



# Grant Resources: Helpful tips for writing your grant application

A/4.1.1.1

Check the Synod tool [Tips for finding suitable grants](#) which contains some helpful tips to find suitable grant opportunities. Further information is also provided in the Synod's [Fundraising Policy](#). The resource [Grant Funding Template](#) is a companion guide for use with this document. In relation to planning and timing, it is important to seek guidance and direction in prayer, remaining focused upon the church's mission.

## Legal Trading Name

The Uniting Church in Australia, Queensland Synod has a **legal name** 'The Uniting Church In Australia Property Trust (Q.)' It's important to ensure that the legal trading name is used in funding applications or submissions: The Uniting Church In Australia Property Trust (Q.) trading as **<insert name of church>**. *For example, The Uniting Church In Australia Property Trust (Q.) trading as The Gap Uniting Church.*

It is sometimes helpful to provide a letter explaining the structure of the Church, to submit with an application or submission. Contact [property@ucaqld.com.au](mailto:property@ucaqld.com.au) to obtain a *Letter of Incorporation* signed by the Secretary of the Property Trust (Q.).

## Tips to increase success

### 1. Explore local resources

- 1.1. A number of free resources are available to help you prepare a successful grant application. Some community groups offer free grant writing sessions. Alternately, you may know of a local organisations that has been successful in obtaining grants. Try contacting them for any helpful tips or resources to improve the likelihood of successful future grant applications.

### 2. Know your community

- 2.1. Find out information about your community. Knowledge of local information, and partnerships that you currently have in the community are helpful to support your application and can help make your application stand out.
- 2.2. Provide details of existing links or existing relationships in the target group or community that you are applying for funding to assist. Describe your large volunteer group and the commitment that they have to the community, and some of their achievements previously.
- 2.3. A commitment to collaborate with other organisations where there are shared interests and opportunities, is a positive and makes your application stand out.

### 3. Build partnerships

- 3.1. Developing relationships with community partners can help you with your grant applications. Many organisations that provide grant opportunities are keen to support events, programs or projects that build community relationships and community participation. A grant application for a project that includes a community partner may stand out and may be more successful in receiving funds.
- 3.2. Multifaith events or projects, and events that include the community may be more successful, particularly for applications that are seeking larger amounts of funding. Building relationships with your local councillor may also provide opportunities to seek funding in the future.

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## Writing a grant application

### 4. A successful application requires:

- 4.1. access to detailed information about the organisation making the application
- 4.2. sufficient information about the project for which the grant application is being made
- 4.3. the ability to prepare and submit a whole and complete application in timely manner to meet grant deadlines
- 4.4. Outlined in this document are four stages which aim to improve your success in writing grant applications:
  - 4.4.1. Planning
  - 4.4.2. Gathering information
  - 4.4.3. Writing the proposal
  - 4.4.4. Completing and lodging your application

## Stage one: Planning

### 5. Planning

- 5.1. Start early. In relation to planning and timing, it is important to seek guidance and direction in prayer, remaining focused upon the church's mission.
  - 5.1.1. It always takes longer than you think
  - 5.1.2. Changes to guidelines from funding round to funding round are usually minimal
  - 5.1.3. You don't need to wait for a program's funding round to open before you start planning your project
  - 5.1.4. Prepare a yearly calendar of closing dates for all funding sources: local, state and federal government, and other sources
- 5.2. Identify who will be the applicant. The applicant will need to be a legal entity who can enter into a contract e.g. an incorporated group
  - 5.2.1. Identify the contact person for the applicant and relevant contact details
- 5.3. Spend time planning so you are clear about:
  - 5.3.1. Identifying the link to your plans
  - 5.3.2. What you want to achieve/do, what will be the outcomes→Who will/needs to be involved
  - 5.3.3. Materials required
  - 5.3.4. Costs
  - 5.3.5. Timeline—what's to be done, when, by whom
- 5.4. You'll also need to emphasise:
  - 5.4.1. Why your project is important
  - 5.4.2. How it links to your plans and broader community
  - 5.4.3. Value for money
  - 5.4.4. How you will monitor and evaluate the success of your project—how you will know
  - 5.4.5. How will the project be maintained/continued in the long term, after the project is finished?
  - 5.4.6. Identify early who you will need to consult, get advice from, seek approval/letters of support/referees
  - 5.4.7. Make contact with them early and discuss your project idea
  - 5.4.8. Once you are clear about what you want to do, identify the appropriate funding source



- 5.5. The [light blue](#) section of the [Grant Funding Template](#) contains information about the Uniting Church in Australia, Queensland Synod and its legal name 'The Uniting Church In Australia Property Trust (Q.)' The [light blue](#) section of the template contains information about how to obtain some important legal documents that are commonly required to be included in your grant application.
- 5.6. Make sure to request any of documents as soon as possible. Some grants only provide a very short timeframe to apply before they close.
- 5.7. Verify your **Legal Entity** status. Many grants require evidence of non-profit status to be eligible to apply for the grant. Grant applications will not be successful without the required evidence of your legal entity status.

### 6. Tools used to verify legal entity status

- 6.1. ABN Lookup
  - 6.1.1. All organisations are asked to supply an Australian Business Number (ABN), which will be verified on ABN Lookup, available on the Government's [www.business.gov.au](http://www.business.gov.au) website.
  - 6.1.2. ABN Lookup is also used to identify the legal name and entity type of your organisation. Please make sure your entry on ABN Lookup is current and correct.
  - 6.1.3. If you do not supply an ABN, any funding you receive may be subject to withholding at a rate equivalent to the top marginal income tax rate (see [www.ato.gov.au](http://www.ato.gov.au) for further information).
- 6.2. Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC): A valid and current entry on the ASIC register ([www.asic.gov.au](http://www.asic.gov.au)) is used to determine company status and business name registration
- 6.3. Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations (ORIC): Aboriginal Corporations should have a valid and current ORIC registration ([www.oric.gov.au](http://www.oric.gov.au)) with an ICN.
- 6.4. Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC): Charitable organisations and not-for-profit organisations may have registered their status with the ACNC ([www.acnc.gov.au](http://www.acnc.gov.au)), which can be used to verify Public Benevolent Institution status.

### 7. Documentation that may be used to verify legal entity status

- 7.1. For organisations established through specific Commonwealth or state/territory legislation (public benevolent institutions, churches, universities, unions, etc.) the relevant Act or legislation under which the body was formed.
- 7.2. For trustee on behalf of a trust (trust deeds). The Government will review these documents to determine capacity to enter into a legal agreement. Proof of legal entity status of the trustee will also be required.

For more information, refer to the [light blue](#) section of the [Grant Funding Template](#).

## Stage two: Gathering the information

### 8. Gathering the information

- 8.1. Collect all the information you need
  - 8.1.1. Guidelines
  - 8.1.2. Application form
  - 8.1.3. Any other relevant documents e.g. plans, strategies
- 8.2. Read the guidelines and application form thoroughly



- 8.3. If the program is ongoing check what changes, if any, have been made
- 8.4. Programs often produce useful information on how to fill out the form, checklists, etc.—use them
- 8.5. Get any approvals or permits required
- 8.6. Find out about the assessment process
  - 8.6.1. How will the proposal be assessed?
  - 8.6.2. Against what criteria?
  - 8.6.3. What are the higher scored criteria?
  - 8.6.4. What is the turnaround time for approval?

#### 9. Some examples of types of evidence

Evidence type	Examples of this type of evidence
<b>Quantitative evidence</b> is numerical. It can be counted or measured objectively.	Include the number of people in your community or target group that require the service you would provide.
<b>Qualitative evidence</b> is less numerical. It describes or explains, or even tells a story.	Include information about the strategies your congregation has in place to determine how successful your event or program is—what process do you have in place to engage with the community when planning or providing services.
<b>Evaluations</b> provide quantitative and qualitative information on the effectiveness of current services or programs	Applications should include evaluation style evidence on the previous and current outcomes achieved by current/similar services and programs.
<b>Expert evidence</b> is based on research and expert opinions.	Applicants can use expert evidence to supplement and strengthen other forms of evidence.
<b>Anecdotal evidence</b> is based on opinion.	The opinions of people are very valuable inputs into the planning process, particularly when developing new ideas. Special care should be taken to ensure that a diverse sample of opinions is sought. Do you have some short success stories? Try to include a few from a wide range of people if possible. This type of evidence should not be used on its own as evidence but may be considered as supporting evidence.

#### 10. Sources of evidence

- 10.1. It is possible to collect evidence in many ways and you should consider drawing on a range of evidence sources to support your organisation's case for funding. Consider the following potential sources of quantitative evidence:
  - 10.1.1. data from your own records and experiences as a service provider (e.g. annual reports or surveys)
  - 10.1.2. data available from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (e.g. census data or crime statistics); and
  - 10.1.3. program or service evaluations, reports released by research bodies, government departments, or not-for-profit organisations.



- 10.2. Consider the following potential sources of qualitative evidence:
  - 10.2.1. needs analyses or expert advice
  - 10.2.2. interviews—conducted by your own organisation or another—with clients or subject experts, with a focus on benefits of proposed services to the local community
  - 10.2.3. content from broadcast or social media, and
  - 10.2.4. public meetings and forums.
- 10.3. Where applicants draw on external sources, it is not necessary to attach these sources to your application but make it clear where the assessors can check these sources if required.

## Stage three: Writing the proposal

### 11. Writing the proposal—All funding is competitive

- 11.1. Keep in mind who will be reading your application—they are likely to know nothing of your organisation
- 11.2. The **dark blue** section of the [Grant Funding Template](#) contains prompts to help you find supporting information for your application. Not all of the information prompts in the **dark blue** section will be required for each grant application.
- 11.3. Make the proposal interesting and easy to read:
  - 11.3.1. don't use acronyms or abbreviations
  - 11.3.2. use simple language
  - 11.3.3. formatting, use of bullet points, good print size
  - 11.3.4. type your application if at all possible
  - 11.3.5. use exact numbers instead of approximations (shows you have done your research)
- 11.4. Be clear and concise—use strong evidence
- 11.5. Answer all the questions unless any really aren't applicable—this isn't usually the case
- 11.6. In describing your project, present a clear picture of what it is about, what your project will specifically achieve, and how it will be achieved
- 11.7. Match your project to the program:
  - 11.7.1. Show how the goals of your project match that of the program
  - 11.7.2. Use words from the guidelines, quote from plans, etc.
  - 11.7.3. If the program has a particular focus (e.g. on-ground works), highlight it in your project.
- 11.8. Keep to the word count

### 12. Some examples of using evidence effectively

Tip	Example of evidence being presented less effectively	Example of evidence being presented more effectively
<b>Be clear and concise:</b> Use clear and concise language to express your evidence. This will help produce a logical and professional application.	The bushfires in 2006 were really damaging, as were those in 2009, and there have been even more since then, which definitely highlights that emergency management is really important.	The 13 incidences of bushfires rated at a critical level by Emergency Management Australia since 2006 demonstrates the importance of effective emergency management.



<p><b>Be accurate:</b> Avoid emotive language. The most persuasive applications state their evidence objectively and dispassionately.</p>	<p>The issue of (<i>name specific issue</i>) is destroying our community.</p>	<p>In a series of 20 interviews conducted by our organisation, 16 individuals identified (<i>name specific issue</i>) as a major challenge for our community.</p>
<p><b>Be relevant:</b> Ensuring your evidence is clearly relevant is just as important as expressing your evidence in clear language.</p>	<p>In our organisation we have 15 staff members.</p>	<p>In our organisation we have 15 staff members, two of whom are dedicated full-time to the delivery of (<i>this service</i>). Of the staff, another three are trained to also deliver (<i>this service</i>) in case there are times when the full-time staff are not available.</p>
<p><b>Remain current:</b> Old evidence is less persuasive than new. Use the most up-to date evidence you can find and if you do use older evidence, explain why.</p>	<p>Between 1991 and 1996, the target population for our service grew by 23 per cent.</p>	<p>Between 2007 and 2012, the target population for our service grew by 12 per cent (ABS 2012).* <i>use relevant statics when appropriate.</i></p>
<p><b>Attribute your evidence:</b> Your evidence will be more persuasive if, whenever you use it in your application, you attribute it clearly. This includes both quantitative and qualitative evidence. Remember to cite data, as well as ideas and direct quotes from interviews, surveys and media.</p>	<p>Experts recognise that the service our organisation provides is an integral component of care for our target population.</p>	<p>Smith (2011)** argues that the service our organisation provides is an integral component of care for our target population. <i>** use relevant research if appropriate and footnote the reference in your application.</i></p>
<p><b>Use both qualitative and quantitative evidence:</b> Both offer distinct advantages. Quantitative evidence provides breadth, and can be used to compare large numbers, however, qualitative evidence is often deeper and richer. For this reason, it is best to use a combination of both.</p>	<p>People we spoke to are often really stressed because they don't know who can help.</p>	<p>In a survey of 30 people conducted by our organisation, 56 per cent of people who faced (<i>name specific issue</i>) reported the lack of awareness of available support as their most immediate need. Assistance to apply for support was the second highest response.</p>

### 13. Budget

- 13.1. Make sure your budget has sufficient detail to be clear
- 13.2. Ensure your budget adds up and the budget summary matches the full budget
- 13.3. Make certain the budget matches the project description. The panel needs to be able to see what is being done and how much each activity will cost
- 13.4. If there are funding rules, follow them:
  - 13.4.1. Don't put in ineligible items
  - 13.4.2. Stick within recommended amounts or limits

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- 13.4.3. If required put in the formula you used to work out the budget (20 hours per week x \$26 per hour = \$520)
- 13.5. Justify your budget especially if an item is more than a recommended limit
- 13.6. Demonstrate that you're using the most cost effective and economical methods
- 13.7. Matching funding—if this is required, be clear about contributions to the project and whether they are cash or in-kind
- 14. Feasibility/technical advice (some programs)**
- 14.1. You may be required to provide written advice from 'experts' or 'consenting authorities' to support your claims. It is important you identify and involve these individuals early in the planning process
- 15. Permits/approvals**
- 15.1. Don't leave them to the last minute—Identify any permits/approvals do you will need early in your process e.g. landholder's consent (and signatures at time of lodging), planning permits (e.g. local government—some may take a couple of months)
- 15.2. **Approval is required from the property owner** for many applications which relate to renovations or installations such as solar panels for the church building or church property. If you are not sure, then it is best to check by email [property@ucaql.com.au](mailto:property@ucaql.com.au) or phone 07 3377 9860 to be certain.
- 15.3. A [Letter of Consent](#) template has been developed for your congregation to complete and return to the Synod office for finalisation.
- 15.3.1. This template covers all of the information required, so that a signed letter can be provided from the Synod office. The completed signed letter provides formal approval from the property owner for the proposed work in the grant application.
- 15.3.2. Any minor or major capital works or improvements to a church building or property, requires evidence of formal approval from the Property Owner.
- 15.3.3. Your grant application will not be successful, without the inclusion of this important document in your application.
- 15.4. Are there any cultural heritage sites at or near your project site?
- 15.5. Local Council Planning Officers/Community Service Officers/Sport and Recreation Officers will be able to assist you in identifying possible permit requirements.
- 16. Letters of support and referees**
- 16.1. As soon as you have your project idea ready to go, contact your referees.
- 16.2. Identify relevant individuals/organisation you could approach for a letter of support or to act as your application referee.
- 16.3. In the last few days of big funding rounds many organisations are inundated with requests for letters of support or to act as project referees and if you leave it to the last minute, they may not be able to supply you with letters.
- 17. Community benefit**
- 17.1. Some grant programs (Community Benefit/Jupiter's Fund) require your project to show significant benefits to the broader community. Think about how your project will add benefit and value to your local community. For example, increased participation in your activity will improve the spiritual



health and well-being of the community, improve family relationships, provide avenues for cultural diversity through engagement in multi-faith activities.

## Stage four: Completing and lodging your application

### 18. Completing and lodging your application

- 18.1. Check that your application addresses ALL the criteria in the guidelines
- 18.2. Make sure it is complete (use checklist provided if there is one)
  - 18.2.1. All questions answered
  - 18.2.2. All additional information attached (letters of support, permits, certificate of incorporation, insurance evidence)
  - 18.2.3. All boxes ticked and application signed by the appropriate person
- 18.3. Use the 'stranger test'. Ask someone who knows nothing about your project to read your application and tell you what you want to do, how you will do it and what the outcomes will be. If they can't, chances are your application is not clear.
- 18.4. Send the original or submit online
- 18.5. Keep a copy of application and all the attachments
- 18.6. Lodge on time—preferably a couple of days before closing. Sometimes servers go down due to the number of people trying to submit applications or access the website so better to be early
- 18.7. Late applications and/or attachments are not usually accepted

### 19. Ask for help

- 19.1. Grant programs are usually very competitive as more often than not, funds are limited. The aim is to give your proposal its best chance of success. If you are having trouble completing any part of the application, please seek help and advice from the funding bodies or contact the Synod office at [missionpossible@ucaqld.com.au](mailto:missionpossible@ucaqld.com.au) or 07 3377 9777.

### 20. Share the good news

- 20.1. Please let us know that you have submitted a grant application. We also want to share your good news about any grant applications that are successful. Contact [communications@ucaqld.com.au](mailto:communications@ucaqld.com.au) or [missionpossible@ucaqld.com.au](mailto:missionpossible@ucaqld.com.au) on 07 3377 9777.
- 20.2. Do you have advice or helpful tips for others? Can you help other congregations that are struggling and have not had experience in applying for grants?

## Revisions

Document number		A/4.1.1.1			
Version	Approval date	Approved by	Effective date	Policy owner	Policy contact
1.0	01.12.2020	Director – Church Enterprises	01.12.2020	ED Strategic Resources and Assurance	Business Development Unit
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