

Tips for successful fundraising

1. Before submitting an application

First clarify whether the institution or person you want to write to actually supports your institution respectively your type of project. A search on the Internet will help you with this; if you are unsure, a telephone call can provide clarification and save time.

You should be able to answer these questions before approaching private sponsors:

- What is your project about (brief description in a few sentences)?
- What excites you about your project?
- What could inspire others about your project?
- Why is your project unique?
- Why is your work important?
- What contribution does your project make (to society/science)?
- What does your financing plan look like?
- What is your timetable?
- Who shall help you and what kind of support are you looking for?
- Where is the project affiliated (faculty/department/discipline) and is/are they aware of your project?
- Have all other usual funding institutions (e.g. SNF, EU, University of Basel research fund, etc.) been considered in advance?

2. Preparation of an application

Most funding bodies nowadays have their own application forms, which you should definitely use; check this on the Internet in advance. If you are formulating your own application and approaching a private funding body for the first time, the trick is to mention everything important and still concentrate on the essentials. Applications that are too long risk causing resentment on the part of the recipient and being perceived as unprofessional. The lack of important information in turn makes it more difficult for the funding body to make an initial preliminary decision. The application should also be understandable for laypersons, which does not mean that all technical terms have to be translated and complex relationships explained in detail. However, it helps, if the recipient generally understands what your project is about and does not need to be an expert in your field.

Including the cover letter, an initial application should be no more than four to six A4 pages long. Pay attention to the following:

➤ **Cover letter (1 DIN A4 page)**

- Describe the most important points of your request clearly and comprehensibly in a short letter.
- Formulate the core message as enthusiastically and convincingly as possible!

- **Who are you? (1 DIN A4 page CV, alternatively existing flyer of the institution)**
 - Enter your personal details (name, address, telephone, e-mail).
 - Introduce yourself with a short biography.
 - Emphasize your qualifications (if applicable with collected reviews).
 - Describe the location of the project in your own CV or within your field of activity at the institution.

- **Project description (1 to 2 DIN A4 pages)**
 - Give the most important dates and location of the project/proposal.
 - Describe your project precisely and in detail - be sure to concentrate on the essentials.
 - Describe it realistically and yet enthusiastically!
 - What are your goals and who is your target audience?
 - What impact do you want to achieve and how do you ensure the sustainability of your project?
 - Describe why your project is absolutely worthy of support.
 - Announce to provide regular (e.g. annual) project and financial reporting to the funding body.

- **Budget and financing plan (1 DIN A4 page)**
 - Provide a precise, plausible cost estimate as an overview (list of budget items).
 - What is the total amount to be funded?
 - Are there other sources of funding (secured, requested or planned) and which budget items are to be covered by them?

- **Time planning (integrated in project description or budget plan)**
 - Specify initial milestones with planned dates.
 - Illustrate the planned duration/running time of the project.
 - Date the planned end of the project.

3. After the funding is before the funding

Think early on about how you want to inform acquired sponsors about the status of the project and plan to maintain continuous contact. Primarily use existing resources: You can invite sponsors to annual events organized by your institution. Publications, annual reports and newsletters are also read with pleasure by sponsors.

Remember: it is much more time-consuming and cost-intensive to find and win over a new sponsor than to encourage an existing sponsoring partner to make a further commitment! Thanks, information, transparency, honesty, respect - and thanks again - are the basis of a long, successful partnership!

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