Improving Access to Funding for New and Emerging Communities

SUMMARY OF ISSUES AND SOLUTIONS

October 2015

About FECCA

FECCA is the peak, national body representing Australians from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and promoting their issues to government, and the broader community. FECCA strives to ensure that the needs and aspirations of Australians from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds are given proper recognition in public policy.

FECCA's work on issues affecting new and emerging communities in Australia is supported by a dedicated New and Emerging Communities Advisory Committee comprising members from a variety of cultural and professional backgrounds. FECCA seeks to contribute to improving participation outcomes for new and emerging communities through raising awareness of key issues, and identifying innovative and collaborative strategies.

Introduction

This summary draws on findings from a series of activities undertaken as part of FECCA's efforts to identify the needs of new migrants and refugees through community feedback and research, develop and propose evidence-based policy responses, and strengthen the capacity of new and emerging communities to self-advocate. The input comprised the advice from FECCA's New and Emerging Communities Advisory Committee members and their extended networks, as well as the feedback received through an online survey. Feedback was also gathered in consultations with community leaders and multicultural and settlement organisations. The Committee also held a workshop that brought together community leaders, grant providers, government officials and other key stakeholders to discuss the pathways for empowering new and emerging communities and facilitating their access to public and private grants.

This summary highlights the challenges faced by new and emerging communities in Australia in accessing funding for their community based activities and outlines proposed solutions for improving access. It includes grassroot feedback from new and emerging community leaders about what are, in their view, the main obstacles to building the long-term capacity of their communities through sustainable funding models.

As part of the consultations process, we have received feedback from communities that identified with diverse backgrounds, including from Sierra Leone, Burma, Nepal, Bhutan, Somalia, Ethiopia, Guinea, Indian Ocean Islands (Mauritius, Reunion Island, Rodrigues, Seychelles), Nigeria, Chaldean community, Pacific Islands, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan and Zimbabwe.

FECCA thanks all the community members who generously contributed their time and shared their valuable insights. We also thank the Ethnic Communities' Council of Queensland, the Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria, the Victorian Multicultural Commission, City of Melbourne, the Multicultural Development Association, the Albury-Wodonga Ethnic Communities' Council, and the Australian Government Department of Social Services for their input and assistance with this project.

New and emerging communities and the challenges they face

Despite being a very diverse group with members from a wide range of backgrounds, new and emerging communities share some characteristics that can be broadly applied to them as a group.[1] Their members almost always come from a refugee or other humanitarian background, they are small in number compared to the more established communities and most of their members are new arrivals to Australia. They can have limited or no English language skills and often lack established networks, support systems, community structures and resources.

It is extremely important for migrant community organisations to understand the Australian political, legal and funding systems in which they need to operate. Feedback received by FECCA revealed that many small new and emerging community organisations are unfamiliar with the Australian political, legal and support systems available, have limited social and professional networks and access to information, lack experience with submission-based government funding processes, and have limited ability to influence political processes and to attract funding. A significant 39% of the organisations surveyed indicated that they are only somewhat familiar with the Australian grants and funding systems, while 23% are not familiar at all.[2]

By their very nature, 'new' and 'emerging' communities often have limited ability to self-advocate as a result of limited systems knowledge or understanding of the existing platforms and mechanisms available to assist with the settlement process. This means that their needs often remain overlooked and go unaddressed. Their associated needs are not always included, nor adequately considered in the planning, funding and development of programs and policies at local, state and federal levels.

We asked new and emerging community members what are, in their opinion, the key characteristics of their community groups. Some of the answers included:

- *lack of social capital and support network, inexperienced, untrained and un-resourced leadership team;*
- *no clear strategic direction and focus*;
- *they have no services or organisations that are funded to assist them past the initial settlement period*;
- *lack of knowledge of rights and responsibilities, low level English language, limited education, enthusiastic and willing to integrate, poverty;*
- *newly arrived and lacking stability and influence in the mainstream;*
- *need for information, support, linkages, opportunities;*
- *refugee communities who have limited resources and infrastructure.*

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[1] The factsheets can be accessed on the FECCA website at http://fecca.org.au/resources/better-beginnings-better-futures-factsheets
[2] 2014 FECCA New and Emerging Community Organisations Survey

Working for their communities

According to FECCA's online survey, education (55%) and employment (55%) feature as the most common needs that require intervention for new and emerging communities, followed by housing and accommodation (41%), and migration and settlement support (41%). This is consistent with other feedback received by FECCA and other peak organisations with regards to the needs of new and emerging communities.

Other areas of need identified by the survey include community leadership, capacity building and strengthening, transport, information and language needs, children and youth, sport and activity, mental health, spiritual needs, and justice and human rights.

The contribution that small ethno-specific organisations make to the settlement process is significant. They take great responsibility for complementing the delivery of mainstream services and addressing their communities' needs. They contribute towards strengthening social cohesion and participation for their communities, provide advocacy support and community education. They are the closest to the issues and therefore the most knowledgeable on what the key needs of their communities are and the best solutions for them.

The vast majority of organisations make an active effort to ensure that their mission is aligned with the needs of the communities they represent, either through organised community consultations (30%) or informal discussions with selected members of the community (32%). A significant number of organisations diversify the way they gather input, such as through surveys, forums and workshops. This is a positive indicator of how organisations ensure that they remain representative of, and accountable to, their constituents, continue to address community needs, and respond to their expectations.

In terms of the resources invested, the most pressing issues for organisations are the lack of adequate funding and heavy reliance on volunteers as the only human resources that many organisations have. The large majority of the organisations surveyed have no paid employees, while some of them have only one paid employee. Not surprisingly, the overwhelming majority of organisations suggested that they require more paid employees to operate effectively.

> *It is hard to sustain the organisation as most of its members are volunteers. As migrants/new migrants, the volunteers' time is taken with paid work/establishing their families etc. It is important for an organisation to have at least a part-time employee to sustain itself for the long term.*

The majority of surveyed organisations engage between 10-20 volunteers at a given time, and some even between 30-100 volunteers. The number of hours per week that a volunteer contributes to the organisation's work provides another indication of how much organisations rely on their voluntary workforce. The responses indicate an average commitment of 5-10 hours per week (30%) while the vast majority of organisations suggested that they require more paid employees to operate effectively (66%).

There is ongoing pressure on the non-for-profit sector and especially organisations working with new and emerging communities to complement government support and to meet the complex needs of their constituents, while lacking access to funding and the necessary resources. Most of the organisations surveyed noted that they mitigate this by attracting more volunteers (50%), reallocating resources (34%) or, unfortunately, limiting access to services (32%). Others were managing it by developing good referral systems through

networks and partnerships with other organisations that could complement the support, while some organisations managed to develop more complex and robust systems to meet the demand.

Funding sources for new and emerging communities

The most common funding sources for the surveyed organisations are government grants at State and Territory level, followed by local government grants and membership fees. Federal government grants also play a significant role, followed by donations, private grants and self-funded sources. Several organisations were entirely funded by public grants, with different levels of government identified as their main sources of funding. Knowledge and understanding of how to access private grants, philanthropic funding and other funding sources outside of government grants is limited.

The vast majority of respondents indicated that their organisations do not have sustainable funding and constantly need to pursue additional resources to run their activities and address the needs of their constituents (61%).

Lack of adequate sustainable funding is undoubtedly the most pressing issue that impacts on these organisations' operations and longevity, along with a reliance on volunteers and issues associated with their recruitment and retention. With regards to funding, communities cited, as main issues, the changing funding priorities and policies, including funding cuts and uncertainty, lack of operational funding, short funding cycles and competitive tendering against larger organisations. Other key issues affecting sustainability are maintaining membership, community support and proactive leadership.

Access to funding: Issues

A series of issues hinders access to sustainable funding for new and emerging communities. The process of applying for funding was described by the consulted community leaders and organisations as daunting, difficult, or impossible. Many of the issues stem from a lack of engagement between the funding providers and grassroots organisations, and broadly refer to:

- accessibility of funding opportunities;
- availability of information;
- language barriers;
- understanding eligibility criteria and addressing selection criteria;
- availability of resources;
- competing against established organisations; and
- compatibility between funding priorities and community needs.

Community leaders' responses revealed a series of difficulties in attracting and applying for funding, including navigating the complex system of grants and a lack of, or limited access to, timely information about available funding opportunities.

Communities do not generally have access to information about funding opportunities and are not familiar with Australian grants and funding systems, including the mechanisms through which to attract and apply for funding. Many indicated that they do not know where to look for information, that information is hard to find, and funding opportunities are not widely advertised.

Generally small and emerging communities are very unfamiliar with grant funding systems. The systems are so complex and fluid (three layers of government, philanthropic, private trusts, crowdfunding....) that it is difficult for even established organisations to keep up.

[I]f there is information it is hard to find on their website. Where to find information? Who do we need to contact? Maybe they should design a website that is much more user-friendly.

Often the only way to find out about opportunities is through their local Ethnic or Multicultural Council or through other established multicultural and settlement organisations which would normally circulate information about available grants via email.

There is a perceived communication gap between funding bodies, including government agencies, and grassroots community organisations. Funding that targets these communities is not always made known to the communities themselves and they are not engaged in the process.

It is a vicious cycle whereby the government wants to know about new and emerging communities and to build their capacity but in the same time they don't communicate with each other. If people in the community don't know about the Government how does the Government want to know about these communities?

Consulted community leaders emphasised the need for timely information on when to expect certain grants in order to be able to plan and prepare in advance:

The problem is mainly knowing ahead of these funding opportunities when they are coming and getting yourself prepared for them. We don't have a year plan like established organisations and we don't know when the funding would be made available. It would be great to have that forth knowledge on when to expect certain grants.

They also identified the need for diversifying the way the grant providers disseminate information about funding opportunities. Publishing information online is not seen as sufficient, and grant providers should reach out to new and emerging communities through the ethnic media or direct engagement at the grassroots level.

Language barriers are a significant issue. The use of bureaucratic jargon and complex language makes it difficult for newly arrived communities to understand selection and eligibility criteria, and creates great confusion.

When they arrive in Australia it is very hard to understand the language and the system and how to juggle it. It is very difficult. Language barrier and lack of understanding are the main issues.

The way they write the funding forms is confusing. You don't know if you need to fill in the cause, or the objectives, the aims or the goals. You think you are answering a question in a section but then further down there is a similar one. Are we going to put the same thing? Or what they are asking is different? Is it repeating?

Complex forms that are not written in plain English and the need to supply a large amount of information are a deterrent for inexperienced community organisations. Financial, human and time resources that are required for researching grant opportunities and preparing applications are among the most common obstacles. With the majority relying on volunteers,

organisations struggle with a lack of expertise and knowledge of the funding process as well as with managing their time to meet funding deadlines.

> *It is very difficult because most of the people in the organisations are volunteers and those people also have family life and jobs and don't have the time to go and search for funding, or look at which funding grants are open. Because we are all volunteers we don't have the time or the knowledge of any consultation or any information. It means that when the opportunity comes we are not really prepared for it.*

Some of key issues faced by new and emerging communities when addressing the eligibility and selection criteria are the inability to provide evidence of a track record, lack of experience, lack of incorporation, and difficulties with clearly articulating detailed answers, the need for their project, its expected outcomes and the impact it will have on the community. Having to complete applications online is also a barrier for certain community organisations and groups if they lack computer literacy and struggle to navigate the system.

The quality of the project plan and the evidence provided to demonstrate a community need can determine whether an application will be successful. Developing a project proposal and providing evidence puts a lot of strain on these communities' already limited time and resources. Many community leaders noted that as they are all volunteers they do not have an allocated person who can do the research and put together evidence to substantiate the need for a project.

> *[…] knowing that some big organisations have people who are employed just for writing grants. They are not doing anything else. That is their job. So if you are competing in some instances against these organisations you are not going to stand a chance.*

Communities are also concerned that funding tends to be allocated on the basis of applicants' experience and quality of the applications, as opposed to the needs.

> *Also if everyone is a volunteer, they might also not know what to write because different grants have their own assessment criteria which are very difficult to address. And that's why someone who is already an expert gets the money.*

Many community groups are concerned about the lack of targeted feedback on applications that get rejected. Feedback is extremely important for inexperienced communities as there are not many other opportunities for them to develop their application writing skills.

New and emerging communities often lack understanding of how the funding system works and how the decisions are made on what needs to be funded. The lack of information does not allow these communities to be more proactive and prepared when funding opportunities arise, therefore limiting their capacity to influence priorities.

Often funding providers have limited understanding of new and emerging communities and the challenges they face, and therefore funding policies and priorities do not cater for them. Funding priorities are established based on government's prior experience with more established communities and do not take into consideration the fact that new and emerging communities might not follow the same pattern and need innovative and more inclusive strategies. The very access of new and emerging communities to the current system is inequitable, if they do not have proven track record of successful project management. In view of such barriers, these communities are at risk of a stalemate as they cannot develop their capacity without having access to funding.

> *If we are still going at this rate then we will still have this problem this year and next year. Because we don't have the capacity to be able to put together professional grants that are going to pass the threshold. We just have to realise that this is a fundamental problem for new and emerging communities.*

A proposed solution to overcome the lack of experience in writing grants is to hire a consultant which is not a feasible option for community groups operating on a minimal budget.

Another option is to apply under the auspice of an incorporated organisation or through a partnership. However, some unincorporated groups express disappointment with the requirement to apply for funding by entering into an auspicing agreement or a partnership for reasons that include limiting their independence and ownership over the project.

The size of the organisations is perceived as a key issue. New and emerging community groups are generally small and have to compete against more structured and established organisations. There is also a perceived bias on behalf of the grant provider towards small organisations and a lack of trust. This is mainly the case if the community organisation is not known to the grant provider or if it does not have any known partnerships or affiliates.

> *Unfortunately the government or funding agencies don't trust us. They think that new and emerging communities fight amongst each other, they misuse the money and they have no track record of good practice. Of course there were some community organisations that received funding, tried to run a project and failed, but those are isolated cases. It is a myth.*

Small community organisations feel like they have no opportunity to prove themselves and to build a trust relationship with the grant provider. The bureaucratic system is very rigid in assessing organisations' capability to deliver a project and rarely allows flexibility to support new groups without a track record in Australia to build experience.

> *The government system is working by ticking the box: do you have a track record, an annual report? Without this you are not able to succeed. But it doesn't mean that if you don't have a record then you are not capable. You might have a lot of experience working with the communities in your country, you might have worked in a refugee camp, be involved in Committees, have degrees, but once you come here they think you have no experience.*

New and emerging communities require access to funding to develop a strong community infrastructure and to build their capacity. Grassroots organisations have in-depth knowledge of what is needed in the community and how to provide solutions but they often miss out in a very competitive process. New and emerging community groups feel like they cannot compete against larger organisations that have a broader coverage, are established, have a good track record and a strong relationship with grant providers.

Community leaders understand the importance of engaging with grant providers prior to applying for funding and communicating their communities' needs and activities. However, many of these communities reportedly lack the appropriate channels to communicate their messages and engage with the funding providers, while the funding agencies undertake minimum outreach to communities and their leaders. There is a concern that funding agencies only engage with those they see as the gatekeepers for certain communities, while those individuals may not represent the interests of the community as whole. Inadequate engagement of community members in the process can result in the funding not having the desired impact on the community.

> *The person who acts on behalf of the community we don't know who is that person. As a community, we never meet and speak to the government person. It is better to handle the whole information within the community and try to fix it from within and by community leaders. That is the funding that we need. The funding goes to the wrong place, they never reach the community.*
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> *[…] but by doing that they are missing the real people who are on the ground and they are not getting the opportunity. That is a myth that the person who writes the funding and gets it knows the issues best but the real people on the ground miss out on that.*

New and emerging communities do not always feel that they can relate to larger organisations that tend to receive funding, and feel bypassed in the process, without having an opportunity to intervene or contribute. Some new and emerging communities are potentially at risk of becoming disenfranchised because of a lack of investment in their capacity and in developing sustainable leadership. 'Volunteer fatigue' is one of the issues that impacts on these communities and threatens their sustainability as they struggle to maintain a sufficiently large cohort of active and committed volunteers who can take up leadership.

> *We need organisations that can relate to the communities, that are there for them. Of course they [larger organisations] believe they are the people who can get work done. But what is going to happen to these communities that are new and emerging, if they are not getting the help that they've been trying to get for a long time, they are going to get dis-enfranchised, they are going to give up.*
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> *We need sustainable funding. Volunteerism is good but it needs to be sustainable as well. We need that funding to go directly to these communities. Without that funding how is it going to work? The leaders will leave. The communities, what is it going to happen to them? The communities are going to tire, they are going to die down. They will not see anyone coming forward anymore because there is no funding for communities.*

It was reported that the 'inability to speak the grant-maker's language' is a big challenge because there may be programs or issues that are important to a community group, but grant-makers do not prioritise them for funding at all or for more than on a one-off basis. The challenge for communities is to align their communities' needs with the funding priorities set by grant providers.

> *Why is the government not going in the community and asking the gate-keepers or the community – what help do you need? Instead of saying there's the funding, apply for it, without maybe understanding the intricacies involved in different communities, or different cultures within a community. Otherwise you find that when you apply for the grant it doesn't serve its purpose because it's not meeting the community needs. I think that the grant should meet the community's needs rather than the community having to meet the grant's needs.*

Some community leaders noted that sometimes they need to tailor their applications according to funding agencies' priorities of the day instead of focusing on real needs that require attention in their communities.

> *Do they understand new and emerging communities and what exactly are the problems that they are facing? It is important for those that do the grants or the*

assessment, to know exactly which communities they are dealing with, do a bit of research on communities before they open the grants to have at least a brief understanding of these communities.

The ability to attract operational funding as opposed to finite project funding is another concern, along with the inability of the organisations to have an advanced plan for development. After several failed attempts, many organisations tend to become discouraged and stop applying, feeling that they invest their time without achieving a positive result. Others end up pursuing only small grants with less stringent requirements which are not sustainable but are easier to get. Small organisations are again caught up in a cycle of disadvantage, with grant providers looking for sustainability as one of their application criteria and small organisations lacking that sustainability as their activities rely entirely on small grants funding.

Solutions for grant providers

Creating a level playing field by empowering smaller organisations and mandating large organisations to work in partnership with smaller organisations

The ideas presented below refer to what grant providers and funding agencies could do to facilitate new and emerging communities' access to funding, in this case largely different levels of governments.

Community engagement

It is important to invest an active interest in cultivating relationships with new and emerging communities, engage them and their leaders directly and consult with them on the issues that they face and the nature of the help they need. The aim of the engagement would be to bridge the communication gap between communities and grant providers, facilitate interaction with inexperienced communities and build a trust relationship.

Access to information

Funding opportunities should be widely advertised and the information should be disseminated through adequate channels so that it reaches those communities who may lack access to professional networks, newsletters and mailing lists. Ethnic media and grassroots engagement are effective alternative means of communication. Community leaders should also be encouraged to join social and professional networks and relevant mailing lists. Information about funding opportunities should specify opportunities for submitting enquiries and seeking assistance, including links to information about private consultants, pro bono consulting or other organisations that can provide support or mentorship.

Training, support, mentorship and feedback

Different levels of government should provide direct assistance or contract local established organisations to deliver training to new and emerging communities on how to look for funding, how to apply, including how to address the eligibility requirements and the selection criteria, and how to develop a project proposal. Similar programs are already delivered at a local level but community feedback suggested that they were not sufficient and that assistance should be provided in a targeted manner, when the grants are open, so that applicants can get more timely support and advice on a specific funding proposal. Businesses, local councils, grant providers and established community organisations can

provide mentorship programs for new and emerging communities to help them develop their capacity and understanding of funding, legal, political and governance structures. Timely and targeted feedback is very important for new and emerging communities as it helps them understand how the assessment is being made and what areas they need to improve. Receiving constructive feedback also reduces the risk for new and emerging communities of becoming discouraged and disenfranchised. Larger grant beneficiaries should be held accountable to ensure that funds aimed to address issues in new and emerging communities are producing the desired outcomes for these communities, that they engage them directly throughout the life of the project and investing in empowering them.

Grants Access Program funded by the Queensland Government

MDA's Grants Access Program, through a dedicated officer, provides assistance to culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities, including new and emerging communities, across Queensland to access funding to bring their project dreams into a reality. This mix of training, information and support, enhances CALD communities' capacity to access vital funds while promoting cultural diversity in Queensland.
MDA's Grant Access Worker:
- Delivers free grant preparation workshops
- Provides one-on-one grant application support
- Promotes available grant opportunities from the corporate, philanthropic, and government fields
- Researches grants suitable to the needs of organisations and groups
- Reviews draft grant applications for organisations and groups

MDA has been delivering this service for over ten years with funding from the Queensland Government.
For further information: https://mdaltd.org.au/cs-grant-access-program/

Tailored applications: language and structure

Consideration should be given to modifying applications for funding to support better outcomes for new and emerging communities, for example, through encouraging letters of support from the community and promoting partnerships between new and emerging community organisations and more established organisations. Larger organisations have more resources and experience in writing grant applications, however, many small organisations may provide a greater return based on their knowledge of local issues and connection in the communities. Minimising the competition between small and larger organisations can assist. Grant providers should ensure that the application forms, the guidelines and the eligibility criteria are written in plain English and can be easily understood by people who speak English as their second language. Assessment of eligibility criteria should also be more flexible so that it does not disqualify new and emerging groups who might not be able to provide a comprehensive track record of their experiences. Assessment should be done based on need, recognising the circumstances of emerging groups and not limited only to how well written or articulated an application is. Improving access and simplifying the application process can also be achieved by ensuring that applications can be submitted both online and as a printed application.

Start-up funding

Grant providers should consider the provision of grants for new and emerging communities that are tailored to allow inexperienced groups to apply for funding without having to compete against more established organisations. Such funding opportunities would take into consideration the lack of experience and track record of new and emerging communities and

would focus on allowing these groups to develop their capacity and ability to manage projects. To overcome the lack of experience, the grant provider should provide, through the start-up funding, ongoing one-on-one support to successful applicants to assist them with the management of the grant and implementation of their project, regularly check on the progress the organisation is making and provide advice.

Solutions for new and emerging communities

These ideas propose what new and emerging community groups themselves could change in their approach.

Partnerships and engagement

New and emerging communities should seek to develop partnerships, networks and collaboration opportunities to increase their capacity and credibility when applying for funding. Grant providers give preference to organisations that have a track record of being able to provide services and manage funds. Small organisations that have developed networks through larger multicultural or settlement organisations have more support and guidance while engaging with the funding systems. Partnerships can provide small organisations with access to resources and expertise that larger, more established organisations have, such as financial accounting and auditing capacity. When negotiating a partnership, each organisation should agree what the budget is for and how it will be spent before submitting a grant application. New and emerging communities affiliated with ethnic or multicultural councils or other established bodies could apply for funding through an arrangement that commits these bodies to act as a guarantor for the applicant and to provide support, monitor and report on the progress of the community and their project. By doing this, new and emerging communities could gain access to funding if the grant provider trusts the organisation they are affiliated with. They can become more independent in managing their projects while also having the security that they are supported and advised by larger organisations. New and emerging communities should attempt to liaise with the grant provider, if they have provided an access point, to discuss their project proposal and seek advice about whether it would be eligible for funding. This could reduce the risk of submitting ineligible applications and could also increase the quality of the application and the chances of success. Communities should also seek to develop a relationship with the funding body before funding is made available, if possible.

Enhancing participation and raising organisation's profile

New and emerging communities should mitigate the risks of volunteer fatigue by encouraging more community members to take up leadership roles and have a succession plan in place in case key community leaders become inactive. Seeking to expand membership is also important. Community groups should raise their profile by introducing themselves to their local Member of Parliament, local council and the rest of the local community, who want to see their communities flourish and grow. Organisations can also create an online footprint of their past activities through social media, websites and photos. These actions could contribute towards making the group known to the local community, other communities and the grant provider and could increase the confidence of potential funders.

Articulating the need

The proposal should articulate the needs of the community, provide evidence and propose solutions. Funding is granted based on the ability to formulate clear objectives. If applicants

do not substantiate their claims for the needs of the community, there is no justification or accountability for the expenditure and grant providers cannot provide funds. The application should be very clear about what the applicant is seeking to do and how it will benefit the community. Organisations should ensure that the application is framed so that it is about the community rather than the organisation's need to develop itself or become more independent. Application should provide evidence such as testimonies from people the organisation have talked to about community needs and community survey results.

Evidence should be provided to justify why the organisation is the best placed to provide the service to the community, including the organisation's experience and connection to the community. The work that volunteers do for the organisation can be highlighted to demonstrate the ability of the organisation to attract people that are passionate about the cause. Government grant providers respond well to applications that contain information about governance and leadership in organisations, to show that even if the applicants do not have the skills, they are recognised and being worked on. Successful grant applications demonstrate that the organisation works not just for their community but for the larger community as well as grant providers like to see that their money will benefit the community at large.

Small grants and corporate funding

New and emerging communities should start with smaller funding. A $1000 grant is much easier to get than a $10,000 grant and can give smaller organisations the practice and an opportunity to demonstrate proper management of a grant and build a track record. Applying for corporate grants is often simpler than submitting government grant applications and can give communities a chance to prove their ability to manage funds and implement a project.