

Grant Application Guide

Preparing a Strong Grant Application

Introduction

Welcome, and thanks for your interest in applying for a *Focus with Passion Grant*.

Every Grant Application represents much more than a request for financial assistance. It reflects your passion, creativity, commitment and belief in a project that has the potential to contribute to your own artistic development and the wider creative community.

The purpose of this Guide is to help you understand what Assessors are looking for when reviewing your Application. Rather than simply explaining each question, this Guide explains why the information is important, and how each Section contributes to the overall Assessment.

Remember, Assessors are not comparing you with other Applicants. They are assessing how effectively you have explained your own Project against the published Assessment Criteria. The clearer and more consistent your Application is, the easier it becomes for Assessors to understand your vision and appreciate the potential impact that Grant Funding and Mentorship may have on your creative journey.

The Assessment is divided into three major Sections:

Assessment Section	Weighting
• Describing Your Project	• 25%
• Project Profile Video	• 50%
• Project Implementation	• 25%

Although each Section is assessed independently, they should work together to tell one clear and consistent story.

Section 1: Describing Your Project (25%)

Why this Section Matters

Every successful Creative Project begins with an idea.

However, successful Grant Applications demonstrate much more than enthusiasm. They show that the Applicant has carefully considered what they hope to achieve, why the Project is important and how they intend to deliver it.

This Section establishes the foundation for the remainder of your Application.

Your Project Title, Timeline, Project Focus, Summary and Outcomes should all connect naturally with one another. Assessors are looking for evidence that you understand your Project and have developed a realistic plan to achieve your objectives.

Remember:

*Funding supports Projects that have been carefully planned,
rather than ideas that have not yet been fully developed.*

What You Should Include

A strong Project Description clearly explains:

- What you want to achieve.
- Why this Project is important to you.
- What Activities you will undertake.
- What Outcomes you hope to achieve.
- How Grant Funding will help make The Project possible.

Rather than writing general statements, explain your Project in more practical terms.

For example, instead of saying: *"I want to become a better musician."*

Consider a deeper explanation:

"I intend recording a professionally produced five-track EP that will enable me to apply for festival performances and establish my first commercial release."

Specific responses help Assessors understand exactly what success will look like.

Connecting the Sections

Throughout your Application, each section should support the others – ensure your:

- Project Summary should explain your Project.
- Project Outcomes should describe the changes you expect to achieve.
- Timeline should demonstrate when activities will occur.
- Milestones should explain how progress will be measured.
- Funding Request should directly support those activities.

Assessors gain greater confidence that your Project has been carefully considered when every Section tells the same story.

Questions to ask yourself

Before your application submission, ask...

1. Could somebody unfamiliar with my Project clearly understand what I intend to achieve?
2. Have I explained why this Project is important?
3. Do my Activities naturally lead towards my intended Outcomes?
4. Does my Timeline appear realistic?
5. Have I explained how Grant Funding will contribute to my Project?

If you can confidently answer **"Yes"** to each of these questions, your application is likely to communicate your Project more effectively.

High Scoring Applications Usually Demonstrate

- Clear Objectives
- Well-defined Project Activities
- Realistic Timelines
- Logical Milestones
- Measurable Outcomes
- Consistency throughout the Application
- Careful planning.

Lower Scoring Applications Often Demonstrate

- Vague Objectives
- General Statements without explanation
- Activities that do not relate to intended Outcomes
- Unrealistic Timeframes
- Funding Requests that are not clearly justified
- Sections that contradict one another

Summary

Strong Project Descriptions help Assessors understand not only what you hope to achieve, but how you intend to achieve it. A well-planned Project demonstrates commitment, preparation and realistic expectations - qualities that provide confidence in your ability to make effective use of both Grant Funding and Mentorship.

Section Two: Your Project Profile Video (50%)

Why this Section Carries the Highest Weighting

The Project Video represents **50% of your overall Assessment** because it provides Assessors with the best opportunity to understand you as a person.

- Your written Application explains your Project
- Your Video explains **you**.

Focus with Passion invests in people as much as Projects. Every successful Applicant also participates in a Mentoring Relationship. As a result, Assessors are looking beyond Artistic Ability. They also consider your style of communication, commitment, openness to learning and willingness to engage with a Mentor.

Authenticity is always more valuable than performance.

You don't require expensive equipment, professional editing or elaborate production techniques.

Instead, your Video should communicate genuine enthusiasm for your Project and allow your personality to come through naturally.

What your Project Video should demonstrate

Your Video should help Assessors understand:

- Who you are
- Why this Project matters to you
- Why now is the right time
- How completing This Project will influence your future
- Why *Focus with Passion* should invest in your development

Your Video should reinforce (not repeat) your written Application.

Rather than reading your responses directly to the camera, expand on your story.

Help Assessors understand your motivation, experiences and aspirations.

Where appropriate, include examples of your creative work, photographs, sketches, performances, rehearsals or other material that illustrate your Artistic Journey so far. This allows Assessors to connect your creative practice with the Project you are proposing.

What Assessors are looking for

A strong Project Video provides Assessors with confidence that you are genuinely committed to completing your Project and making the most of the opportunity that *Focus with Passion* provides.

The strongest Videos typically demonstrate:

- Genuine passion for the Project
- Clear and confident communication
- Self-awareness and authenticity
- A realistic understanding of what the Project involves
- Enthusiasm for receiving guidance and Mentorship.

Remember:

Assessors are not expecting a polished media presentation.

They are looking for an honest conversation that helps them understand who you are and why your Project deserves support.

Practical Presentation Tips

Before recording your Project Video:

- Prepare a few notes rather than a complete script
- Speak naturally, as if you're explaining your Project to someone meeting you for the first time
- Record somewhere quiet with good lighting
- Ensure your face and voice are clearly visible and audible
- Keep your presentation between **three and five minutes** - as outlined in the Application requirements.

Most importantly...

Smile.

Be yourself.

Allow your personality to become part of your story.

Assessors want to meet the person behind the Project.

Questions to ask yourself

Before uploading your Project Video, ask yourself...

1. Have I explained why this Project is personally important?
2. Would somebody watching this understand my passion?
3. Have I explained how this Project may influence my future?
4. Have I demonstrated that I am ready to learn from a Mentor?
5. Does my Video complement my written Application rather than simply repeat it?

High Scoring Applications usually demonstrate

- Authentic communication
- Genuine enthusiasm
- A strong personal connection to the Project
- Confidence without exaggeration
- Clear explanation of future goals
- A willingness to learn and accept guidance.

Lower Scoring Applications often demonstrate

- Reading directly from prepared notes
- Repeating written answers without adding insight
- Little explanation of personal motivation
- Unclear communication
- Limited enthusiasm
- No evidence that Mentorship will be embraced

Summary

Your Project Video provides Assessors with the opportunity to understand the person behind the Project. The most successful Videos communicate authenticity, commitment and purpose, giving Assessors confidence that you are ready to benefit from both Mentorship and Grant Funding.

Section Three: Project Implementation (25%)

Why this Section matters

Creative ideas become successful Projects through careful planning, realistic expectations and consistent effort.

The Project Implementation Section demonstrates that you have considered what will be required to successfully complete your Project.

Assessors understand that every Project presents challenges. They are not expecting perfect certainty. Instead, they are looking for evidence that you have thought about how the Project will progress, how Grant Funding will be invested and what support you may require along the way.

This Section provides confidence that your Project can realistically be delivered.

What should be included

A strong Implementation Plan explains:

- The major stages of your Project
- Realistic commencement and completion dates
- Clear Milestones that demonstrate progress
- How Grant Funding will be spent
- Why those expenses are necessary
- Additional support that may contribute to the Project's success.

Where possible, explain each Milestone in practical language.

Here are some examples:

"Complete six weeks of studio recording."

"Finalise editing of documentary footage."

"Present first public exhibition."

"Complete advanced acting workshop."

Specific Milestones demonstrate preparation and make it easier for Assessors to understand how the Project will progress.

Explaining Your Funding Request

Grant Funding should directly support your creative Project.

Every expenditure should have a clear relationship to achieving your stated outcomes.

If you intend purchasing equipment, explain why it is essential.

If you intend undertaking Professional Development, explain how it will improve your ability to complete the Project.

Avoid assuming Assessors understand why an expense is necessary.

Instead, explain how every significant item contributes to achieving your objectives.

Remember:

*A carefully justified Funding Request
demonstrates thoughtful planning and responsible Financial Management.*

Demonstrating Wider Support

Creative Projects are often strengthened by support from others.

Where relevant - include evidence of:

- Confirmed performances
- Exhibition opportunities
- Industry partnerships
- Community support
- Letters of encouragement
- Professional endorsements
- Volunteer assistance
- In-kind contributions

Evidence that others believe in your Project can strengthen Assessors' confidence in its potential.

Mentoring

Focus with Passion provides more than Financial Assistance; successful Applicants also participate in a Mentoring relationship.

Accordingly, Assessors are looking for evidence that you are / can:

- Welcome constructive feedback
- Be prepared to learn
- Understand that creative development is a continual process
- Value guidance from experienced professionals.

Applicants who demonstrate openness to learning often gain greater long-term benefit from both Mentorship and Grant Funding.

Questions to ask yourself

Before submitting your application, ask...

1. Can I realistically complete everything I have proposed?
2. How does my Timeline support my Milestones?
3. How did I explain each major expense contributing to the Project?
4. What evidence have I included regarding wider support where available?
5. How did I demonstrate that I am willing to receive advice and Mentorship?

High Scoring Applications usually demonstrate

- Realistic planning
- Well-defined Milestones
- Practical budgets
- Strong links between Expenditure and Outcomes
- Evidence of preparation
- A willingness to learn
- Confidence balanced by realistic expectations

Lower Scoring Applications often demonstrate

- Unrealistic schedules
- Poorly explained Funding Requests
- Limited planning
- Weak or missing Milestones
- Little evidence of wider support
- Limited understanding of Mentorship.

Summary

Successful Projects require more than creativity alone.

Careful planning, realistic budgeting and a willingness to learn demonstrates that you are prepared to transform your Creative Vision into a Successful Outcome.

Final Application Checklist

Before submitting your application, take a few moments to review the following:

- ✓ Have I clearly explained what my Project is?
- ✓ Do all sections of my Application support one another?
- ✓ Have I explained why this Project matters to me?
- ✓ Does my Project Video demonstrate my passion and commitment?
- ✓ Have I developed realistic Milestones and Timelines?
- ✓ Is my Funding Request clearly justified?
- ✓ Have I explained how Mentorship will assist my Development?
- ✓ Have I reviewed my Application for spelling, grammar and consistency?
- ✓ Would somebody unfamiliar with my Project understand exactly what I am proposing?

If you can confidently answer "**Yes**" to each of these questions, your application is likely to provide Assessors with the information they need to make an informed and balanced Assessment.

Conclusion

Every Grant Application tells the story of an individual seeking the opportunity to develop their Creative Practice through belief, encouragement and support.

While Artistic Ability is important, *Focus with Passion* also recognises the value of thoughtful planning, authentic communication and a willingness to learn.

The strongest Applications demonstrate not only what an Applicant hopes to achieve, but also how Mentorship and Grant Funding will help transform those aspirations into meaningful outcomes.

Approach your Application as an opportunity to introduce yourself, explain your creative vision and demonstrate your commitment to bringing your Project to life.

By presenting a clear, consistent and well-prepared proposal, you enable Assessors to understand both your Project and your potential, giving them confidence that an investment in your future will contribute to your artistic development - also to the broader creative community.