



## **Essex RFU - Grant Funding Handout**

Every rugby club should be engaged in searching out grants from the wider business community to help them meet their business plans and long-term stability to support both rugby and the wider community.

Achieving a grant is like darts, no good just chucking a dart at the board and hoping, you need practice and focus to hit the bull's eye. Finding a grant is exactly the same, preparation before you start looking will bring huge benefits in the end.

The RFU, Active Essex, Sport England and Club Matters have exceptionally good tools and guides to assist you achieve your needs. Links are at the bottom of this document.

**The key to getting any grant is to first understand the CRITERIA and ensure that at all stages of the process you are constantly focussed on addressing that criteria.**

And

**Be Proactive, “You only get it if you apply for it”.**

### **General Guide to Help You.**

**Stage 1: What do you want the funds for and is a grant the most likely way to achieve your objectives:**

1. Funds for kit, tours, balls, overhead costs, general funds, pitch maintenance, these are best achieved via Sponsorship.
2. Funds for new boiler, minibus, floodlights, developing community links, facilities linked to community participation, pitch machinery, new facilities, would all be considered good grant finding opportunities.

Go to the RFU Grant Finder tool, Before you start go to

<https://www.englandrugby.com/participation/running-your-club/funding>

and look at various types of grants to get a feel for:

- the type of activities funders are looking to support at this time.
- the type of criteria they are looking for.
- the level of commitment they are looking for.
- the language and phrasing they use, it is important we respond with language and phrasing they understand, in general they will know nothing about rugby.

**Stage 2 – Pre-Engagement. Arrange to meet with other Members of the Executive or Group who have the need, to agree:**

- What is it we want to achieve, please be as specific as possible, it will help when searching for funders?
- Does this need fit into the Clubs existing business plan? If not, why are you looking for a grant.
- Does the Club have some funds and resources that it would be willing to commit to the project? Funders like partnership funded applications.
- What is the timescale for the project?
- What outcomes would you want to achieve? the more precise you are the better as it will help narrow the search.

- Does the use of the grant require any further permissions, such as lease holder sign off or planning permission? Funders will want to know these types of permission have been agreed, even if just in principle.
- Document the results of the meeting so you can ask the Committee and Club Officers for their input. Buy in from everyone is essential, there is no point starting this process and finding out the Club will not or cannot support it.
- REMEMBER, the funder expects his desired outcome to be achieved as well as you achieving yours.

**Stage 3: Engagement. When reviewing funding sources, you should ideally meet with one or two others and crosscheck your requirement against:**

- What particular problems or needs are the funders trying to solve? if it matches excellent proceed, if not then no point going any further.
- What geographical area does the funders focus on? most funders will only grant funds local to a specific area.
- What type of activities do they support?
- What ways of working do they support?
- What reporting is required?
- How big is the fund? is there a maximum amount you apply for? how and when is the grant paid?
- What types and mix or levels of funding do they consider for partnership funding?
- What is the size and duration of the grant?
- Are there any restrictions?
- Are their policies on financial or governance matters that might affect your eligibility?

**Readiness and Trust Factors, these are key tenets that Funders will want assurances on:**

- Security of Tenure, e.g., Freehold, length of lease.
- Partnership Funding agree in advance how much the Club is willing to invest. Not all grants will require this, but if they do and you cannot provide any funding then do not apply.
- Financially Secure, annual accounts are normally required.
- Open Constitution, funders want you to be open and inclusive.
- Open Club, Membership should be available to all.
- Business Plan not always required but if, then ensure it exists and that the reason for the grant is referenced in the plan.
- Committee Consent, ideally funders like to see committee wide consent.

As a checklist you can use the RFU's form "Are You Ready For Funding" link at end of document.

**Top Tips for your Funding Application.**

**Remember, apart from what you provide on your application the funder may have no idea who you are, so the funder must feel assured that you are addressing their need from the very start of the application, that you understand the criteria and that you can meet it.**

- Give the funder what they want, be concise, address their need,
- Tell the funder who you are,
- Describe the problem and your solution, remember YOUR SOLUTION must address only their need, do not address other needs that they have not asked for.
- Be positive, what are the outcomes, what are the successes.
- Avoid jargon, assume the reader is a novice, use plain English, BUT be concise and deliver a punch.

- Offer evidence for your cause, BUT only evidence that references the need, do not bullsh\*\*t, stay on track.
- Know your budget.
- Check your application again and again, get others to check it, go back to stage 2 and crosscheck, remember, CRITERIA, CRITERIA, CRITERIA.
- Get your application in early as possible after application date, some funders may review on receipt so better chance of success whilst “pot is still full”, rather than at the end when they may be left with a lot of applications and a much smaller pot to award.

### **DO's and DO NOTS.**

#### **DO's.**

Read the Guidelines.

Submit Information Requested

Correct Contact Details

Get Critical Friend to read and review.

Keep a copy of what you send.

#### **DON'T's**

Apply if you do not meet the criteria

Submit superfluous background material, that has not been asked for.

Rush the Application.

Apply outside the deadline period.

#### **Key links:**

##### **Buddle (Club Matters) Funding Guidance.**

<https://buddle.co/learning-and-support-resources/money-matters>

##### **RFU Grant Finder.**

<https://www.englandrugby.com/participation/running-your-club/funding>

##### **Sport England – How We Can Help**

[www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/our-funds](http://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/our-funds)