

# Top tips for funding applications from CEF2023 Workshop

19/06/2023

Thanks to Tara Bowers of ECOE, Dan Curtis of BHESCo and Nicola Davidson of Community Energy South and MaidEnergy. Watch the YouTube video of the event here:

<https://youtu.be/If0-6bRfx4Q>

Good notes of the workshop, provided to us for anyone to use by Alban Thurston, are [here](#)

## Top Tips for Funding Bids for Community Energy

- ★ Contact your local authority and see if they have anyone that helps with writing funding bids.
- ★ Talk to the funder or attend their webinar if they have one for some useful insights into what they want.
- ★ Read all the criteria and application advice before you start.
- ★ If the bid is for a large amount of money and/or has multiple partners, write a project plan for the bid itself.
- ★ If your organisation is small or has no reserves to cover you being paid in arrears, partner with a bigger organisation or one that the funder has funded before.
- ★ Write your own project or business plan for the project before you start completing the application form, including:
  - 1) Clear rationale and objectives
  - 2) Provide lots of stats – not just what you have done, but also industry data to prove your point that there is a need
  - 3) Give examples of the challenges faced and how your project will solve the issues
  - 4) Create a budget, and ensure your budget makes sense
  - 5) The right staff in place with the right experience and qualifications and detail these
  - 6) Make sure you cover off risks and mitigation in detail if they ask for this.

- ★ Answer the questions fully and individually - like an exam.
- ★ Use bullet points to reduce word count.
- ★ Give lots more detail than you think is necessary.
- ★ Include every little you'll do for the ££s even if you think it's obvious from the description.
- ★ Repeat the key points as often as you can.
- ★ Ensure you use lots of key phrases that show you know what you are talking about.
- ★ Have a copy editor to edit the bid.
- ★ Don't give up! By their very nature most applications fail so don't let it get you down or take it personally when yours does.
- ★ But if you are successful, apply to the same fund next year with the same bid (with minor changes if needed)!

As you watch or rewatch [the Workshop video](#) please add bits of advice that we failed to record in comments and we will incorporate into the document. This will be ultimately shared on our Funding Page.

**1. Key Highlights and takeaways - identify the key highlights and takeaways from the event - these can be insights or main talking points from speakers, or lessons learned/ key actions.**

- Read funding guidelines. Meet all the requirements.
  - Break them down. Answer each one in the application separately.
- Review draft with the team
- If an application works, use it again for the same fund next year.
- Work in partnerships with organisations known to a funder you're applying to for the first time. Big partners are good for the Energy Redress Fund where you have to have a good financial track record and the first quarter's costs already in the bank as they pay in arrears.
- Know your overheads and allocate them out calculated on a daily basis over the life of the project
- Include additional data in Appendices with reference in the main text, if they don't essentially answer an application question.

Useful resources

- Dan Curtis - BHESCo : Here is the Govt Contracts Finder:  
<https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Search/Results> - "energy"
- Michaela Cryar - Yonunity : Yonunity will be opening the next round of Powering Communities Fund soon, small pots of grant funding for community energy groups:  
<https://www.yonunity.coop/energy-producers/powering-communities-fund>

Keep an eye on our socials for details of when the next round is open...

- Younity also have a 'bridging loan' fund to help get projects built in a timely way.

<https://www.younity.coop/funding/community-energy-kickstart>

Connie Muir : email [connie@younity.coop](mailto:connie@younity.coop) for more info about the bridging loan