**Podcast transcript Number 1**

Hello I’m Matt Jones from the External Funding team at Suffolk County Council.

This is the first of a series of podcasts giving hints and tips on funding and a few pieces of advice to bear in mind when developing an application.

1. Do your research. Is this the right fund for your organisation and your project? If unsure, then talk it through with CAS or our team
2. If the application process permits it, then try and speak to the funder beforehand. Some actively encourage this. It can be a useful way of ensuring that there is, in principle, a decent fit between your project and the fund.
3. Allow plenty of time. Ensure that you have sufficient time to complete your application. A rushed bid will probably not succeed. Make sure you are aware of the deadline and work back from that. You should also allow time for the project to be appraised, approved and an offer letter issued, before you start work, as any activity prior to this may not be eligible.
4. Be clear on the need and demand for your project. How do you know that there will the necessary take-up? If you do, then how can you evidence it? Funders will want to know that their money will be used effectively, that the project will achieve the stated results and that it represents value for money
5. Answer the questions. This sounds very simple, but remember to give the information that the funder has asked for and not just what you want to tell them!
6. Show the bid to someone else prior to submitting it. Letting someone who hasn’t been involved in writing the bid have a look at it can ensure that it is clear and understandable. Do not assume that an appraiser will be familiar with the acronyms and technical terms which you may use. Having someone look at your bid “cold” can be a useful sense-check.
7. Be realistic. If you are asking for money, then ask for what you **need,** as opposed to what you **want.** The project needs to show value for money, but do not over-promise in terms of outputs and results. Do not feel that you need to outshine other bids. Funders want projects which will deliver results, but they do not want projects which do not succeed because of unrealistic ambitions.
8. If your bid does not succeed, try and get as much feedback as you can. Learn from the experience and try and establish the reasons why your bid didn’t succeed. Was the fund over-subscribed? Was there an issue with the application? Or was it the project itself?

If you need to talk through any of this, please feel free to contact the External Funding Team at Suffolk County Council or colleagues at Community Action Suffolk