



QUEENSLAND MEN'S SHED ASSOCIATION Inc

ABN 82 659 067 088

Joint Patrons

Her Excellency the Honourable Dr Jeannette Young AC PSM

Governor of Queensland

Professor Graeme Nimmo RFD

PO Box 415
SPRING HILL QLD 4004

A practical guide to grants

Introduction

At some stage in their journey, every Men's Shed has wanted to get grant funding. Some sheds have been very successful, while others have struggled. Is there some magic formula or silver bullet for successful grant applications?

Unfortunately, there is no guaranteed path for securing grants, but the good news is that there are a range of principles that organisations can employ that will improve their chance of securing grants.



This guide will outline some of those principles.

1) Principle #1 - Establishing the foundations for grant success

a) Putting in place the right personnel, resources and structure will support your Shed's grants success. Like all other forms of fund-raising, grant seeking requires an investment of volunteer time and resources. Sheds often dedicate many volunteer hours to building, cooking and serving for fund raising, yet struggle to find the time for writing grant applications. To address this:

- i) Consider appointing a dedicated grant writer who will be responsible for identifying and applying for grants. It might be an existing committee member or another shedder.
- ii) Provide tools and resources where necessary. This might include a computer or a subscription to a grants service (see more in section 3 about this).

b) Know what you are aiming for:



- i) Be clear on what you are seeking – it will help focus your efforts and identify suitable grants.
- ii) Don't let the tail wag the dog – be careful about applying for a grant that may distract you from your real purpose.
- iii) Do you have a strategic / business plan? Does this grant fit into it? This is a good way to demonstrate your intent to grant funders.



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c) Supporting shed sustainability

Attracting funds for operational expenses (ongoing day-to-day expenditure) is challenging and is often specifically excluded by grant funders. To address this, you might consider:



- i) Applying for capital grants that reduce long term operational expenditure (for example solar panels or rainwater tanks).
- ii) Some project-based grants can support limited operational expenditure (for example a one-off project may allow you to cover some operational expenses). This should be made clear in the guidelines.

d) Leverage your partnerships

- i) Partnerships are attractive to funders for multiplying outcomes. Do you regularly work with other groups who would partner with you?
- ii) Before you apply for a partnership project think about everything that could possibly go wrong for the partnership and how likely that would be. If it's likely and you can't mitigate the risk, think twice about the project.

e) Shed legal structure

- i) Having [deductible gift recipient](#) (DGR) status (link to more information on the QMSA website) can make your shed eligible for additional grant funding and receiving tax deductible donations.



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2) Writing grant applications

- a) The single most important instruction for any grant application is to **read the guidelines!**
- b) Use the right words: when writing your grant use appropriate language. This demonstrates understanding and will usually be viewed favourably by the grant funder. You can do this by:
 - i) Reflecting the language of the guideline in your application.
 - ii) Asking for advice from an expert in the field.
 - iii) Keeping it in plain English.
 - iv) Making sure you get someone to proofread the application before you submit to pick up any obvious errors.
- c) Connecting with the grant funders – one of the best supports available can be the staff from the grant funder.
 - i) If they are happy to speak to you – take the opportunity. Read the guidelines first though and use the discussion to ask questions that improve your understanding. Check what you are proposing is eligible.
 - ii) Listen carefully – maybe ask if you can record the conversation.
 - iii) If your application is unsuccessful, follow up with the grant-funder and find out why so you can improve for the next opportunity.
 - iv) Sometimes grant funders will have a list of successful applicants on their website. You can use this to discover if a project similar to yours has been funded before. You might consider making contact with an organisation who has been successful and see if they can offer any hints or tips.





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d) Thinking your project through from beginning to end.

If you have a clear idea of what you are applying for, how you are going to deliver the project and how you are going to prove you've delivered it (acquitting the grant), this will both give confidence to the grant funder and make the delivery of your project simpler.



- i) Have a well thought out project plan.
- ii) Anticipate the acquittal – how are you going to measure your success?
- iii) Don't be overly ambitious – make sure your project can be delivered on time and on budget.

e) Use a master document / template.

Lots of grants ask similar questions, so if you start a master document and store your common answers, you can then cut and paste from this document into new grant applications and edit as necessary.

- i) Your master document will typically contain details about:
 - Your organisation (size, history, purpose etc)
 - Your project
 - The need you are trying to address
- ii) Store the document somewhere, where any member of your committee can access it (the shed computer, a shared Google Drive or Microsoft One Drive etc).



f) Demonstrating your need / identifying the evidence.

When assessing applications grant funders will want to understand the need your grant is addressing and how important that need is.

- i) Be clear about who you are targeting and what the specific need is.
- ii) Do you have data available to support your application? Sources might include:
 - Your local government often has a data portal where they can tell you about community need.
 - The Queensland government has a collection of data stored:
<https://statistics.qgso.qld.gov.au/qld-regional-profiles>.



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- You can set up a Google Alert which will let you know when new information that relates to your area of interest is published on the web:
<https://www.google.com/alerts>.

3) How to find grants

- a) How and where do you find relevant grants?
Websites and Newsletters can be one way.

- i) There are two basic strategies you can employ:

- A regular search of known sources (see the list below) OR
- A newsletter subscription that will email you opportunities on a regular basis (again, list below). Both AMSA and QMSA will let you know about some relevant grant funding opportunities if you are subscribed to their communications.



- b) Using your relationships to identify suitable grants.

- i) It is important to develop a relationship with local funding sources, so that you will be the first group they think of when an opportunity presents itself. Relationships might include:

- Politicians – Local, State and Federal
- Local philanthropic foundations
- Local businesses



- ii) Use the connections that exist within your shed – if you have got someone who has a constructive relationship with one of the groups listed above, task them with keeping their eye out for funding opportunities.

- c) Unsolicited Proposals

- i) Sometimes governments and organisations will fund innovative proposals even when a grant has not been advertised.
- ii) Articulate your proposal as clearly and attractively as possible and present it to your prospective funder. This might be a politician's office or a government department. It costs nothing to ask!



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Grants resources

https://grantguru.com.au/	Register for limited free searches or a \$4.50 per week grants subscription
https://indigogold.com.au/	Free monthly newsletter of grants over \$10,000 (link at bottom left corner), paid options available as well
https://www.grants.services.qld.gov.au/	Queensland Government grants finder
https://www.grants.gov.au/	Australian Government's grants information system
https://www.qcoss.org.au/grants/	A regularly updated list of upcoming grants that are relevant to community and social service organisations
https://gemlocal.com.au/	GEM Local is a grants calendar database designed specifically to help small Australian charitable and community organisations find the right grants for them Cost: \$480 (ex tax) per year with flexible payment options (paid quarterly, 6 monthly or annually).
https://www.fundingcentre.com.au/ (an enterprise of ourcommunity.com.au)	Subscription – EasyGrants newsletter
https://www.askright.com/paf-guide/	Subscription service – free 7 day trial -PafGUIDE is an "industry insider" resource that provides comprehensive and up-to-date information on all Private Ancillary Funds (PAFs) and Public Ancillary Funds (PuAFs).



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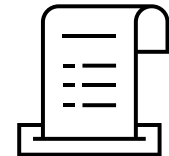
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4) Delivering your grant

- a) The delivery of one grant is the launch pad for the next application and is your opportunity to demonstrate your capacity and skills.
- b) Take the opportunity before signing a funding agreement to clarify expectations. i.e. Find out:
 - How much flexibility there is in delivering the grant.
 - If the money needs to be handed back if it isn't spent.
 - How the funder wants to be acknowledged.
 - What the procedure is if you want to make a change to the project?
- c) Take lots of photos, collect stories and statistics – these will be useful for both your acquittal and your next grant application.
- d) Remember your acquittal – keep your receipts!



Contact

If you've got any further questions about grant funding please contact regionalcoordinator@qmsa.org.au.