FUNDING: SOURCING AND APPLYING

Whether you are a school, an employer, an HFE institution or a community group, Cycling Scotland and other organisations can support the development of your project through their funding programmes. We have compiled this guide to detail the usual stages of the funding process, and provide tips on how to write successful bids and adequately report on spend and progress to your funders.

It may be useful to refer to the project planning section of the tool kit prior to reading this section.

ESTABLISHING AN EVIDENCED NEED

Prior to writing any application, it is essential to communicate with your stakeholders to ensure your proposal is a true reflection of their needs and requirements. As an evidence-driven organisation, Cycling Scotland highly recommends this as the basis for any funding bid and will seek justification of how your project is likely to increase cycling rates to/from your organisation. Depending on the size of your organisation, this can be achieved through a range of methods: Travel Surveys, focus groups, direct engagement, photographs, etc. Anecdotal evidence may also be used as justification to back quantitative data, i.e. quotes from staff/students/teachers/members of the community, photographs, email records.

Example: You are the lead officer in charge of facilities in your organisation. You are aware that the Cycle Friendly Employer Development Fund has recently opened and you are thinking of submitting a proposal. Visitors and employees have repeatedly commented that the current cycle parking infrastructure is no longer appropriate for two reasons: lack of capacity and exposure to the weather. These comments can ideally be backed by a short travel survey to reinforce your base of evidence. After establishing your stakeholders' main mode of travel, your survey would ideally contain questions such as:

"What are the main reasons you do not cycle to work?"

"What would make you more likely to cycle?"

To support your application for upgraded sheltered cycle parking, you could then include the results of your travel survey and photographs of bicycles chained to railings, lampposts, etc.

OUTLINING YOUR PROJECT AND WRITING THE APPLICATION

Successful applications will demonstrate:

Cycling Potential: Successful applications will fill identified gaps in provision for your institution and explain how addressing the said gaps should result in an increase in the number of people cycling to/from your organisation.

Value for money: Always seek the best value for money. For any item costing over £500, we recommend obtaining three quotes and adding them to your application. If you do not have the time or resources to secure these quotes prior to the deadline, we may accept estimates.

Strategy and commitment: Describe how your project fits in with the local/regional and national cycling strategy, such as the Cycling Action Plan for Scotland or the long-term vision for active travel in Scotland 2030.

Overall quality of the proposal: Make sure to present the information clearly and concisely. Outline the various milestones you intend to take to achieve the project and how you would mitigate any potential risks. Add relevant photos and documents to support your application if necessary.

Location: Remember that you project can focus on different locations. For example, a university with 3 campuses may submit a bid to improve cycle parking at campus A and purchase a fleet of pool bikes for campus B.

Guidance notes and T&Cs: Cycling Scotland's funds come with guidance notes and terms and conditions. Guidance notes contain all the information related to the funds including funding cap, eligible expenditure, match funding, and assessment criteria. It is strongly advised that you read the guidance notes and T&Cs carefully prior to submitting an application and contact a Development Officer if you have any further questions.

REPORTING ON SPEND AND PROGRESS

Upon receipt of the grant acceptance form, successful applicants will have 12 months to bring their project to completion. It is advised to start implementing your project as early as possible to avoid delays and consult with Cycling Scotland in case you are considering making amendments to the project. You will be asked to provide an interim report during the implementation phase and a final report upon completion.

AMENDMENTS IN SUCCESSFUL BIDS

If for any reason over the course of your funding period your organisation is no longer able to complete the project within the terms agreed with Cycling Scotland, Cycling Scotland have processes in place to support amendments to your current bid. Organisations will usually submit a change request that a member of the Cycle Friendly Team will review and either agree to the proposed amendment or request further clarification.

CAPITAL AND REVENUE FUNDING

Cycling Scotland funds as well as other funding pots will have set restrictions on what is and isn't eligible as part of a proposal. In some instances this will relate to "Capital" and "Revenue" funding. Capital expenditure refers to fixed assets expected to be productive for a long time: cycle parking, showers, lockers, pool bikes, and fixed bike maintenance repair stations are examples of capital expenditure. Revenue funding refers to short-term expenses: events, training and development, sessional work, or maintenance are all examples of revenue funding.