local supermarkets have community funds you can apply for. • Try to build up a track record – funders feel more conf dent when others have supported you (even if it is small grants). • Avoid burn out of your board and volunteers. Have a 3-year rotation. Make sure you have the right skill set on board and support your volunteers. • Allow suff cient time for writing applications, they are time consuming and you are unlikely to be successful if you rush at the last minute. • Do not feel obliged to work through an application form in order, if it is easier to start by writing section 7 before section 4 do so. Ensure your message and ask is consistent and focussed throughout. • Save on f le the key pieces of information that you will need for any funding application so you can cut and paste. e.g. d yL Aonou

Background

Background

Specific