

Guidance Notes

Business Planning for Small Organisations

What is a Business Plan?

A business plan is a description of what you intend to do, when you will do it, how you will fund it and how the money will be used.

A business plan is a tool for organisations to improve their own planning and also to raise funds and gain supporters.

If our organisation has a written plan of what it intends to do and how, this is a way to demonstrate that you know what you are doing and also that the organisation has thought through how to manage its own affairs and that you can be trusted with the money.

Who produces the Business Plan?

Planning is more effective if it involves the key people in the organisation. Ideally your organisation should put together a working group that represent the different points of view and interests in the organisation (e.g. management committee, staff or volunteers). You should also consider a consultation process with members, beneficiaries and if appropriate key funders.

Who approves it?

Once consensus is reached the final business plan should be approved by the management committee and shared with key people and organisations.

What the plan contains

A business plan may be for the whole organisation or just for a project, it can be a short-term plan or a strategic plan (i.e. a plan of where the organisation wants to be in the long term).

Below is a suggestion of what your business plan could include.

1. History and background

Explain the following:

- a) Why does your organisation exist (e.g. your mission statement).
- b) When was it set up?
- c) The legal structure of your organisation.
- d) The structure of your management committee and how it operates.
- e) Membership of the organisation: numbers and where they are from.
- f) Any main achievements of the organisation so far.

2. Our Current work

Describe the following:

- Activities/projects your organisation has been implementing.
- Who has benefited from the projects and how.
- Main outcomes or benefits experienced by your beneficiaries/users.
- Main resources you used to conduct your activities (e.g. staff, volunteers, equipment)
- How have you funded your activities

3. Our future work

Include the following:

3.1. Our priorities for the next 3 years (or 5 years)

State what are the key priorities or objectives for your organisation over the next 3 to 5 Years (as per your strategic plans).

3.2. Demand for the services

Show that there is a need and demand for the services or projects you are proposing. Give numbers or any other evidence (e.g. results from research, etc.)

3.3. Activities and services

Describe the different projects or services your organisation is going to implement during the next 3 years. Include also the specific *outcomes* you expect to achieve.

4. The Work Plan

Include a plan listing the key activities or projects to be implemented, when they will be done and who will be responsible. This plan can be just for year one or for 2 or 3 year.

Work Plan

	What (activities/projects)	When (date)	Who is responsible
Year 1			
Year 2			
Year 3			

5. Resources required & Budget

List the resources required and the costs involved. Include staff, work space and equipment, core costs.

6. Fundraising plan

Describe how you intend to raise the income for the proposed activities/projects.

7. Promotion and Publicity

Describe how you will advertise and promote the project(s).

8. Management

Describe how the organisation and projects are going to be managed.

9. Monitoring and Evaluation

Describe how you will keep track and measure progress and achievements. Also include how this information will be used to improve the project

If you would like further information on the issues in this Guidance Notes, check <http://www.knowhownonprofit.org/organisation/strategy>

More Guidance Notes can be found on our website: www.wvsda.org.uk

The Wandsworth Voluntary Sector Development Agency (WVSDA) provides information, advice and training to voluntary and community groups. Whilst every effort is taken to ensure the information, advice and support we offer is current, relevant and accurate, it does not constitute legal advice.

This document was last up dated in March 2011.