

Fundraising information and ideas

If you want to do voluntary work, you must let nothing put you off. There will always be a solution to any setbacks you have, even if you can't immediately see it. Financial concern is perhaps the major factor that stops many people from volunteering. You may be wondering how you will support yourself during your project. Well, stop worrying. There are numerous grants available to help pay your travel, food and accommodation expenses. All you need to do is apply. For information about how to raise funds, please read on.

Where do I start?

In addition, to getting a job and trying to save as much money from that as you can, there are three main ways of getting funds together for your project:

Applying to a trust for a grant.

Applying to your school or a community business.

Hold fundraising events.

What are educational trusts?

There are about 7500 grant-making trusts in the UK, which exist to provide £1.7bn in grants each year. The world's largest trust is the Wellcome Trust, which specialises in medical research. About 1000 of these are educational trusts, dispensing £300m each year. Each trust has a specific remit – it may seek to assist people intending to do a specific type of work, or of a particular age group, or from a certain geographical location. However, it is highly likely that there will be a trust suitable for your situation. Trusts tend to favour those with limited economic needs, but it is always worth applying.

What national guides are there to help me?

Your first step should be to visit your local library or bookshop in order to get a copy of one of the following books:

Charities Digest 2004 (published by Waterlow Professional Publishing) lists 1200 charities and full lists of citizens advice bureaux and law centres (who will advise individuals in need), councils for voluntary service, rural community councils, and federations of community associations (which advise and support charities), and volunteer bureaux (who will find local volunteering opportunities). £26.95.) Order from Waterlow Legal Publishing, Customer Services, Paulton House, 8 Shepherdess Walk, London N1 7LB (Tel: 020 7490 0049). Publishing information from Family Welfare Association, 501-505 Kingsland Road, London E8 4AU (Tel: 020 7254 6251).

Directory of Grant Making Trusts (published in association with the Charities Aid Foundation).

Educational Grants Directory (published by Directory of Social Change, 24 Stephenson Way, London NW1 2DP, tel: 020 7209 5151). Published every two years. Current edition: 7th edition 2002/3.

The Grants Register (published by Palgrave Macmillan).

A Guide to Grants for Individuals in Need provides information on 2,500 service and ex-service charities, trade union welfare funds, occupational benevolent funds, disability charities, local and parochial and national charities - all of which give financial support to individuals. £20.95 plus p&p from Directory of Social Change.

Sponsorship Funding Directory (published by Plymbridge Distributors Ltd on 01752 202301).

What regional guides are there to help me?

You may feel that you want to apply directly to a trust in your local area. If so, one of these should be of use.

London - A Guide to Local Trusts in Greater London 2002-03, £17.95 plus p&p.

Midlands - A Guide to Local Trusts in the Midlands 2002-03, £17.95 plus p&p.

Northern Ireland - Funding for Voluntary Action - A Guide to Local Trusts in Northern Ireland 1998, free from Northern Ireland Voluntary Trust, 22 Mount Charles, Belfast BT7 1NZ. Also see www.dsc.org.uk/charityexchange/ni.html for a guide to Northern Ireland funders.

North of England

A Guide to Local Trusts in the North of England 2002-03, £17.95 plus p&p.

A New Guide to Grant-Making Trusts in Lancashire is published by the Community Council of Lancashire (now called Community Futures), 15 Victoria Road, Preston PR2 8PS, tel: 01772 717461. It includes details of charitable trusts that fund in Lancashire.

The North East Guide for Grant Seekers 2003-04, £12 plus £1.50 p&p (also available on CD-ROM for £35 including p&p), The North East Guide to Grants for Individuals 2000-2001. Edited by Julie Christie, published by Funding Information North East, 2nd ed., 1999, £7.50, ISBN 0 951475 45 2. Available from FINE, John Haswell House, 8-9 Gladstone Terrace, Gateshead, NE8 4DY, tel: 0191 477 1253, fax: 0191 477 1260 or order online at www.fine.org.uk.

Scotland – The Directory of Scottish Grant Making Trusts 2000 is published by the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations, available at www.scvo.org.uk/essentials/directories/grant_making_trusts/index.htm. The website includes details of charitable trusts that give to individuals.

South - A Guide to Local Trusts in the South of England 2002-03, £17.95 plus p&p.

Wales - A bilingual Welsh Funding Guide is available for £16.96 plus p&p.

Except where an alternative publisher is stated, all the above are available from Directory of Social Change.

How do I write an application?

Find the most relevant trusts and contact them for a leaflet and application form. Read the leaflet to discover their core criteria for making grants and ensure you apply to the most relevant one. If it only makes grants to people from a deprived background, and you are not, then do not apply, as it will be a waste of time. Find about a dozen trusts which are suitable for you, and then fill in the application form for each, carefully tailoring each form to the requirements of the specific trust.

It is crucial that your application is serious, consistent and well thought-out. If, on the other hand, you come across as vague and contradictory, you will unlikely to be successful. To assist you, here are sample good and bad letters:

1. Dear Mr Thomson,

Re: Application for funding

I am writing to request funding from your trust to enable me to take part in a voluntary project for Support the World next July and August in Romania. The organisation runs a TEFL programme in Bucharest and I have been selected to spend six weeks next summer teaching English to primary school-aged children. I have already raised £600 to cover my food and accommodation costs while I will be away through a sponsored 10 mile swimathon and savings from my job as a waiter. However, I will not be able to raise any more funds as I shall be concentrating on working for exams, which I am taking in June. I am therefore writing to you to fund the cost of my airline ticket of £200.

2. Dear Sir,

I would like to go abroad next summer and so I am writing to ask you to pay for it. I would like to help other people if possible and I was told that you may be able to help. I am interested in volunteering in eastern Europe, possibly in Romania. I would like you to grant me £200, in order to help me do this.

The first extract is clearly better than the second. Here are some useful guidelines to writing an application letter.

1. Personalise the letter. Find out the name of the person you need to write to and address them directly.
2. Say exactly what you intend to do during your voluntary project, where you will do it and why. Say what organisation you are working for. Explain exactly how this grant will help your work.
3. Be specific. Do not simply ask for a £500 grant. Explain that you need £200 for a flight, £200 living expenses and £100 for further travel costs. You will look far more professional if you explain exactly what the money is for.
4. Give details of all other methods you have used to raise funds – by getting a job, by holding a charity sale, for example. This will ensure that you look as if you are thoroughly committed to getting the money.
5. Include all your contact details.

The three most important rules when writing your application are:

- Choose carefully. Only apply to a trust which has helped someone like you in the past.
- Ensure that, when the trust reads your application, every detail they read would get the answer “yes” to this question: “Would assisting this person fulfil our criteria as a trust and uphold our reputation?”
- Ensure that you apply for funds well in advance. Many trusts will only offer grants to one in four applications so make sure you don’t lose out by applying too late.

Who do trusts help?

In terms of who they help, there are six different types of trust. Therefore, if you approach a trust which helps people from a certain religious group or of a certain disability, there is no point applying unless you specifically fit their criteria.

Age related 35%

Disabled people (including people with medical conditions) 25%

Socio-economic 15%

Religious/denominational 12%

Gender/relationship 11%

Ethnicity 3%

Information from Patterns of Independent Grant-making in the UK, 2000, published by Charities Aid Foundation.

Example trusts:

The **Helena Kennedy Bursary Scheme** encourages “social inclusion and widening participation in further and higher education”. It awards one-off annual bursaries of £1000 to individual students. The charity is named after Baroness Kennedy QC and supports the recommendations made in her 1997 report 'Learning Works'. Please go to www.hkbs.org.uk.

The Prince’s Trust helps young people aged between 14 and 30 years old. It distributes a number of awards to enable young people to improve their circumstances through training, education and development of life skills. For an application form, telephone 0800 842 842 or go to www.princes-trust.org.uk.

The Jack Petchey Foundation is a grant-making trust which offers sponsorship of £200 to young people (aged 11 to 25) who are undertaking voluntary projects. The Foundation will sponsor gap year projects as well as fundraising events, such as a swimathon, sponsored cycle ride or marathon. The scheme is open to any young people who live in East London or West Essex. For further information, please go to www.jackpetcheyfoundation.org.uk.

Who else can I approach?

If you are still at school or college or have just left, it is a good idea to find out if there are any funds available there. Many schools will have funds available for worthwhile projects undertaken by current or former pupils and may be willing to help. Contact the Bursar or a member of the finances team for further information.

Similarly, organisations and businesses in the local community may be able to help you. Some businesses will have foundations, which are grant-giving trusts attached to the profit-making organisation. The principles are the same as for writing to a trust: identify one which is relevant to you and your volunteering, and write the letter taking into account their criteria for making grants.

How else can I raise funds?

Every year, thousands of people hold fundraising events. It is astonishing how helpful the local community can be in helping you to raise money for a useful cause. Here are examples of the main types of event:

Charity concert. Nikki Berry from Harrogate raised £900 from a concert for her volunteering placement on her gap year to India. She organised a choir and string quartets to play at her local church and managed to get her picture on the front page of the weekend section of six local newspapers.

Bring and buy sale. Get lots of friends and neighbours to give you unwanted books, videos and ornaments and hold a bring and buy sale.

Quiz night. Many pubs have upstairs rooms which you may be able to hire for free to hold a quiz night or social event. The pub will be happy to co-operate provided that you can guarantee either a certain number of people to turn up or a certain amount spent at the bar. You can charge each person a small amount to gain entry in order to raise funds.

Sponsored sporting event. You could run a marathon, or go abseiling or do a swimathon. In each case, you get friends, family and other benevolent people to sponsor your event. For example, you might ask people to sponsor you £1 for every mile you run of your marathon, so that you have a real incentive to complete the race.

Choose an event that is most suitable for you. Whatever you decide, make sure you get publicity. Phone up your local paper and tell them about your event, send them a press release and get them to write an article before your event, so that as many people can attend the event as possible. This is bound to increase the funds that you raise.

Useful websites

www.access-funds.co.uk/directories/char_trust/a_e.htm Grants information for the British charitable and not-for-profit sector.

www.acf.org.uk – you can download copies of the Association of Charitable Foundations advice leaflets, facts and figures about trusts and foundations, as well as links to trust and foundation websites.

www.avso.org - Association of Voluntary Service Organisations.

www.dsc.org.uk – Directory of Social Change

www.funderfinder.org.uk/ Funderfinder has a free guide to writing letters of application, *Apply Yourself*, which is available on their website. There is also a version giving details of trusts giving to individuals in need. Details from 65 Raglan Road, Leeds LS2 9DZ. Tel: 0113 243 3008. Fax: 0113 243 2966.

www.maccvol.btinternet.co.uk/youth2.htm Funding trusts for volunteers

www.scholarship-search.org.uk/ Scholarship Search.

www.support4learning.org.uk Supported by Higher Education and Research Opportunities.

Contact details of useful organisations:

The Association of Charitable Foundations

The ACF has over 300 members who give over £1.3 billion every year. Its two largest members are the the Community Fund (£300 million - one fifth share of the net proceeds of the National Lottery) and the Wellcome Trust (£400 million devoted to medical research and the history of medicine).

Association of Charitable Foundations
2 Plough Yard
Shoreditch High Street
London
EC2A 3LP
Web: www.acf.org.uk

The British Council

The Education and Training Section of the British Council has information about courses, work experience in the UK and abroad, exchange visits overseas and programmes for adult learners. They have information about grants, scholarships and other sources of funding for all of these.

The British Council runs a Youth Millennium Awards scheme, which helps young people to improve their local communities. It is open to any British resident aged between 18 and 30. The award scheme is open to the initiative and interest of young people in any community action project; applicants are requested to put forward their own international project for consideration.

The scheme supports activities such as learning or undertaking training which will improve skills in community work, or representing the local community. The core grant for each award is £1500. This covers preparatory costs, travel, daily subsistence, and follow-up activities.

British Council Education & Training Group
10 Spring Gardens
London
SW1A 2BN
Tel:020 7389 4383
www.britishcouncil.org

Charities Aid Foundation (CAF)

King's Hill
West Malling
Kent
ME19 4TA
Tel: 01732 52000
Fax: 01732 52001

E-mail: enquiries@CAFonline.org

Web: www.cafonline.org

Directory of Social Change

24 Stephenson Way

London

NW1 2DP

Tel: 020 7209 5151

Fax: 020 7209 4804

Email: books@dsc.org.uk

Web: www.dsc.org.uk/

EGAS - The Educational Grants Advisory Service

EGAS primarily assists students who cannot receive statutory funding, with priority to lone parents, the disabled, refugees, and people from under-privileged backgrounds or in exceptional circumstances. EGAS can advise on possible sources of funding. You will need to send a SAE and in return EGAS will send you an Information Form to complete.

The Educational Grants Advisory Service

501-505 Kingsland Road

London

E8 4AU

Tel: 020 7254 6251

E-mail: egas.enquiry@fwa.org.uk

Web: www.egason-line.org

Rotary clubs Rotary is a global network of service volunteers. It is the world's largest service organisation for business and professional people. There are 1835 Rotary clubs in the UK. To find your local Rotary club, which may be able to help you, please go to http://www.rotary-ribi.org/3_dist/districts.htm

Round Table is a community-based organisation, with 1000 local organisations in the UK. Please go to <http://www.roundtable.co.uk> .