



WRITING GRANTS TO IMPROVE YOUR FACILITIES

WHERE TO START

Tennis West
May 2020

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CONTACT DETAILS

LOCATION

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POSTAL ADDRESS

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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CHECKLIST

✓ PREPARATION

- Create a grants/funding/facilities team
- Talk to the following and build relationships:
 - Local Government Authority & DLGSC Regional Manager (LGA)
 - Tennis West
 - Land Owner
 - Other tenants
- Make sure your club has a strategic plan and business plan in place
Optional: You may also look to complete an Operational Health Check for your club
- Gather LGA's strategic priorities
- Assess feasibility. What is the need for the project?

✓ START THE GRANT APPLICATION

- Read it! Check all criteria, dates, and what exactly you need
- Speak to the funding body
- Make an impact; you need to sell the story. Use pictures, diagrams, facts, and statistics
- Does the application answer:
 - Why
 - What
 - Who
 - When
 - How
 - Cost
- Does it link to funding body and LGA strategic priorities?
- Are all supporting documents included?
- Spell and grammar check
- Check your budget . Does it all add up? Is it inclusive or exclusive of GST?
- Get someone outside of your project to read it. Ask them to explain it back to you. Did they pick up on the key priorities?

✓ AFTER THE GRANT APPLICATION

SUCCESSFUL

- Feedback to whole club
- Involve local media
- Look at acceptance. Do you need to do anything in particular?
- Remain vigilant on progress, and inform funding body of any abnormalities in schedule
- Look at acquittal process. Keep track of this

UNSUCCESSFUL

- Gather feedback from funding body
- Gather feedback from LGA

PREPARATION

You should look to complete your preparation stage before the grants are released. This will allow you good time to build up relationships and to show justification for the project.

CREATE A GRANTS/ FUNDING/FACILITIES TEAM

Think about the different skill sets, look outside of the committee and also think about looking outside of the club. Is there potential to use previous members with grants experience? There are numerous people looking to volunteer – reach out to them. Your local council may have a register of volunteers, or try bodies like Volunteering WA.

TALK TO THE FOLLOWING AND BUILD RELATIONSHIPS

• Local Government Authorities & DLGSC Regional Manager

Develop a relationship with your Community Development Office or regional officer, as their role is to engage and develop strong relationships with local residents and community groups, to establish priorities and needs and deliver community development in response. Building your relationship allows you to understand the LGA priorities and to also put tennis on their agenda and get them thinking about it in their long term plans.

• Tennis West

Speak with your Club Development Officer and your Places to Play Coordinator. Involve them in your application, as it shows a good link and can also help to show your vision for your community. Use aspects of the Tennis West strategic vision and also the strategic facilities plan to support your application. Ensure a facility audit has been completed in the last two years by Tennis West, as this may help to support your application.

• Land owner if this is not the LGA

Get them involved. What are their priorities?

• Other tenants

Do you share the facility with other clubs or community groups? What are their short and long term plans? Is this a project for which you can combine resources, funding, etc.?

• Can you incorporate other users of the facility?

Reach out to the community. Could you hire rooms out? Or sub-let any of the land for other sports, such as squash or padel? Also think about broader community usage, such as corporate meetings, or other community health providers.

COMPLETE A STRATEGIC PLAN/BUSINESS PLAN/OPERATIONAL HEALTH CHECK FOR YOUR CLUB

These are great ways to reflect on all aspects of the club. Having a club strategic and business plan are critical elements to ensure the sustainability and viability of your application. In many cases, funding bodies are seeking information around how this application aligns to the club's strategic plan. Additionally, LGAs are seeking information around the sustainability of the investment and possible broader benefits to the community for the usage of the facility. Having a business and strategic plan demonstrates sound business practice, and can positively impact the outcome of the application. Tennis Australia has a range of templates available to access and utilise, and staff at Tennis West can support you in developing a robust plan.

GATHER LGA'S STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Look at you LGA's strategic plan and specific recreation/sport or infrastructure plans. Read the LGA's vision and mission statement. Think how your tennis club can help the LGA achieve their vision and mission, or specific actions in their sport and recreation plans. What projects do they have coming up? Are you in line for help and support in next few years? What are their key focuses when it comes to sport. e.g. increase participation, reduce social isolation. Further to this, is there scope for partnership with other local community providers, and opportunity to demonstrate broader community health benefits, whilst leveraging a diverse portfolio of income sources? Can you seek support from your LGA in the form of a supporting statement or recommendation for the project?

ASSESS FEASIBILITY. WHAT IS THE NEED FOR THE PROJECT?

Address these to show justification for the project;

- Why do you need it?
- What impact will it have?
- Who will it impact?
- What would happen if this project was not completed?
- How can you justify it?
- What evidence can you provide?
- How will it impact the community? Be specific with your facts and numbers (eg. rather than 'lots', state '86%' or '3 out of 4 members'). Think about it from a health and wellbeing perspective as well
- How can you demonstrate the sustainability of the project?
- Is there any in-kind contribution that should be included in the application?
- Have you considered and have evidence of partnership?
- Remember to look long term, e.g. in 5,10 or 20 years



STARTING THE GRANT

READ IT! CHECK ALL CRITERIA, DATES, AND WHAT EXACTLY YOU NEED

Make sure you read all the criteria and check that you are eligible. Check exactly what information they require and make a note to ensure you include all necessary details. Go through submission dates and, if appropriate, make a timeline for completion so you are ready to submit before the deadline approaches. Don't underestimate how long it will take to collect evidence, quotes and information.

SPEAK TO THE FUNDING BODY

Ask any questions about the grant, and build up a relationship with them. Get them to highlight the key priorities they are looking for when giving the grants. Make sure your application meets these and provides evidence of how they will be achieved. If possible, have them attend your venue and provide them with a face to face overview of the project.

MAKE AN IMPACT, YOU NEED TO SELL THE STORY

- Use pictures, diagrams, facts, and statistics
- Create an impact statement. Normally the first 20 words of an application are the most important!
- Photographs can act as a good way to provide evidence of the condition of any facility, and can also help people reading it to understand the project more (as they say a picture paints a 1000 words). The use of aerial shots can also allow funders to understand the application and rationale behind the project. Utilise technology such as Google Maps to highlight where your club is in reference to local primary and secondary schools, other sports, key transport links, and other community facilities. Seek community support beyond the members of the club and facility. Look to local businesses, tourism, and community health providers to establish a strong narrative of how this project will increase social and economic activity in the community
- Include facts and statistics on how the club is performing. Make sure this information is accurate, and support it with evidence, making reference to this in your application

DOES THE APPLICATION ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS?

Make sure it does! Where you can also provide evidence, such as photos, timetables, reports, facts, and figures.

- **Why?** What is the need or demand for the project/ Why do you need the money? Why and how will it affect the community?
- **What?** What will you do? Be very specific here. Break it down into small tasks and explain them. What are the risks? How will you overcome these?
- **Who?** Explain who is going to lead the project, what experience and capabilities you have. Give the funder faith the project is organised, will be run well, and is sustainable. Add any information around the success of previous projects at the facility, and provide information about the experience of the project management team and preferred suppliers. Seek to provide any quotations from preferred suppliers to evidence costings and availability of contractors. Seek any information from funding body, LGA or Tennis West as to preferred suppliers and contractors
- **When?** Put time frames and milestones for each small task from beginning to end. Highlight how long stages will take, and provide a project plan. Make sure these fit in with the funding criteria.
- **How?** How will you do it? Be very specific. What steps are you going to use to select the contractors, surface, design, etc.
- **Cost?** Break the costs down on every task. Add the quotes in you have obtained. Is the project sustainable? Have you considered all costs, such as insurance and auditing? When do you need the money? Have you allowed for a contingency fund?

DOES IT LINK TO FUNDING BODY AND LGA STRATEGIC PRIORITIES?

Focus on the people, not the 'stuff'. Talk about the impact on the community, and how it will increase participation. If it aligns with LGA priorities, provide supporting evidence.

ARE ALL SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS INCLUDED?

Make sure all the documents the grant applications requests are included and completed fully. Make sure you reference these documents in your application and organise accordingly.

Supporting documents you may wish to consider include but are not limited to:

- Strategic plans
- Club finances
- Occupational Health Check
- Business Plan
- Budgets
- Management plans
- Maintenance plans
- Sinking funds
- Photos
- Facility audits
- Supporting letters

SPELL AND GRAMMAR CHECK

CHECK YOUR BUDGET

Does it all add up? Check it again. Have you been asked to provide the budget inclusive or exclusive of GST? Are you clear about what contribution your club/LGA needs to provide?

ASK SOMEONE OUTSIDE OF YOUR PROJECT TO READ IT

Get them to explain it back to you. Did they pick up on the key priorities? Doing this allows you to understand how it reads to an external person. Did they spot any errors? Are they able to explain to you exactly what the plan is? If they can't, you may need to think about changing your structure. If they don't understand it, how can someone assessing understand it?

CHECK THE DUE DATE AND TIME

Be aware of the time zone, and where the time suggested is AEST you submit in accordance to the time difference. Don't wait until the last minute to submit as file sizes etc could be an issue.

ESTABLISH A KEY CONTACT AT THE FUNDING AGENCY

Speak with them to ensure you have any questions or issues rectified before submitting your application.

AFTER

SUCCESSFUL

FEEDBACK TO THE WHOLE CLUB

It is important to make sure everyone feels involved, but also to celebrate success in gaining grant money. This will allow club members to appreciate the hard work that goes into creating grant applications.

INVOLVE LOCAL MEDIA

This may or may not be something you choose to do, depending how far into the project you are. If this was the last piece of funding you required, it could be a great way to convey to the local community the changes that are happening, and hopefully draw up interest! This might also allow you to highlight the funding body, your LGA, and the sporting association.

LOOK AT ACCEPTANCE. DO YOU NEED TO DO ANYTHING IN PARTICULAR?

To receive the grant money, some funding bodies put certain restrictions on the funding. Make sure you fully understand if any of these restrictions apply. If you need to change aspects of your design, make sure you run it past the funding bodies as well to make sure they approve of any changes. This should ensure that there will be no effect on the amount of money provided over time.

LOOK AT THE ACQUITTAL PROCESS

Keep track of this. Acquittal is a formal condition of funding. If you do not provide a satisfactory grant report at the times and in the manner detailed in your funding agreement, the grant provider may not make any further payments that may be due to you, and you may be ineligible to apply for further grants. You may even be asked to return money in some instances. Look at how they want you to acquit the project, and make sure you stay in regular contact to update them on how the project is progressing. Take regular photos, and be sure to keep all invoices and certificates in a safe and logical location. You could host an open day and invite influential dignitaries across all levels of government, funding bodies, SSA and any contributors both financial and non-financial.

AFTER

UNSUCCESSFUL

GATHER FEEDBACK FROM FUNDER AND LGA

Yes, you will be annoyed and upset, but take time to understand why you did not receive funding. What do you need to change to make your application be successful next time? Where possible, set up a meeting and request the feedback in writing to use in future applications. Many of the grants and funds are over subscribed and not all applicants can receive funding. This should not prevent you from applying again, so seeking this feedback is important.



SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

ONGOING MANAGEMENT PLAN- SUSTAINABILITY

How is the facility going to be managed? What structures do you have in place to make the project sustainable? Funding bodies and LGAs are looking at projects that once an initial payment is given that the project can then run independently. Show that your project has foresight for the future, and budgets and plans accordingly.

OPERATIONAL HEALTH CHECK

For all Tennis Australia grants, an Operational Health Check (OHC) is a key pre-requisite. Tennis Australia in partnership with the University of South Australia has been benchmarking the performances of tennis venues across the country for over 8 years. Industry benchmarking carried out through the OHC is one of the ways we recommend local governments stay abreast of the performance of local tennis venue management. The OHC can provide local governments an opportunity to work closely with their venue managers and clubs to identify key areas of performance across the areas of income, expenditure, management and usage. The OHC for tennis venues is a national survey of facilities that measures performance in the areas of management, usage and financial sustainability. The survey data is used to produce industry benchmarks and medians enabling facilities to annually compare results against both individual performance and other venues of a similar size.

SINKING FUNDS

Tennis West and the WA Government advocates that clubs should aim to generate an annual profit which will allow the club to maintain a 'sinking fund' to help pay for facility refurbishment projects. Your 'sinking fund' is separate to your annual maintenance budget; it is the savings that will place you in a stronger position.

The amount required for your annual sinking fund will vary based on:

- The number and type of courts at your club
- Your occupancy arrangement, and whether the landowner (such as your council) has responsibility for capital refurbishment, or has a specific policy for club-council co-contributions

MAINTENANCE PLANS

What is your current maintenance plan for your facility? How will this change for the facility? Do you need to learn new maintenance skills, for example, are you putting in a new surface? How will this be accommodated? Is your current maintenance successful? what condition are your courts/ building/facilities in? Tennis Australia has good resources to guide the maintenance of your facility.

SUPPORTING LETTERS

Gather supporting letters from your LGA, land owner, other tenants, other potential users, local schools you currently engage or wish to engage, local community members, and State Sporting Association. All these can help build a great picture about the current situation of the club and the way it wishes to move forward. It can also show your engagement or future engagement with the local community and the impact the new project can have.

FACILITY AUDIT

At Tennis West, we have a national scheme to complete facility audits on all tennis venues in Western Australia. This facility audit can be included in your application and made reference to in order to show the current condition of the facility.

FINAL HOT TIPS

- Do your research. What type of projects have been approved for funding by this provider in the past? Why should your project receive a grant over others that may apply?
- If financially viable, consider procurement of a grants funding consultant to support and possibly develop your application
- Divide and conquer! Grants for larger sums can be quite time consuming. Consider using a team to write the application. Divide up the sections for your grant writing team to research and complete. Have one person collate the final version to ensure cohesion across the application
- Create one central location to keep all documents to avoid duplication, deletion, or outdated versions. Consider using a live document sharing platform such as GoogleDocs or Dropbox
- Be concise. Consider using dot points or a table to display information clearly, as opposed to in long, word heavy paragraphs
- Be reasonable with your expectations. Your funding request should match the scale of the project. Demonstrating other contributions, including those from your own organisation, is important
- Never just change the name of the grant provider if applying for multiple grants. Always give the grant the fresh start that is needed to ensure you cover all of the provider's requirements
- Don't leave it until the last minute. Have a grants calendar and plan out your year with details of when grants open, and when they close
- The three key documents to make sure are correct and referenced in your application are:
 1. Business plan or strategic plan
 2. Project plan
 3. Budget

HOT LINKS

TENNIS WEST GRANTS AND FUNDING GUIDE

This guide contains a descriptive list of current funding options, and fundraising initiatives that are available to our affiliated clubs. It covers large infrastructure grants, general and participation grants and fundraising, specific grants (equipment, projects, events), and local government grants.

TENNIS AUSTRALIA INFRASTRUCTURE GUIDE

The Tennis Australia infrastructure guide gives clubs information on how to plan their projects, highlighting the 7 stage guide. Included in the guide is also court and fixtures specifications, and gives insight into facilities.

For more information, visit: <https://www.tennis.com.au/doc/tennis-infrastructure-planning-resource-2019>

TENNIS AUSTRALIA'S FACILITY LOAN SCHEME

The Tennis Australia Facility Loan Scheme financially assists affiliated tennis clubs, centres and associations with upgrades, replacements and improvements on their tennis facilities, by providing low interest loans. A club, centre or association will often embark on a project utilising grant monies from local government and/or state government, as well as their own funds. The Tennis Australia loan is designed to assist in shortfalls the club may have in funding their project after other avenues of funding have been determined.

For more information, visit: <https://www.tennis.com.au/clubs/funding-and-facilities/facility-loan>

OTHER LINKS

From time to time Tennis West will communicate to clubs about grants that may be of interest. However, there are a number of sources that provide information on current grants available that you can access at any time. It is worth taking the time to look into a few of these if you have a project in mind to see if there is a grant suitable for your project.

- dlgsc.wa.gov.au/funding
- grantguru.com.au
- sportscommunity.com.au/grant-category/wa-grants/
- thegrantshub.com.au
- communitygrants.gov.au/grants

