

Grants Kit

Here is a guide to assist you in making grant applications for your Playcentre.

Nailing the application process



Join the Facebook group 'Playcentre Grants and Fundraising'. A place to share ideas, inspire others, and support grants officers across Aotearoa.



Keep an eye out locally for any funding workshops for community organisations. Local councils often host workshops that offer a crash course in grant applications.



For local Board or Council grants in particular, it pays to form relationships with your elected officials so that your centre is on their radar. Make sure that you maintain a relationship with your elected officials and Council staff all year round, and not just when you want money.



Check the requirements of the funder carefully and make sure you comply – some need a resolution to apply for funding or minutes from a meeting, others need multiple quotes. All applications are different.



If you've seen another Playcentre successfully receive funding for a project, don't be shy about asking them for hints and tips about their successful application.



You can apply for more than one grant at a time. The worst thing that would happen is that you'd get both and need to go back to one of the funders and explain you've received funds from elsewhere.



Check the closing date.
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If at all possible, aim to submit your application before the due date. Leaving it to the last few days gives you no wriggle room for last-minute delays; either at your end (sick child) or theirs (when an overloaded online site repeatedly crashes).



The key ingredient to a successful application is keeping it clear, concise and focused on your purpose.



Highlight all the relationships your centre has with other local community groups. Do you hire out your centre or host community events? Clearly articulating how your project may benefit a wider cross section of the community can help increase your chances of being successful.

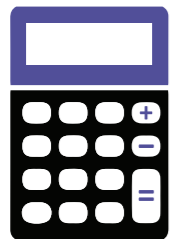


Most, if not all, organisations are looking to give funding to meaningful projects that benefit the greater good. Make a point of those benefits in your application.



Before you hit send on your application, have a fresh pair of eyes look over it. You've probably been staring at it for so long, it's starting to blur. New eyes might pick up that stray error.

Nailing the application process cont'd



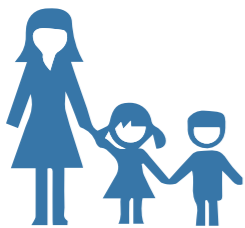
Proofread the numbers too. Have a financial whizz, or someone not afraid of numbers, to check the figures and budget you're including.



It might seem obvious, but keep a copy of your application. It will make it easier next time you apply.



Don't forget about the accountability reports! You may need to prove you've spent the money on what you said you would, and give a brief on how the grant benefited your Centre. Late submissions of accountability reports could mean you miss out next time.



You may need to prove that the amount of time and effort that you budgeted for 'in-kind' has actually been contributed. A volunteer log – recording who provided the volunteer time, the type of work they did, when, and for how long – can be helpful for this.



Remember to say thanks. It can be a nice touch to have the tamariki craft a card or write a letter to say thank you to the funder. Photos are an added bonus! Tag the funder in a Facebook post and share the love.



If your application is unsuccessful contact the organisation and ask for feedback. Most will be happy to give you an idea why you were unsuccessful. Ask them if there is anything you can do to improve your application for next time.

Most grant applications will want the following information: Who are you? Who will benefit from this grant?

By Hannah Coleman from Mangere Bridge Playcentre

- Make sure you include information about what Playcentre is all about. Talk about the importance of child-led play and use our tagline *Whānau Tupu Nga tahi – Families Growing Together*. Don't assume that the panel reviewing your application will have any prior knowledge of Playcentre, or understand what makes it different and special. Include specific information about your centre like how long it has existed, what links it has with the wider community etc.
- Who will benefit from this money? Your members? Wider community? Māori whānau? Specific ethnic groups or ages? All of the above?

What do you want the money for?

- What do you want to buy or do?
- Why do you need the money?
- What steps has your centre already taken to fundraise for this project?
- What will your centre contribute towards the project? (e.g. payment in kind in volunteer hours; 50 percent of the cost; venue for a community event or workshop related to your project)
- What will be the impact if your centre is unable to get funding?

When do you need it?

- What will be the timeframe for the project?
- Any project milestones – make sure these align with the timeframe the grant is meant to cover and that you will have time to complete an accountability report at the end.

Why do you need it?

- How will this project add value to your centre either in terms of a change to the physical environment, ability to purchase resources; opportunity to replace or repair broken and unusable equipment etc.

A final thought....

Funders will be looking for justification that they should give your organisation money over other applicants, so you need to sell your idea as passionately and enthusiastically as possible. Make it sound convincing. Think about whether it would look good as a news story in the local newspaper or (if it's a bigger project) on the TV news. If it would, this can often help your application to be successful.

Ready to apply? Can you answer these questions?

