

Grants, Trust Funds and Sponsorship

To achieve your student group's aims and objectives, in most cases you will need money to organise activities. Some activities can be paid for through membership fees or by charging members to cover the costs.

The thought of applying for grants and sponsorship can be daunting especially if you have never done it before. This guide gives you some tips and guidance on what you should and shouldn't do when applying for funding and how to make the most of your application!

If you are interested in fundraising or you wish to use an online donation service, the Guild officially endorses 'My Donate'. Please refer to the Fundraising Guide for more information.

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Trust Funds and Grants

Trust funding is usually only suitable for events and activities that have a charitable aim and objective, so particularly apply to the community volunteering groups. There are over 4,000 trusts in the UK so it's essential you find out what type of work a trust is able to support and select appropriate ones to apply to. Most trust funds will have set criteria that any applicant needs to meet. It's essential to find out what these are before you apply. If you do not do this, you may waste your time by applying to a trust which cannot give grants to your area of work. It is also worth double checking the guidelines each time you apply for a grant as the criteria may have changed since you previously applied. To find out more about what trusts are available:

Speak to the Jobs, Skills and Volunteering department about grants that may be relevant to you

Talk to other student groups who have applied for trust funding.

Type of application: To apply to some trusts you'll need to send a proposal while others will have application forms. If there is an application form you must supply all the information requested in the form in order for your application to be considered.

Budget: The trustees must account for the way they have spent the trust's money, so they will ask you for a detailed budget of how you plan to spend their grant. If the money is to purchase an item, you will have to send them the receipt. If it is to set up a project, or general running costs, you will be expected to produce a breakdown of costs, a timescale and details of how you will sustain the project once the grant has been spent.

When to apply: Trustees usually meet two to three times a year to decide on their grants. It is a good idea to find out the date of these meetings so you can plan your application well in advance. If you miss one meeting, it may be a long time before your application can be considered.

Waiting Time: If your application is for a large sum, do not be discouraged if a decision is not made at the first or even second meeting of the trustees. Some trusts want to inspect your work before they make a decision. Trusts are very likely to ask for more information before they make a decision. It may be many months before your grant is decided and given.

Tips for proposal writing

Before writing, think about the following

- : What are the aims and objectives of your project?
- : What are the key activities of your project?
- : Who are the main beneficiaries? How many of them?
- : How do you know there is a need?
- : How much money do you need, what do you need it for and when will you spend it?
- : How will you monitor progress and evaluate results?
- : If the project continues, how will it be funded?

Keep it Brief: Keep your letter to a page or two if possible. If your proposal is long, the managing director or decision-maker will not want to spend time reading it. If the reader is impatient, they may skip sections and miss your important points.

Keep it Simple: Keep the style simple, informal and easy to read. Your proposal should be clearly set out, with clear headings and paragraphs. Use short sentences, good grammar and use clear, professional fonts. Leave spaces between paragraphs, sections and sometimes use bullet points to make the text easier to read and the meaning clear to the reader.

Order logically: Each paragraph and section should lead logically on to the next so that you build up the reasons why they should support your work.

Clearly State the Purpose: At the beginning clearly state the purpose of your proposal, identifying what you are asking for and why. You can either have an opening sentence explaining the purpose or give it a heading such as 'Proposal for funding for Selly Oak play scheme, working with disadvantaged children in the Birmingham area'. The reader will want to know this in order to confirm that it is worthwhile reading the whole proposal.

Explain who you are: Give your project name, your full name, committee position, address, telephone number and email address. Explain your project is run through the University of Birmingham Guild of Students, which is a CLG (Charitable Company Limited by Guarantee.) State the Guild's charity number (1137548). [Please contact volunteering@guild.bham.ac.uk](mailto:volunteering@guild.bham.ac.uk) if they require any further supporting information.

Give a Brief Introduction: Include some brief background to the request. Do not assume the reader knows anything about you.

Keep Facts Relevant: Only include the information the trust needs to have - Think about the facts which a committee needs in order to make a decision whether to support you. They need to know whether your project is a

legitimate one, and they need to know about the work which you are asking them to support.

State the Need and Benefits: Explain what need or problem your activities are addressing and how. Make it clear the wider benefit that your activity will have. This part is very important as the trustees will base their decision on the impact that your activity will have on its beneficiaries. Provide any evidence that you have about the benefit your project will have.

Explain Your Evaluation Methods: Explain how you will monitor the project and measure the results to assess its effectiveness.

Provide Cost Breakdowns: State what you are asking for: are you requesting funding for the whole sum required or towards one particular cost, such as equipment? List the individual costs you would like to cover and show how the estimated money will be spent over a period of time. Set this out in a clear budget plan.

Match funding: It is in your favour to show that you have already made an effort to cover costs. List the money you already have and show the amount you still need.

Add Attachments: Making the letter longer will often reduce rather than increase its impact, but attaching compelling material is fine. They can then decide whether to read it. Make sure that all information you provide is relevant and to the point.

Follow up: If the grant is successful, thank the trust and keep them informed of developments. Send them some kind of annual report at the end of the project/year and regular updates.

If there any planned changes about how grants will be spent that differ from the original proposal, you must gain the Trust's approval, if that is a requirement of funding.

Guild Campaigns Pot

A Student Campaign is sustained action by a group of students to change something that you want to make better.

You might want to improve the services the university provides (such as contact hours or exam timetabling), or the policies of government towards students (tuition fees or international student visas). You might want to raise awareness of an issue that you care about (like human rights, animal cruelty etc.), or want to fight for a better deal for student rents, travel fares, or hidden course costs.

The campaigns pot is the political budget of the guild and is controlled by the officer team. Any society or group, or individual student can apply for support. As the campaigns pot is the political budget of the guild, the final decision is made by the officer team and an application is not guaranteed to be passed even if the criteria are met.

As well as funding, successful applications also receive the support of the campaigns coordinator in planning campaigns, organising events and promoting a cause. Successful applicants must have an initial meeting with the campaigns coordinator before the funding will be provided.

The campaigns pot this year is split between and general pot, and 4 smaller pots, one for each of the liberation groups (Women, LGBT+, BME, Disabled). These pots are open to relevant student groups or individual students that self-define into that group.

The application form for the campaigns pot (for both general and campaigns) can be found here:

<https://www.guildofstudents.com/representation/campaigns/useful-documents>

Sponsorship

Sponsorship is the term used to describe a commercial partnership between two parties who come together in order to support a particular activity. The partnership must be balanced, with both parties getting equal benefit from any agreement reached.

Any sponsorship deals made between a student group and a third party, external to the Guild, must be pre-approved by the Student Groups Manager. This refers to:

- : All agreements where money, products and services exchange hands between a group and a third party
- : All agreements for sponsorship of a group, activity or event by a third party separate from the Guild

Practically any company or organisation could be a sponsor. You could approach companies that have a relevant link with your group. The more relevant the event or the target audience is, the easier it will be to get a sponsor.

You may also wish to try approaching the following types of companies:

- : Graduate recruiters
- : Local Retailers
- : Clothing companies
- : Sports companies

Pretty much anything can be sponsored – all that's needed is a bit of imagination and a vision to see how companies can benefit from a given activity or event. Sponsorship doesn't always mean cash, it can also include the lending or donation of equipment, transport, free products, gifts, discounts, training or room hire.

Do some background research and find out more:

- : Find out about the company and what they do
- : Think about how the company's work relates to your groups aims and activities and consider whether they may be likely to support you
- : Find out whether the company has done anything similar in the past and if they already have any links with the Guild.

Can groups promote companies without a deal?

No - Any commercial promotion must either be through an equal and balanced sponsorship deal where the company is giving your group, not an individual, either cash or other benefits.

As a student at the University of Birmingham you are fortunate to have access to the student market. As a committee member you also have access to a specific audience of students that certain companies will want to contact.

It is NOT acceptable to abuse your position either as a student or a committee member by promoting companies or products without it being a formal sponsorship deal. The University does not look favorably on this.

Is there anyone who can't sponsor Guild groups?

There are a number of documents that people can consult to give an idea of who you should not accept for sponsorship. They include the Beliefs and Commitments and also the Ethical, Environmental and Procurement Policy.

For a copy of these policies or if you need assistance or are unsure you can still contact studentvoice@guild.bham.ac.uk or visit them in person for more support.

Policy can now be made or amended via the Your Ideas platform, so if anyone feels strongly about the list and wants to amend the policy, Your Ideas is how to do it. You can submit an idea here:

<https://www.guildofstudents.com/yourideas/submit-your-ideas/>

How to write letters/proposals to companies

Points to Include:

- Who you are
- Your groups' aims, objectives and core activities
- What you would like from them
- Why you would like them to sponsor your group
- Details of any projects/events you would like them to sponsor or if it is general sponsorship for the whole year
- Why the company should be interested in your group
- Benefits to the company and anything they will get through sponsorship
- Benefits to the Guild and students/ your group
- Whether other companies will be sponsoring you
- How you will monitor and prove to them you have fulfilled your agreement
- Duration/timescales of the sponsorship
- Costs if appropriate
- Next step for the recipient and yourself

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the best from Birmingham!**



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- Keep it focused
- Make important aspects of the application stand out
- Use bullet points to keep it short, simple and to the point
- Always address the letter to an individual, never sir/madam. This can normally be found out with a bit of telephone investigation.
- Pick out appropriate issues to demonstrate if your society has similar issues and concerns

What benefits could your group offer to a company?

It's up to you what you offer; here are some ideas to consider:

- Raise awareness of the company with their target audience
- Enhance company & brand image
- Achieve a business or corporate social responsibility objective (the organisation engaging in the community)
- Advertising opportunities
- Coverage (reach of target group)
- Signage & logo display
- Partner of the Guild/University
- Foster positive associations
- Further marketing opportunities may arise from the sponsorship
- Allows them to work with the student group and access a pool of highly motivated proactive students.

Contracts

If you are offered a sponsorship package with an organisation, you will be asked to sign a contract to state the amount they have agreed to sponsor your group and what they expect in return. Either the company will provide the contract or you can use the Guild's template (available from the Student Groups department)

DO NOT SIGN A CONTRACT BEFORE THE GUILD APPROVES IT

The Guild will sign all contracts on your behalf. This means that, if something goes wrong and you cannot fulfil your contractual obligations, you will not be legally liable as an individual. If the Guild signs it on your behalf, we will be legally liable as we have signed the contract.

Procedure for applying for sponsorship

1. Find out more about sponsorship

Email studentgroups@guild.bham.ac.uk or volunteering@guild.bham.ac.uk if you have further questions

2. Decide how much you wish to ask for

How much money do you need and what for?

How much do you realistically think you could gain from sponsorship?

3. Decide who you wish to approach

What kind of organisations would you want sponsorship from?

What kind of organisations would be interested in sponsoring your group?

Who might have the funds to sponsor your groups?

4. Write a proposal or letter to chosen organization(s) or arrange to meet them

Let them know why it would be mutually beneficial and why they should want to work with you over other groups etc. You could also outline any potential ideas you have for sponsorship or what you are looking for.

5. Get a written contract for any sponsorship agreements made

You must have some kind of written document setting out the conditions of the agreement, so that both parties understand the commitment. Do not just rely on a verbal agreement. A Guild contract template is available in the finance section of the Guild website.

6. Give the contract to the Guild to sign on your behalf

Once you are happy with the terms and conditions within the contract, hand it into the Student Activities counter. It will be checked over by the Guild and, if there are no problems with it, it will be signed by a staff member on behalf of the Guild. **DO NOT SIGN THE CONTRACT YOURSELF**

The contract will then be sent back to you and you can go ahead and arrange for any money or resources to be transferred to your group.

It's very important you deliver what you have promised and fulfil any agreements of the deal, to ensure the credibility of your group, the Guild and University is maintained. Once the deal goes ahead remember to thank the company, send them updates on your progress and let them know how their sponsorship is being used. You may also want to invite your sponsor along to events your group is organising, but remember to follow the speaker request procedure if the event is on campus – the existence of a contract does not remove the need to get the University's permission for them to come to campus.

Invoicing a company

Most companies will require a formal invoice to be raised after a contract is signed, before they will pay any money over.

Groups cannot write their own invoices, or use a template provided by the company, as with contracts, you have no legal right to issue those documents on behalf of the Guild.

In order to invoice a company, you need to complete an 'invoice request form' (available from the Student Activities Counter), attached to a copy of the signed contract. The Guild's Finance department will then raise an invoice and email it to the company. If not paid within 30 days, they will also chase the company for payment on your behalf. If the company hasn't paid by the end of the academic year, we'll ask for your help chasing up the payment, as you will have contacts with the company.

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