

Questions you should consider when writing a business plan

Aims, objectives and personal aspirations

- What is your organisation's mission (overall aim/objects)?
- What are your personal aspirations in this project? (e.g. do you see yourself as receiving an income or will your input be voluntary?)

Activities

- What activities do you intend to provide? (state what, when and where and how many people you aim to reach)
- What borough/s do you want to provide these activities in?
- Who do you intend to provide those activities to? (who are the beneficiaries, e.g. young people, black and minority ethnic, people with learning difficulties? Etc.)
- How will you promote these activities?
- Who will provide those activities (full time or part time paid staff, sessional workers, volunteers)?
- What are the aims of these activities?
- What is unique about the activities you will offer?

Research

- What research have you done into similar services offered by other organisations?
- Who have you discussed your proposal with (e.g. council officers, people from other local voluntary organisations)?
- How will you monitor and evaluate the outcomes of these activities? (e.g. what benefits will beneficiaries gain)

The people involved

- How many people are involved on your board/management committee?
- What experience and skills do you and the people involved on your board/management committee have of this area of work?
- What experience and skills gaps need addressing with regard to yourself and the people involved on your board/management committee?
- What experience do the people involved have of managerial work and/or running a small business and/or of being on the board of a charity or voluntary organisation?

Legal form

- Do you have a governing document (constitution)? If your organisation has registered as a company and/or a charity please provide registration numbers. Please note that it is inadvisable to rush into setting up a company without having fully considered answers to this list of questions. Company formation agencies and many solicitors are often very inexperienced at advising voluntary and community organisations. They will also charge for their services.

Funding

- How much funding will you require in the first year (provide a budget if available)?
- How much funding will you require over the first three years (provide a budget if available)?

- Who will you approach for funding?
- Will any of the funding be self-generated (e.g. will you charge for entrance)?
- What sources of funding are you considering? (Corporate funding, grant funding, donations, statutory funding, trading etc...)

Resources

- Tools for tomorrow: a practical guide for strategic planning for voluntary organisations
NCVO
- A business planning guide to developing a social enterprise
http://socialenterprisefund.ca/wp-content/uploads/2010/01/New_BusPlanGuide.pdf
- How to develop mission statements that have impact,
<http://www.knowhownonprofit.org/how-to/how-to-develop-mission-statements-that-have-impact/?searchterm=None>
- Write a business plan guide form GOV.UK <https://www.gov.uk/write-business-plan>

Support

If you would like any support with starting up, strategic or business planning or any other issues facing your organisation, please contact the Development Team at Community Southwark: development@communitysouthwark.org.uk or 020 7358 7020