



Writing about need

What evidence can you use to prove there is a need for your project?

What do we mean by need?



Big Lottery Fund's mission statement:

'To bring real improvements to communities and to the lives of people most in need'

- What difficulties do people in the community face?
- Why do they face these difficulties?
- What needs to change to address this issue?

Why do you need to evidence need?



- High demand for limited resources
- Prove your project will make a difference
- Prove that you haven't presumed what the community needs
- Prove that your project is the best way of addressing the need identified – what are the alternatives?
- Prove that you understand the community and their needs

What sources can you use to evidence need? Exercise 1



- What sources of evidence can you think of?

What sources can you use to evidence need?



- Strategies - generic and specialist
- Statistics and area or community profile
- Research (reports, surveys etc)
- Consultation and community involvement

Cont....

What sources can you use to evidence need?



- Other existing services/current provision (or lack of)
- Evaluation of existing services
- Letters of support
- Anecdotal evidence

Key principles

What should you consider when referencing or carrying out research?



- Avoid using individual pieces of evidence in isolation
- Ask questions about the data you're referencing to determine if it is a reliable source
- Try to ensure research is not biased:
 - Take care when wording questions and interpreting data
 - Ensure surveys and statistics are representative

How much evidence do you need to provide?



First identify:

- the scale of the problem
- what capacity you have

As a minimum, you need to involve your stakeholders:

- stakeholder analysis - who are your key stakeholders?
- How do you involve them (incl. the 'hard to reach')?

Questions that maybe asked on the application form



- What is the need? – existing services and gaps
- How have you identified the need? – consultation and research you have done
- What priorities have been identified as most important in your area? – link to strategies
- How will your project address the need?
- Why is the project the best way of meeting the need?

Presenting your case



- Does the problem make sense?
- Don't assume that readers (funders and partners) will automatically see that there is a need. It is up to you to convince them.
- Use statistics, anecdotes, etc. from reliable sources and cite those sources in the text.
- Can you realistically address the problem with what you are proposing?
- Provide evidence that is specific to the project and not to the organisation as a whole

Presenting your case

Group exercise



- Strengths and weaknesses?
- Excellent, Good, Satisfactory or Weak?

Some useful websites

- facts, figures and strategies



- Census statistics: www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk
- Community Health Profiles: www.communityhealthprofiles.info
- Association of Public Health Observatories: www.apho.org.uk
- Regional Observatories: www.regionalobservatories.org.uk
- Government Offices: www.gos.gov.uk/national
- 10 Downing Street: www.number-10.gov.uk
- Government Directory: www.direct.gov.uk

Some useful websites

- research and consultation



- Community Toolbox: www.nps.gov/phso/rtcatoobox
- Consultation toolkit:
<http://worcestershire.whub.org.uk/home/wcc-con-toolkit>
(type 'consultation toolkit' into Google and you will find a number of other similar toolkits)
- National Association for Voluntary and Community Action: www.navca.org.uk
- N.B. The Big Lottery Fund is not responsible for the content of external websites

Summary

What grants officers are looking for



- Is the need for your project supported by robust evidence or research?
- Have you consulted with all relevant stakeholders?
- Does the consultation support the identified need?
- Do you have a good understanding of similar work already taking place?
- Do other stakeholders know about your project and are they supportive of it?
- Are you aware of relevant local, regional and/or national plans, and strategies? Can you explain how your project relates to them?