

How To

RAISE FUNDS FOR RECRUITING

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RPM



■ recruit ■ promote ■ maintain ■

SQUARE DANCING

KEEP IT ALIVE...RPM

In order to keep Square Dancing alive we need a way to bring in a steady flow of younger people.

FUNDRAISING **FOR YOUR SQUARE DANCE CLUB**

Zoë Bremer

Introduction

All square dance clubs (SDCs) are familiar with fundraising activities. This document is to help you with raising large amounts of money in the form of grant aid for publicity, finding a better venue, networking and outreach work with community groups, schools, colleges, etc. Most clubs will be short of money for proper marketing programmes which will ensure regular recruitment of new members. It is imperative that, if square dancing is to survive, clubs do more outreach work and promote themselves in a professional manner. This can be an expensive business. As all clubs are voluntary organisations, they should be able to approach at least some government agencies and grant-making trusts (others will only give money to registered charities). It is important before you approach any source of grant aid to ascertain what the legal status of recipients needs to be, in case your club is excluded. If it is, your local Council for Voluntary Service may be able to help by holding grants in trust for you.

Money to Burn

Many grant-making organisations have so much money to give away that they are desperate for applications, which they are not allowed to solicit. This includes central and local government as well as charitable trusts. It is not so long ago that one of the trusts in the City of London was crying out for voluntary organisations in the London area to collect some of its £50,000,000 in accrued funds. That's just one organisation in the smallest borough in the UK. Incidentally, if your club is based in one of the London boroughs, there are quite a few City trusts that can provide money only to voluntary organisations within Greater London, including the City Parochial Foundation if you use Church premises. National sources of money include the Department of Health and the Arts Council. Most give out money every few months.

The first thing to note is that, as some Trustees meet only a couple of times a year, if you need money for a recruitment drive in

September, you may need to submit your application by the end of the March in order to be considered.

Get Help

Applying for grants can be daunting so don't try doing it alone. The best source of advice about grant applications (who has the money, what it's there for, how it can be used, target groups, etc.) and help with making applications for grants is your local **Council for Voluntary Service (CVS)** <http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/>, which can be found in your local telephone directory or via your local Town Hall. You will need to affiliate to the CVS but the annual fee is kept at a nominal level (£1-£5). All SDCs should be affiliated to their local CVS as this also provides lots of free publicity within the voluntary sector in your area as well as help with designing posters, leaflets and press advertisements. Most have at least 200 affiliated groups.

You should also be in frequent contact with your Borough's **Arts Officer** and your county council's **Arts Development Team**. Ask them about local and regional arts networks. All county councils and Metropolitan Borough councils have a Youth Services team. In some areas, this will include a **youth arts officer**. Such people can help directly with recruitment as well as guiding you towards grants specifically for work with young people. If necessary, be pushy when dealing with local government staff. The folk arts in general are under-funded and under-promoted in this country and we need as much support and help as we can get. These arts officers are being paid from our taxes to help us, so let's make the best possible use of them.

Not all boroughs have one, but some also employ a **Voluntary Sector Liaison Officer**, or equivalent. These people are worth "cultivating" as they tend to know what support is, and will shortly be, available to voluntary organisations in their area, including funding from their own Borough Council.

Sources of Information about Grants

A new information service about grant-making organisations was established in 2009 called **Funding Central**. If you register with this organisation, you will be sent regular information about local sources of funding that are relevant to you (*i.e.*, money for dance, adult education, youth work, health promotion and the arts in general). Visit <http://www.fundingcentral.org.uk> to register for their email bulletin.

The best source of information about funding specifically for the voluntary-sector arts is the **Voluntary Arts Network (VAN)**, which is free to join and issues a regular bulletin by email: <http://www.voluntaryarts.org> (Tel. 029 20 395 395). VAN also issues Briefings on a wide range of issues, including fundraising, publicity and networking and can offer advice if you encounter any problems.

Local Funding

Although the best source of information on funding in your own area is your local CVS, throughout the UK, all areas also have a local **Community Foundation** and these can be found on the national website <http://www.communityfoundations.org.uk>. An example would be Derbyshire Community Foundation. They comprise groups of small local charities that only give grants to local organisations. Grants available are classified according to what they support, the categories being Arts & Culture, Community Development, Education/Lifelong Learning, Health, Environment, Crime & Disorder (fighting it, that is!), Economic Development, Heritage, Sport, Regeneration and Transport. SDCs should be able to apply for funding under Arts & Culture, Community Development, Education/Lifelong Learning and Health. Bear in mind, however, that some applications will be much more successful if you work with other voluntary organisations in your area, rather than alone, so ask the CVS if there are any organisations in your borough that are looking for partners - some may be registered charities that can obtain grants that your club alone could not. If you are in any of the London Borough's the **City Parochial Foundation** can help if you wish to set up projects that meet their current criteria. Visit <http://www.cityparochial.org.uk> to see their list of current priorities, which include the integration of recent arrivals to the UK.

Also contact and stay in touch with the Health Promotion officers of your local **Primary Care Trust (PCT)** as they may be able to help with funding or with some other form of support for your club *e.g.* providing a free hall or getting your publicity materials out to all GPs in the area. For a list of local PCTs visit <http://www.nhs.uk> if you're having problems locating your local ones.

Rules for a Successful Grant Application

1. Check to see that your club is entitled to apply for a grant. Do you cover the right age group? (This doesn't mean that if you don't have any under-25s in your club, you can't apply for funding for youth work - if you need to recruit young people, make it clear that this is your aim).

2. Determine what it is that you are trying to do for which you require funding. This needs to be a project that will start sometime in the future. You need to explain clearly the following.

- What you are and what you do?
- When your club was founded and how it is constituted?
- What age group you cover (or would like to cover if you are intending to bring in people of a different age group)?
- Where you meet and how often?
- How many people are members?

Then come up with a plan of action to tackle your problems. This will need to include the following.

- What the problems are (for example fewer men than women currently in the club or too few younger people)?
- How you intend to tackle the problems *e.g.* marketing the club to men's groups and youth organisations?
- How long this will take?

Don't make it sound easier than it is. If you cannot realistically solve the problem in less than three years, say so. Some trusts will not fund a project for more than three years at a time but some may review the situation three years later and provide more money if necessary. A long-term project involving outreach work with local schools, colleges and youth clubs will probably need to last 3-5 years and will need to be co-ordinated with the work of your local Youth Services, teachers' groups (dance, PE) and the local Students' Unions.

You will need a fully costed budget for the whole of the project (unless someone else is providing some of the money, in which case

say so). Be realistic but remember that many organisations would sooner give you £50,000 than £500, so don't be too modest about what you can do. Remember to include the cost of advertising in local newspapers and magazines and perhaps your 'county' magazine and on local radio as well as the cost of printed materials such as leaflets and posters. You may also be asked to say where such posters will be displayed. Bear in mind that contacting other voluntary organisations will largely be free if you do it via the CVS but you may be asked to supply leaflets for a mail-out.

There is nothing stopping you from sending the same application to several trusts. In addition to the plan of the project you may be asked to include copies of bank statements and accounts and a list of committee members. Sometimes an Equal Opportunities Policy is requested. If your Club does not have an Equal Opportunities Policy RPM have a draft policy on the website www.uksquaredancing.com which may be adapted for your Club. Or you may prefer to consult your local CVS.

Ensure that your application and plan are well written. Steer clear of any jargon that a non-dancer would not understand. Make sure that your text answers the questions that are being asked by the funder. You might have to rewrite some applications to meet specific requirements of certain organisations.

Remember that, although we have our problems (as have many dance clubs in the UK at the moment), we do have some selling points: we promote a healthy activity suitable for adults of all ages and taught to an internationally recognised syllabus and we provide social facilities as well as supporting community centres. If you want to cite some articles on the health benefits of square dancing, run a search on Google Scholar for "square-dancing AND

health" or similar. See also <http://www.uksquaredancing.com/page10.htm> .

Some Trustees do not issue forms but ask instead for just the plan and supporting documents. You may be asked to provide several copies. Photocopy the form first then paste up your answers to the questions on a copy. When it looks right, print out another set of answers (making sure that they have been proof-read for mistakes of spelling, grammar, punctuation and vocabulary and that they are free of jargon) and paste them onto the original form. This may then require copying several times for the Trustees. You may also be asked to supply several copies of your own accounts, etc. This may sound long-winded but if you're making several applications, most of it is just a matter of printing things out again and again, with minor alterations. It gets easier and simpler as time goes by because everything you write you can alter at a later date and just print out again for the next round of funding, though you will need to rewrite your plan if you are applying for funds for a new project. Get the form off by post (deliver it by hand if the organisation is local) and note any closing dates. Get a Certificate of Posting or post by Recorded Delivery if you're worried about its fate.

Remember

There is an enormous amount of money out there which can potentially help every square dance club in the UK to promote its activities, run courses, pay for advertising in the local press, run special classes for children, help to teach people whose doctors say they need more exercise... the list is endless. If you can demonstrate that your club is worthy of funding and that you know how to handle money, you should have no problems applying for grants.

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Publications you may find useful

How to **MARKET** Square & Round Dancing to **RECRUIT** New Dancers by Linda Gill 2008

How to **RECRUIT** By Eric Curtis 2008

How to **ARRANGE YOUR FIRST NIGHT** of class By Joan Black Lune Valley Ocean Wavers 2005 Re-issued 2008)

How to **RETAIN** Square Dancers By Irene Dimmer 2006 (Re-issued 2008)

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