

**THE ESFA GUIDE TO**

**GETTING GRANTS FROM TRUSTS**

**Did you know…**

* There are around 8000 grant making trusts in the UK, giving out ten times more than the Big Lottery Fund or the top 500 corporate sponsors each year.
* Local trusts are generally a much neglected source of funding, with voluntary organisations repeatedly asking just the “big names”. This means that the smaller, localized trusts can become keener than others to spend their cash.
* There are rarely application forms to fill in, and where there are, they are often very short. Trusts don’t always ask for reports explaining what you have done with their funding, so it can be one of the most non-bureaucratic ways of bringing in “small” (less than £4k) grants.
* Trusts are often encouraged to invest if they aren’t the only one involved: targeting multiple funders can bring in extra income but also give a sense of confidence to other funders.
* Professional fundraisers targeting Trusts advise that a competent bid circulated widely will usually raise more money than putting huge efforts into a small number of bids.
* Trusts sometimes introduce new schemes or change their priorities: if you were unsuccessful in securing funding in a previous application, don’t automatically rule that Trust out forever.
* Because Trusts aren’t governed in the same way that public funds are, Trustees are likely to be influenced by what they know, and what they see, rather than by a set of restrictive rules and a corresponding well-written application received in isolation.

**Trust lists:**

* <http://grantnav.threesixtygiving.org>
* <https://beehivegiving.org>
* [www.fundingcentral.org.uk](http://www.fundingcentral.org.uk) (there may be a fee, depending on your requirements)

**What to do:**

* Write a one page summary of your activity and be prepared to send multiple Trusts your “application”. Sources of Trust lists are provided above.
* Gather contact details from websites using the tools referenced below to help you send bulk circulations. However, if you get personal contact details from a Trustee or funder, don’t pass them on, unless this information is in the public domain and if a person asks you to stop contacting them, then you must do so.
* Have a particularly close look at local Trusts and identify the Trustees. Do you know them? Does anyone you know, know them? How can you make a personal connection?
* Trusts are often interested in funding “the best” in the sector. Make sure your standard application shows this – participant testimonial is often very powerful.
* For “the best”, this often means the **best** **known**. If you need some help with your social media or marketing, the ESFA may be able to match you with an undergraduate student from UCFB to provide you with this service at no cost – contact andrea.chilton@schoolsfa.com.
* Identify a volunteer to act as your fundraiser, if you can. Someone tackling this systematically is more likely to be successful than a more sporadic approach. Again, UCFB may be able to help with this.
* Invite potential funders to your events. They’re more likely to remember you that way than from an email or application.
* Keep relevant Trusts up to date with your activity, rather than simply asking them once a year for funding. Send them your newsletter, or links to your website’s news stories. Bring your activity to life for them.
* Have a look at “rich lists”, like the one published in the Sunday Times. Is there someone local? Someone you know? That someone you know, knows? Might they give you a donation? Have a look for their estate office or family firm to get published contact details.
* If you get the chance to get some feedback from an unsuccessful funding request, take it, but don’t pester a funder for this. Often Trusts are administered by one or two people who won’t necessarily have the time to do this.
* Finally, if you are successful, make sure you fulfil any conditions, if there are any, properly. Funders may withdraw if they aren’t properly acknowledged, for example: likewise, if the source of funding for the Trust is anonymous (eg through private benefactors), make absolutely sure you don’t breach this confidence.

**Email tools to help bulk applications:**

Use <https://www.atompark.com/web-email-extractor/> or similar to gather published contact email addresses from websites. There is a small cost for this, but older versions of the software may be found on free software websites.

Use <https://www.atompark.com/bulk-email-sender/> or similar to send out emails en masse.