

COMMUNITY ACTION: MK

Proving The Need For Your Work

When applying for funding, you need to be able to convince funders that there is a clear need for your project.

There are two parts to this:

1. Proving that there is a demand and a need for your work to happen
2. Proving that there is a need for funders to support or subsidise your work

Proving The Demand & Need For Your Work

Proving the demand for your services means finding evidence to show that there is an unmet need within a community which you plan to fill. There are lots of ways to do this, but the first step should be to do your research and find out whether there are any similar or complimentary services already in existence. If there are, you could explore ways to work together to reach the beneficiaries you are working for.

Consult your beneficiaries! Make sure you understand their needs or the challenges they are facing. Any evidence you have to show you have consulted with your beneficiaries only helps to strengthen your case for funders to support you.

There are lots of ways to evidence demand for your services:

- Observations
- Suggestion/Comment boxes
- Statistics
- Consultation with stakeholders via surveys, questionnaires, interviews, focus groups, petitions, Facebook posts, open meetings, etc
- Showing unmet demands for your services - waiting lists, referral waiting times
- Evaluations of previous similar projects
- Pilot schemes
- Published research
- Evidence from other agencies

There are also lots of useful statistics and reports online which you can use to demonstrate that there is a need for your projects.

[Census](#) – helps to build a profile of the population

[Office for National Statistics](#) – information about the UK's economy and society

[Google Scholar](#) – works the same as 'Google' but just searches for research relating to your

area of interest

[Milton Keynes Observatory](#) – Information and statistics about Milton Keynes

Proving The Need For Subsidy And Support

As well as showing why your work is needed, you also need to make the case for why your project needs subsidy or support.

Funders want to see that you have explored all the options to help your project to become a reality without solely relying on their support.

- Have you thought about charging for your services?
- Could you ask for donations from service users?
- Does your organisation have reserves they could invest in your work?
- Have you thought about other sources of support, including 'in-kind' donations?

In some cases it is not always possible to get support from services users, particularly if they are very vulnerable. However, funders want to see you have done your research and can justify the case for their support.

If you are planning a new, untested project it could be worth considering a 'pilot' programme which allows you to run a short-term 'test' of the work. Pilots can be really useful way to try our new or innovative approaches.

Talk to our Support Team for more help
Support@CommunityActionMK.org or call 01908 661623

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