The Charity First series aims to provide practical and straightforward guidance on the challenges confronting charity operations today, with fundraising in the spotlight. Its individual subjects range from those concentrating on the UK and Ireland to non-profit issues in the EU and other jurisdictions, from traditional to digital fundraising and from basic help for those just entering the third sector to specialist areas for the more experienced.

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This sample consists of brief extracts from one title in the series.
RAISING FUNDS FROM GRANT MAKERS

How to make successful applications to grant making bodies

Simon George
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INTRODUCTION

For many voluntary organisations, especially smaller ones, applying for funding is a major part of their fundraising strategy. Whether they look to statutory funders, trusts and foundations or the National Lottery, grants form a key income stream for many and so it is imperative that they develop the knowledge and skills to win the funds they need.

This short book seeks to give an overview of what funding is available, where to find it and how to go about applying for grants.
1 WHERE TO START

In seeking funding, it is tempting to start by looking for the money, but success lies first in identifying what external needs you want to address, how you plan to do this, what it will take in terms of resources (people, money, facilities etc.) and – crucially – what difference your work will make to those you are serving. You also need to make sure that your financial information is sound and well presented and that you have certain policies and practices in place. Only when you have completed these key tasks will you be in a position to apply for funding.
Grant makers are mainly interested in meeting specific needs, usually of defined groups of people (or of the environment, animals, heritage assets etc). You need to start by defining what the needs are that you will be addressing and, while you may be able to describe them well, you also need to back them up with facts and figures, either from your own information or from external sources, such as government statistics. It is also worth spelling out the implication of the needs you are describing, to underpin why it is so important to address them. For example, if you are focussing on adult literacy problems, you could cite the higher unemployment rate or lower pay conditions of those with poor literacy skills. Other ways to evidence the needs are to use case studies of real people or quotes from clients or staff members, which bring the needs to life. Grant makers are human too and real stories can make a bigger impact than just the bare facts and figures. Where possible, you can sometimes use photos to illustrate the need. This can be a very powerful way to get the message across.

In summary, you need to set out not only what needs you are addressing, but why this is important and also what will happen if they are not met.
3
PROJECT PLANS

To persuade funders to part with their money, you will need to develop a convincing plan for the work you want to do. This must be costed, realistic and achievable. If you are proposing a large piece of work, then a full scale business plan may be required to support your bids. Even if funders do not require you to send this with your application, they may ask if it is available and, of course, it will help you to know what you will be doing and to work out the funding needs if you have already completed this. The plan should set out what the objectives are, what work will be done, who will do it, what resources will be required and how it will be monitored.

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About the author  
Simon George is a Fellow of the Institute of Fundraising and Director of Wootton George Consulting. He has been fundraising since 1987 and has achieved the Certificate in Fundraising Management. In 1999 he founded the Institute’s Trusts and Statutory Special Interest Group, where he helped draft the Code of Practice on trust fundraising.

Simon has worked as a consultant since 1996, focussing on fundraising strategy, charitable trusts and legacies, with a particular interest in small and medium sized charities. Today, he leads a team of consultants providing a wide range of fundraising advice and interim support to UK charities, schools, hospitals and universities.

Simon and his team have extensive experience of helping organisations large and small to develop their grant based fundraising, providing advice on the case for support, help with prospect research and support in preparing applications, as well as mentoring fundraising staff.

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Simon George is the author of Legacy Fundraising from Scratch, also in the Charity First Series.
The Charity First Series

For the full list of titles in the Charity First Series, including titles in preparation, see our publications list.

Titles already published include:

Fundraising for Small Charities
Major Gift Fundraising
Prospect Research
Legacy Fundraising from Scratch

Also published by Social Partnership Marketing
Invisible Grantmakers - an annual listing of unpublished grantmaking trusts.
See www.socialpartnershipmarketing.co.uk for further details.