

KEY STRATEGIES, TIPS
AND TRICKS TO WINNING
FUNDING BIDS

GRANT WRITING GUIDE

FOREWORD

THERE ARE LOT'S OF ORGANISATIONS IN LUTON DOING AMAZING WORK. WE NEED TO THINK ABOUT HOW DO WE STOP DOING THE SAME THINGS AND HOW DO WE WORK TOGETHER TO DO MORE WITH THE LIMITED RESOURCES WE HAVE. FROM OUR LEARNINGS WITH THE COLLABORATION FUND SEE BELOW WHAT YOU STAND TO GAIN WHEN YOU STOP WORKING ALONE AND WORK TOGETHER WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS.

Collaborative Impact: What's In It for You

- **Expand reach & networks → more visibility, stronger reputation.**
- **Enhance service delivery → share skills/resources, innovate together.**
- **Access more funding → collaboration attracts funders backing joint bids.**
- **Boost community trust → build on reputation and pre-existing relationships.**
- **Reduce admin burden → share spaces, streamline reporting, save time.**
- **Sustain services → retain staff, strengthen referrals, ensure continuity.**

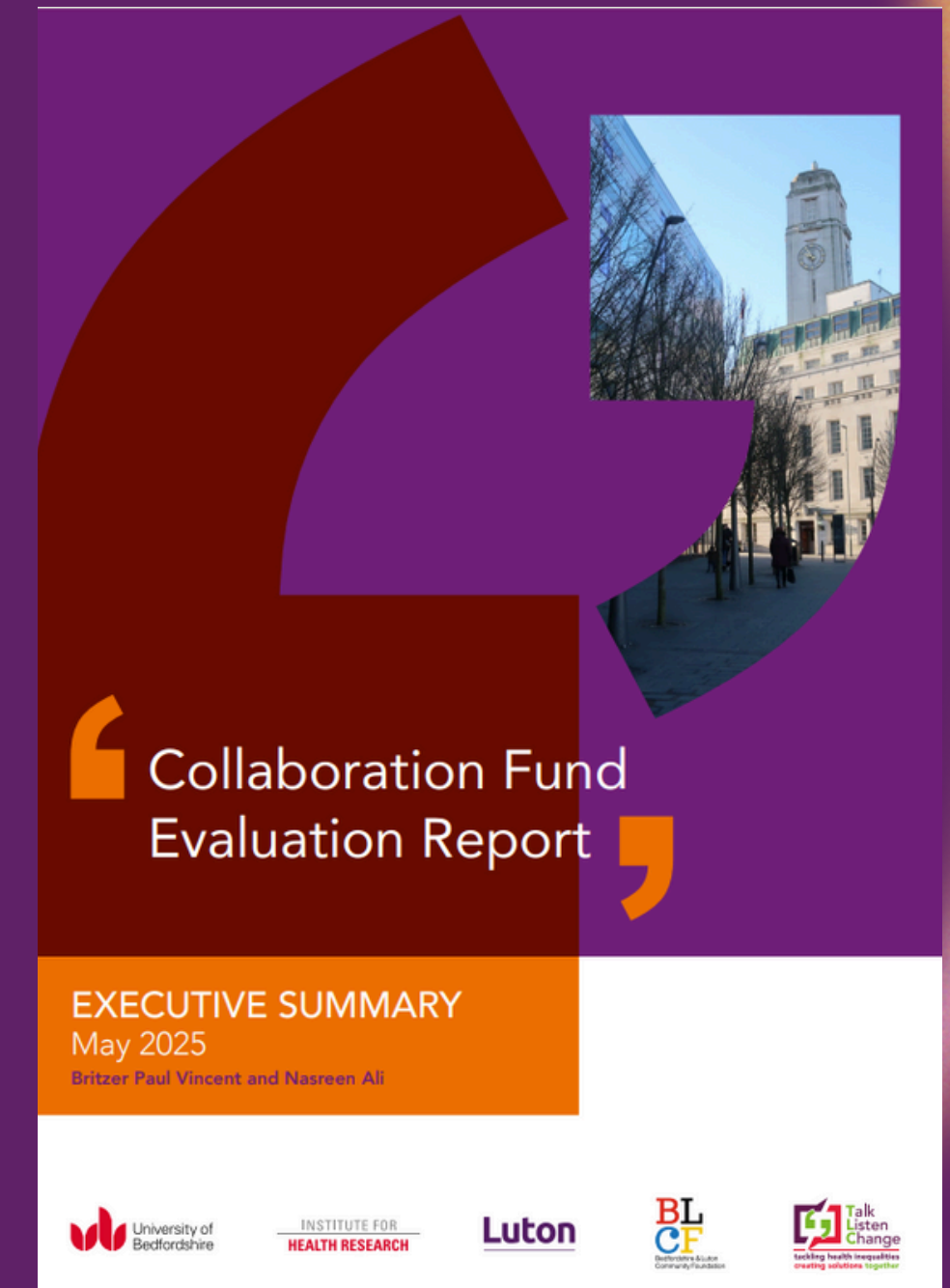


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ELIGIBILITY & ALIGNMENT

MAKE SURE ELIGIBILITY IS CLEAR SO YOU DON'T END UP WASTING TIME

CONFIRM ELIGIBILITY

Make sure you align with suitability requirements to ensure you don't waste time!

01

THOROUGH RESEARCH AND PLANNING

Give yourself enough time - don't rush it.

02

RESEARCH THE FUNDER'S GOALS

Design your project around the funder's goals/priorities or adjust your project to better align.

03

PRO TIP

Look into what the funder has funded previously for inspiration.

Example: They've funded youth sports and you decide to pursue adult sports.

FUNDER'S PERSPECTIVE

FUNDER'S NEED TO KNOW HOW YOU WILL BE VALUABLE TO THEM

UNDERSTAND THE FUNDER'S AIMS AND SHOW HOW YOUR PROJECT ADVANCES THEIR OBJECTIVES.

CLEARLY DEMONSTRATE HOW YOUR PROJECT'S OUTCOMES PROVIDE VALUE TO THE FUNDER (E.G., SUPPORTING SPECIFIC CAUSES LIKE DISABILITIES).

PRO TIP

ALWAYS KEEP THE FUNDER'S PRIORITIES AS THE LENS FOR YOUR PROPOSAL.

EXAMPLE PRIORITY: EDUCATION. LINK YOUR GOAL & EVERY SECTION BACK TO EDUCATION .



DON'T ASSUME THEY'LL UNDERSTAND CONTEXT. WRITE LIKE YOU'RE EXPLAINING TO A 5 YEAR OLD.



FOLLOW ALL INSTRUCTIONS METICULOUSLY AND ENSURING THE DOCUMENT IS EASY TO READ.



PLAN IN ADVANCE; AVOID LAST-MINUTE WRITING.



AVOID A "FRANKENSTEIN" BID WITH MULTIPLE WRITERS, STYLES AND INCOHERENT FLOW.



WITH EVERY SENTENCE. THINK, WHAT'S THE MESSAGE AND IS IT OBVIOUS TO THE READER.



LEARN FROM PAST MISTAKES AND DEVELOP A PLANNING CHECKLIST.

LEARNING FROM MISTAKES EXAMPLES:

UNREALISTIC BUDGETS OR TIMELINES

- *MISTAKE:* PROPOSED MORE THAN COULD REALISTICALLY BE DELIVERED.
- *LESSON:* GROUND FUTURE BIDS IN ACHIEVABLE MILESTONES, BACKED BY PAST PERFORMANCE DATA.

NOT FOLLOWING INSTRUCTION WELL

- *MISTAKE:* DID NOT FOLLOW INSTRUCTIONS CLOSELY (MISSED WORD LIMITS, SKIPPED REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS).
- *LESSON:* ALWAYS FOLLOW THE FUNDER'S GUIDELINES EXACTLY - TREAT THEM AS STRICT RULES, NOT SUGGESTIONS.

DON'T UNDERESTIMATE PLANNING, IT HELPS YOU PUT TOGETHER A MORE PUT TOGETHER BID

EFFECTIVE PLANNING

CLEAR & CONCISE BID

04

MAKE SURE IT IS EASY TO GATHER WHAT THEY ARE READING AND NOT LOST IN WORDS

DO THIS

1. Write clearly for a general audience: Use plain English, avoid jargon, and proofread for perfect grammar and spelling.
2. Use PEE structure (Point, Evidence, Explain) to structure logically.
3. Keep your tone professional but engaging.
4. Keep data very relevant to the funder's priorities

PRO TIP

DON'T FEEL LIKE YOU NEED TO USE THE FULL WORD LIMIT.

SHORT & POWERFUL BEATS LOUD & NOISY.

IF YOU DON'T

1. It will feel like a chore to read. The poor grammar and typos signal sloppy work & inattention to detail
2. It is easy to ramble on. Keep it short, tight and impactful so it's clear why they should invest
3. The funder will lose interest in the bid before even reading through it all
4. The funder will think you haven't grasped the priorities and you lose credibility of measuring the right thing during impact & evaluation

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE

05

USE YOUR LEARNINGS AND SUCCESSES TO ADD TO YOUR CREDIBILITY



Highlight past funding successes and showcase specific achievements with measurable results.

Include stories or data that demonstrate credibility and reliability.

Keep a strong website. Show off what you do - be prepared for funder's to search you up.

PROVE SUSTAINABILITY

Build for the Long-Term.

They should know: What happens after the funding period ends?

Provide a clear financial plan showing long-term viability.

Or show the legacy you build by embedding the project into community infrastructure

Demonstrate a Lasting Impact beyond the funding period

Social Impact

E.g sports session → social connection

Economic Impact

E.g skills workshop → better employability

Environmental Impact

E.g Community Garden → boost biodiversity

If you are unsure where long-term funding will come from just show that you are being proactive.

Why Innovate?

Funder's read proposal after proposal. If it feels like more of the same old they won't be interested. But when you deliver something new or reach a group that's hard to reach, that's where the gold lies.

INNOVATE & STAND OUT

01

Offer unique ideas or approaches that stand out.

02

Demonstrate how your solution is more innovative or efficient than what's already out there.

03

Tell a compelling story: Start broad (context), narrow to the problem, and present your project as the solution.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS PREPARATION



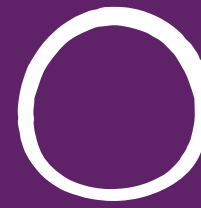
READ ALL GUIDELINES THOROUGHLY

USE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE PLATFORM LIKE CHATGPT TO SIMPLIFY OR SUMMARISE COMPLEX SECTIONS FOR YOU TO UNDERSTAND



RESEARCH THE FUNDER

USE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE RESEARCH PLATFORM PERPLEXITY TO EXTRACT PRIORITIES AND SEE WHAT THEY HAVE FUNDED BEFORE



MAP YOUR PROJECT CLEARLY

CREATE A SEPARATE MASTER DOCUMENT WHERE YOU JOT DOWN:

- VALUE
- BENEFICIARIES
- COMMUNITY BENEFIT
- LONG-TERM IMPACT
- BACKUP PLAN (IF NO FUNDING)



CREATE A CHECKLIST + TIMELINE

USE A WORK MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE OR SPREADSHEET TO TRACK PROGRESS AND KEEP A SHARP EYE ON THE DEADLINE. USE SPREADHSEETS & KANBAN TOOLS LIKE BELOW:



EXCEL



GOOGLE SHEETS



asana

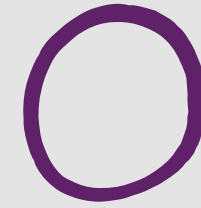
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TIPS FOR SUCCESS

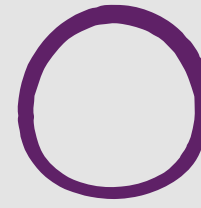
CLARITY & PASSION



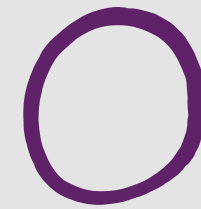
ANSWER CLEARLY - NO EXTRA FLUFF
USE TOOLS LIKE GRAMMARLY AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) TO PROOFREAD AND TIGHTEN WRITING. (DO NOT RELY ON AI TO DO THE WRITING)



TELL REAL STORIES
ADDING REAL QUOTES AND TESTIMONIALS CAN ADD A REAL PERSONAL NUANCE AND BRING PERSPECTIVE - DON'T ADD TOO MANY!



ALWAYS LINK BACK TO FUNDER PRIORITIES
KEEPS YOUR PROJECT RELEVANT



GET OTHERS TO PROOFREAD
A FRESH PAIR OF EYES CAN HELP TRACK ANYTHING YOU MIGHT'VE MISSED

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

DATA & BUDGET



ADD RELEVANT STATS (LOCAL + NATIONAL)

USE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE PERPLEXITY FOR QUICK STAT SEARCHES TO QUANTIFY LOCAL AND NATIONAL CONTEXT AND NEED



DATA NEEDS CONTEXT

IF YOU STATE THE CHARITY SUPPORTS 500 SEND CHILDREN WITHOUT WIDER CONTEXT YOU MAY NOT KNOW IF THIS IS A RELATIVELY HIGH NUMBER OR NOT AS A REVIEWER



BREAK DOWN THE COST

USE A SPREADSHEET BUDGET OR FUNDER PROVIDED TEMPLATE TO BREAKDOWN, DESCRIBE AND JUSTIFY COSTS

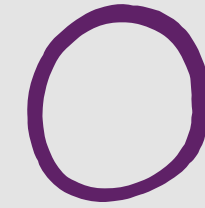


IMPACT AND EVALUATION

SHOW PAST IMPACT EVALUATIONS AS THEY WANT TANGIBLE MEASUREMENTS THAT SHOW THE FUNDING IS BEING USED EFFECTIVELY. THIS CAN HELP BUILD TRUST AND CREDIBILITY MAKING IT EASIER TO ACCESS FUTURE FUNDING.

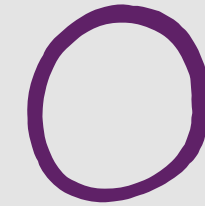
TIPS FOR SUCCESS

EXTERNAL FACTORS



CONTEXT! QUOTE LOCAL/NATIONAL STRATEGIES

THIS HELPS SHOW YOU AREN'T JUST WORKING IN ISOLATION AND ARE CONSIDERING WHAT IS ALREADY HAPPENING, LOCAL STRATEGIES ETC. CHECK GOV.UK, LUTON BOROUGH COUNCIL, PERPLEXITY (ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE RESEARCH TOOL).



SHOW PARTNERS

PARTNERSHIPS HELP SHOW CREDIBILITY AND RELIABILITY



RISK ASSESSMENT/MITIGATION

SHOW THAT YOU CLEARLY UNDERSTAND ALL THE RISKS TO THE PROJECT AND THE PLANNING TO MITIGATE THEM

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

FINAL CHECKS



KEEP A STRONG WEBSITE

BE READY TO BE SEARCHED UP - SHOW OFF YOUR CREDIBILITY AND PROVEN IMPACT



BE PUBLICITY READY

BE READY TO POST ONLINE ABOUT YOUR PROJECTS AND FUNDING AWARD AND BE POSTED ONLINE BY THE FUNDER'S

FINAL REMARKS

WE HOPE THIS GUIDE WILL HELP SERVE YOUR ORGANISATIONS TO RECEIVE MORE FUTURE FUNDING AND INCREASE ALL THE GOOD WORK YOU DO!

WE HIGHLY RECOMMEND SUBSCRIBING TO THE LOCAL COMMUNITY & VOLUNTARY SERVICE TO KEEP UP TO DATE ON ANY FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES.