

# Where can we find funding for our activities?

## Key Terms:

- **Criteria or policy:** An explanation of what the funder will fund.
- **Eligibility:** Under the funder's rules, the definition of who can apply and what for; anything ineligible cannot be funded.
- **Assessment:** The process by which the funder judges your application.
- **Circular:** Standard applications where the same letter is sent off to lots of different funders, without tailoring it to their interests.

## What Groups tell us:

- "I'm confused about how to find out about funding sources; sometimes it seems like a full-time job."
- "I went to a local forum meeting and got several new ideas for where to apply, just from talking to other groups."
- "Our Council for Voluntary Service organised a funding fair. I met 2 different funders who both encouraged us to apply."

## What Funders tell us:

- "Every year we get thousands of applications which are ineligible or outside our criteria, so we can't fund them. What a waste of their time and ours!"
- "Have they really researched what we fund? This looks like a circular, and we put those straight in the bin."
- "Those of us with paid staff welcome enquiries from people who are planning to apply – it saves everyone time if we can answer their questions before they complete the application."

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## → Are you ready for Funding?



- You can find funding information in lots of places, but a good place to start is your local Council for Voluntary Service or Voluntary Action. To contact your CVS go to the NACVS website [www.nacvs.org.uk](http://www.nacvs.org.uk) to find their details.
- Networks of other organisations are good too – especially for hearing about pots of money with tight deadlines.
- When you find a funding source, check that:
  - You meet the funder's criteria.
  - They can give large enough grants to meet your needs.
  - They will make a decision in time to fit with your timescale.
  - Filling in their paperwork (before applying and after you get the money) won't take more time than it's worth – there may be simpler funders available.