

Top tips for fundraising

1 There is no such word as 'No'

'No' is just the beginning of the road to 'Yes'. 'No' means your project does not fit into the criteria of your target just at the moment. So never go away – keep negotiating and returning with slightly different bids, having clearly taken account of the reservations of the decision makers.

2 When faced with doubters confront them with the reality of the project

How do the children benefit from the play project? How would the children suffer if funds were not granted?

3 Don't be afraid to use emotive arguments

Be aware of the emotional vulnerability of adults – they had a childhood too and probably feel it ended too soon, so they are naturally sympathetic to the need for children to play i.e. to the playwork philosophy.

4 Bring decision makers to the project and let them meet the children

After all children are the best sales people of all. Allow children to show potential funders, journalists and government ministers around the site. This will help sell the play project because the child's sense of ownership and involvement has come through.

5 Don't rely on a single source of funding

The benefits of children's play are complex and varied, which means that playwork is not easily pigeonholed. Therefore playwork projects should expect to achieve funding from a number of different sources.

6 Make sure your sources of finance overlap

This will convey continuity to the outside world and most importantly to the children.



7 Identify people who have influence in the decision making process

Target them for meetings and develop lobbying notes on these people. Securing the involvement of people with influence often conveys a statement of strength and solidarity about their project.

8 Make the fundraising appeal tangible and compelling

People are presented with lots of appeals and offers. Does yours stand out? Does it compel an immediate response?

9 Become a social chameleon

It is important to show respect to the grant giver and be sociable and personable to

everyone who has anything to do with the decision, as everyone's perspective on you will be relevant.

10 Get into the mind of the grant giver

Learning how to give grants is a good way to find out what elicits a response from grant givers. It's important to get a feel for each funder so that you get the application right the first time.

Tips drawn from Professor Fraser Brown's booklet, *The Venture: A Case Study of an Adventure Playground* (Play Wales, 2007).

