**Softball New Zealand:**  Dec 2013



**Tips for submitting grant applications**

**INTRODUCTION**



Many sport and recreation clubs operate with limited finances and need to raise additional funds through fundraising, sponsorship or grants.

While there is often money available through local businesses, charities, sport and recreation bodies and Government agencies, it is key to remember that clubs, associations and other groups also compete for that money.

**This document** looks to help give your association a competitve edge when it comes to applying for funding or grants with any Gaming or Charitable Trust and will cover 2 main areas

1. Information to consider prior to making your application and
2. Useful tips for your application process.

This document can be used in conjunction with the following documents available in our Club Tool Box on the Softball NZ webpage;

1. Associations funding / grants calender
2. Example Funding and Sponsorship role description.

**Further assistance:** If your association requires further assistance the Softball NZ staff are more than willing to support associations with funding / grants applications and projects that have been identified (or added) within an Associations Partnership plan.

Please contact your relevant Softball Officer to help start this process.

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| **Softball Officer** | **Contact** | **First Point of contact for the below Associations** |
| Nick | 021537078 | North Harbour; Auckland, Counties Manukau |
| Naomi | 021537068 | Wellington, Hutt Valley, Hawkes Bay, Manawatu, Wanganui, Tairawhiti, Western BoP |
| Lesley | 021537069 | Waikato, Nelson, Marlborough Canterbury, West Coast, Otago, Central Otago, North Otago, Southland |

**INFORMATION TO CONSIDER PRIOR TO MAKING YOUR APPLICATION**

**The basics**

Before we run we need to walk, therefore we need to understand the basics around the funding organisations “do and don’ts” before you submit an application. Some basic things to consider are;

* All applicants shall be non-profit organisations incorporated as charitable or promoting charitable purposes
* Generally speaking overseas travel and expenditure are not an option. (There are exceptions but very few)
* Approved applications should provide enduring community benefit. i.e. assets, facilities, or contributing toward community or sports development projects
* Applicants must be final beneficiary and not for personal gain
* Its best to align yourself with the charitable trusts authorised purpose, so look for one that are essentially about helping sports organisations. Be aware of your generic donation or distribution groups like;
  + Community/Welfare group
  + Education
  + Fire brigade/Ambulance/Lifesaving/Health or health related purposes
  + Youth/sport/recreation

**Be realistic:**

We have to be realistic and appreciate that the amount of gaming funds available to communities continues to reduce while at the same time the number of organisations, charities etc applying for funding is increasing.

It is also important to note that some (not all) funding/gaming societies are looking to support “must have” items or projects. If this is the case make sure that your applications are for items which will help your Assn reach its long term goals.

**Prioritise your applications:**

What do you want funding for?Is it for a “must have” or a “nice to have” item or project. Try to ensure each application submitted is for priority expenses that have been identified by your organisations short or long term plans

We suggest that at the start of each financial year (or even when setting your association’s budget) it is best to sit down and identify/plan what your association will require funding for over the next year and prioritise the order of these projects/items.

The Associations “funding / grants calender” found in the club tool box on the Softball NZ webpage could assist you with this.

**Do your research** (where to apply):

Gaming societies generally look to fund organisations that are based in the communities from where they have raised their funds. Do your research and find out

* Which gaming or funding societies operate in your community
* What their grants criteria and funding priorities are
* If you’re local RST offers any funding opportunities that suit your association.

There are a couple of websites that may help ascertain who you can apply to for funding / grants. All funding agencies and RSTs should provide clear guidelines on their websites as to what they will and won’t support.

Department of Internal Affairs

<http://www.dia.govt.nz/Services-Casino-and-Non-Casino-Gaming-Funding-For-Community-Groups#map>

Sport NZ

<http://www.sportnz.org.nz/en-nz/funding/Directory-of-Potential-Funding-Sources/Start-search-from-beginning/>

Funding information service

<http://www.fis.org.nz/>

**USEFUL TIPS FOR THE APPLICATION PROCESS**

While each funder will have different requirements for their applications, here is some generic tips that may apply to your application.

1. **Don’t rush – allow time**

Basically the days of submitting an application with a click of the fingers is over.

Take your time filling out and gathering the information you require for the application.

If your application is for a comprehensive purpose such as a development project, facility upgrade or for wages for staff, you may need to start the process well in advance, as you need to plan the finer details very careful and make sure you have all the additional resources you need. All of this cant be achieved in a couple of weeks. It takes a fair amount of preplanning and organisation.

1. **Start off on the right foot**

Individual trusts all have different criteria so please read each application thoroughly and fully understand what they want in an application before diving in head first.

Make sure all applications are on approved application forms and that all applications meet the DIA criteria of authorised purpose and must be for charitable purpose.

1. **Don’t assume**

Don’t assume funders know about your association/club. If appropriate to your application and the funding organisation, include

* A summary of what you do,
* How you engage with your community and
* How funding will help your association/club achieve its objectives

1. **Show them how you are helping yourself**

Some gaming trusts are more inclined to help organisations that are actively trying to help themselves. Always summarise what other fundraising initiatives you and your members are doing to raise funds for your organisation or the project/items that you are seeking funding for.

In other words, don’t expect a funder to give you 100% of the amount you are asking for in your application, if you aren’t looking at ways you are contributing as well.

1. **Be accurate**

Check and double check that you have filled in the application form correctly. Make sure you attach all signatories and quotes and other information requested. Incomplete applications are generally declined.

To make sure you have completed the application form correctly, get another committee or staff member to check over the application prior to you submitting it.

1. **Be open and honest**

There is no point in trying to mislead a funder.

If you have already asked another funder for a grant, or plan to approach another funder for funding the same project/item, let the funding society know. It is important to be open and honest.

1. **Stand out from the crowd**

A good application should support points 1 – 5. Additionally some funders like to know why you are too good to decline.

If appropriate to the organisation you are applying to, a suggestion is to include a covering letter with your application that shows the below

* An quick overview of your association
* Your long term goals,
* How the grant your applying for links into the long term goals of your association / club
* What impact the funding will have on your association and/or local community

Keep in mind they don’t want to read a novel so try and keep it to 1 or 2 pages of key points.

1. **Ask for assistance from SNZ**

If you need help putting together your application or require a letter of support, Softball NZ is more than willing to support associations with funding / grants applications and projects that have been identified (or added) within an Associations Partnership Plan.

1. **Make a copy**

Some applications can be uploaded to the funding society’s or RSTs website, as where others need to be sent in via hard copy. Either way, make sure you have a soft or hard copy of the final completed application.

1. **Retain proof of expenditure**

With all successful grant/funding applications, you will be required to provide proof of expenditure. Make sure you keep good records and provide copies of all paid invoices, and bank statement showing payment (generally within 90 days of receiving the grant).

A grants file isn’t closed until proof of expenditure has been provided to the gaming society.

Failure to provide adequate accountability is likely to affect all future funding requests.

1. **Tell a gaming society if your plans change**

You can only spend grants funding on the purposes it has been approved for by the funding society. If for some reason your plans change and the funds are not needed for their original purpose anymore, contact the society and chat to them, or return the funds.

DONT assume the money can be used for any other purpose.

**ALL THE BEST**