

THE PRELUDE TO A SUCCESSFUL FUNDING PROPOSAL: CREATING YOUR CASE FOR SUPPORT

There are differing uses for this term within fundraising, but by 'case for support', we're referring to **an internal document**. It's a resource you create to outline the problem your organisation exists to solve, what you do about that problem, and what you are going to achieve as a result. Put simply: it's your case for why funders should support you. A good case for support effectively acts as a comprehensive, well-organised filing cabinet of convincing content that you can pull out whenever you need it – be it for a funding proposal, meeting with a potential major donor, or to create copy for a webpage.

It's very unlikely that anyone outside your organisation will see this full document. But it should be **your starting point for all your external, funder- and donor-facing documents**. Many organisations shy away from creating a case for support because they don't feel they have time and they'd rather spend that time writing applications.

Yes, it does take time to create. And it's never a case of just copy/pasting large chunks of your case for support into an external document with some images and a catchy title – a successful funding proposal will always need tailoring to the audience and context. But, a good case for support will save you time in the long run, greatly improve the quality of your proposals and applications, and increase your fundraising return on investment.

A GOOD CASE FOR SUPPORT WILL EQUIP YOUR ORGANISATION WITH:

- **Better fundraising content:** you're making an investment in creating strong, reusable core content that you can start from every time, and then focus on fine-tuning for different audiences.
- **Brand and voice consistency:** your staff, trustees and volunteers will feel more confident about writing and talking about your organisation's work. They'll be able to use a consistent tone and always weave in those key messages.
- **The ability to capitalise on last-minute funding opportunities:** if a funder launches a programme at short notice with an urgent deadline, or a donor asks for information ahead of a meeting the next day, there's no need to panic. You'll be able to respond quickly, using your case for support as a starting point.
- **A stronger and more convincing argument:** as you craft your case for support, you'll be able to identify any weaknesses or gaps. For example, if you're not clear why your organisation approaches things a certain way, or why a service user would come to you instead of another organisation, chances are a funder will be asking the same question! This process allows you to critique and fine-tune your arguments over time, on your own terms, outside the rushed process of a specific application. This is more important than ever if you want to stand out in such a competitive funding climate.

A FOUR-STEP CASE FOR SUPPORT FORMULA

There are many ways to structure a case for support, but fundamentally you will need to cover four key areas:

1. **The need for your work:**
 - **The problem** you exist to solve
 - **The people** that you work with - their circumstances, experiences, wishes and needs
 - **How you know** all this - who you have asked, what they have told you, etc.
2. **Your 'solution':**
 - **What you do** in response to these issues



- **Specific details** about your planned activities: what, where, how long, how often, etc.
 - **Why you decided to do things that way**, and how you have evolved your work over time
3. **Your impact:**
- **The change** you're trying to achieve, and the long-term, big-picture consequences of that change
 - **The measurable outcomes** you'll achieve as you work towards that change
 - **How you'll measure, report on and reflect** on your progress
4. **Your expertise and credibility:**
- **What makes you best-placed** to achieve this change (in essence, why a donor or funder should trust you to do the work)
 - To demonstrate this, you might highlight some brief background information about your organisation, as well as your unique skills, lived experience, knowledge, connections, track record and qualifications.

There are lots of potential information sources to draw on for each of these sections, but here are just a few:

- Statistics (about the people you work with, their circumstances, and your previous impact)
- Information collected from your service users and staff via surveys, interviews, etc.
- Third party research and reports
- Photo, video and audio content
- Case studies, quotes and stories
- Information about the local delivery landscape, your partners and funders, etc.

This can feel like a daunting process, but it's important to stress that you don't need everything to get started. As an internal document, developing a case for support can and should be an ongoing, iterative process. Start ASAP, but make a note of what else you'll need to research, gather and add over time. **The best cases for support are never finished; they evolve over time.** For example, if new research is published that reinforces the need for your work, you gather a new case study from one of your service users, or if you've just written a top-notch answer to a question in a funding application that you want to reuse later.

FOUND OUR SESSION AND THIS GUIDE HELPFUL?



There's plenty more where that came from! Our [on-demand fundraising training segments](#) are accessible, affordable, bitesize videos on a range of topics, including fundraising strategy, trusts and foundations and getting started with fundraising. Each video is clearly explained by one of our friendly team, and fully captioned. You will be able to watch every video you buy as many times as you like, whenever you like, for 30 days.

Fundraising Everywhere conference delegates can take advantage of our **50% off** discount voucher on all our training videos using the code **WINTER50** at checkout.



Lime Green Consulting also provide a range of consultancy services to charities and social enterprises, helping your organisation to be more strategic, become more sustainable and access more funding. Our support includes strategic consultancy, facilitated workshops, trusts fundraising support, fundraising training and mentoring. Head to our [website](#) for more information on our services and get in touch if you'd like to explore working with us!

