



UNIT 6



Title of the Podcast: Ups and Downs of Project Application Writing

Welcome to the e-Patterns podcast series dedicated to fundraising for small non-profit organisations. This episode wants to skim through the main topics when we fill in applications, grant requests and so on. One of the nightmares about project applications is “who is going to write this?”

In the previous episodes, you learned a lot about fundraising in general as well as how to approach and address donors. In this podcast, we want to expand the view and focus on public authorities, institutions or private foundations offering funding for NGOs.

First, you need to be aware that most funders offer funding for specific projects or activities. So, this is not a stable income for your organisation. Furthermore, there are several restrictions for which kind of activities, actions or materials you can use the funds. In general, for private funding you have to search for those foundations, which are sensitive to the topic you deal with as an organisation.

Therefore, one step in your decision-making process before applying for funding is to know for what exactly you need money and which specific actions you would like to cover. This will also help you to select the appropriate fund.

For example, within the European programme for education, Erasmus+, you get a lump sum for the management of your project. You don't have to proof expenses for this lump sum with invoices, so it can be a good option for many organisations to sustain themselves. Other funding schemes don't support the management of a project at all and you can for example spend the money only for organising an event or carrying out a specific task.

We already mentioned the example of Erasmus+, which is a specific programme in the field of education. Other European Programmes are for example the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund; the European Regional Development Fund; Creative Europe or the European Social Fund. By the names of the programmes, you can see that they are all dedicated to particular fields. Similarly, there are programmes and funds on national, regional and local level in your country, which are devoted to specific topics. You need to ask yourself in which fields or on which topics your organisation is working. In this way, you can already exclude some funding bodies or programmes, because they are designated to support activities you don't pursue.

You might now ask yourself where to find all these great funding opportunities. Well, nowadays we could just say you can find everything online. But this won't help you, right? Of course, there is an impenetrable variety of online platforms available. We will give you the most important ones for Europe and the national contexts of the partner countries of this project. So, take your time to go through the units and read our training material.

Generally, you have to write an application to access public or private funds. Mostly, application forms are provided by the funding body and can be more or less detailed. It also depends on the funder, if you have to fill in an online form, a pdf document or answer some questions in a word document. Like all writing processes, also application writing takes time and effort. Don't underestimate the work you need to put into it. Set aside time for working on the application during your day-to-day activities.

Having a look at an application form can be overwhelming. Do they really need all this information? And where to start? What do all these terms mean? Of course, we can't tell you that it is a piece of cake, but our training material can be supportive to take the necessary steps.

Bear in mind that there are many formats of application forms, but there are parts which are similar and all the funding authorities want to know. If you are asking for money, it is obvious that the funder wants to know what your project is about and why it is relevant: How are you connected to the target group? How will you ensure a good quality of the project? How will other people hear about the project? How will you measure the activities? Just to mention a few.

When you know about these parts of an application and understand what is expected, you will see that applying for public or private funds is not a closed book.

Our advice when you are sitting in front of a white and untouched page and don't know what to write: talk to others. Discuss your project idea with your colleagues or friends to get it clearer for yourself. Involve other partners in the application process, which will then also be involved in the funded project.

Bear in mind that most funding bodies also offer support and advice regarding the application process for their funds and programmes.

So don't hesitate to ask!

Final advice from our side: visit epatterns.eu and start exploring our free training material right now! Happy application time to all of you!