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Fundraising for grassroots social justice groups

A guide from Edge Fund

1. Grant fundraising

Foundation funding can offer a valuable source of income for grassroots projects. There are steps you need to take before being able to apply for funds and some considerations about how funding might affect your group, which are covered in this guide.

1. What you need to do first

Foundations will expect you to have two things in place before being able to apply for funds; a constitution and a bank account in your organisation's name.

In the majority of cases you will need to prove that you exist as an organisation. To do this, you will need a constitution and a group of people willing to be committee members. A constitution is a document that outlines the aims of your group, how you will make decisions and other important aspects of running your group. There are many model constitutions that you can adapt, rather than writing them from scratch. When writing your aims remember that funders will use this to determine whether your organisation is charitable or not (see section below).

The simplest type of organisation is an Unincorporated Association. You can use the platform provided by One Click Orgs (www.oneclickorgs.com) to create a constitution for an association. The constitution shows that you and other people have come together as a group and agreed on shared aims and the ways that your group will run. You don't need to register the constitution with any government body and don't need to submit any accounts to anyone. Associations have no legal identity or rights.

For those organisations that feel that being an association is not enough, if for example you want to employ staff, raise large amounts of money or own property, the next step is to 'incorporate'. This means that the organisation becomes a separate legal entity, rather than just a group of people. A common organisational structure used by groups to incorporate is a Company Limited by Guarantee, which is a non-profit company. It is very quick and cheap to set up this type of organisation, which you can do through Companies House. Community Interest Companies are also becoming more popular but there is still some confusion about what they are, they are often used by social enterprises. There are also Community Benefit Societies, a form of co-operative, which are registered with the Financial Conduct Authority.

The majority of funders will only fund registered charities. To register as a charity you'll need to make sure your constitution is 'charitable' and submit it to the Charity Commission and provide reports to them every year. However, if you are a small group this may create more work than you can cope with. Also, you may not be eligible to register as a charity if you are a campaign group or have more radical or political aims (see below). Increasingly, the Charity Commission has been putting pressure on groups if they feel they have become too radical, so registration could affect how you work. On the plus side, being a registered charity means you can claim back Gift Aid, which is an extra 25p for every £1 donation, as well as other tax perks.

Make sure you're clear on the implications of each structure too, get proper advice from Get Legal (www.getlegal.org.uk) or your local Council for Voluntary Service (www.navca.org.uk/directory/search).

Funders that will consider supporting organisations that are not registered charities include:

- Esmee Fairbairn

- Tudor Trust
- Allen Lane Foundation
- Trust for London
- Community Foundations
- Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust
- Comic Relief
- The Henry Smith Charity
- Lankelly Chase Foundation
- Big Lottery eg Awards for All

Banking

You will also need to have a bank account in your organisation's name.

Withdrawals and cheques should need at least two signatories. Many banks offer accounts especially for community groups. The Co-operative Bank's Community DirectPlus account is easy to set up and free to use. You can find information about it on their website (www.co-operativebank.co.uk) or call them on 0800 764 764. They will need to see your constitution. Due to ethical problems with Co-operative Bank recently, you may prefer to use a building society. The website Move Your Money gives good information on the most ethical choices. In some cases foundations may agree to transfer the funds to another organisation if you don't have your own bank account.

2. Charitable vs political

In the world of funding there are three types of organisations:

1. Registered charities
2. Organisations that carry out 'charitable' work but are not registered charities
3. Non-charitable organisations (ie organisations with political aims)

As most foundations are registered charities, they will only give grants to other registered charities. Some will give to organisations that are not registered charities, but only if their work is considered to be charitable.

There are 13 standard 'charitable purposes,' or aims, given by the Charity Commission. They include; the prevention or relief of poverty; advancement of education; the advancement of citizenship or community development; the advancement of the arts, culture, heritage or science; the advancement of human rights, conflict resolution or reconciliation or the promotion of religious or racial harmony or equality and diversity; the advancement of environmental protection or improvement and the relief of those in need, by reason of youth, age, ill-health, disability, financial hardship or other disadvantage. Charities also have to benefit the public in general, or a sufficient section of the public. Common examples of charities include community centres, support groups, youth clubs, employment training organisations and homeless shelters.

You can find out more information about this from the Charity Commission website (www.charity-commission.gov.uk) or by calling them on 0845 300 0218.

If your group is a campaign group or politically motivated you will find it much harder to raise money from foundations. This is for two reasons. Firstly, a group which has political aims, described as any purpose directed at furthering the interests of any political party, or securing or

opposing a change in the law, policy or decisions either in this country or abroad, cannot register as a charity and are not considered charitable. Secondly, the foundation world is typically quite a conservative one, with most preferring more traditional charity work.

However, charities can carry out some political work as long as it's not the main part of their work, and as long as it supports a charitable aim.

Funders that support non-charitable work are very limited:

- Andrew Wainwright Reform Trust www.wainwrighttrusts.org.uk
- Edge Fund www.edgefund.org.uk
- Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust www.jrrt.org.uk
- Lush Charity Pot www.lush.co.uk
- Network for Social Change www.thenetworkforsocialchange.org.uk
- Artists Project Earth www.apeuk.org (not currently accepting applications)
- XminY www.xminy.nl/english
- Fire Fund www.firefund.net (in the process of being set up)

3. Applying for funds

The process of applying to foundations for money varies between each one. They have their own application forms, funding criteria, maximum grants, processes etc.

Usually you need to complete a written application form and you will have to prove that you meet their aims and guidelines. Some forms are very long and sometimes filled with confusing language, such as 'objectives', 'outcomes' and 'outputs'. You have to complete the form exactly as they want you to otherwise you are unlikely to be successful. If you are successful you may have to wait a few months before the money arrives and will have to report back to the foundation on how you used the money.

Most foundations will want proof that your project is needed. The starting point is the problem you're trying to address. For example, older people are very isolated. What is the cause of this? Perhaps there is nowhere for them to go to get together with other people? Or perhaps the places which are available are not accessible to people who are not very mobile, or simply they don't know about the facilities or there are no activities going on they are interested in. What evidence do you have to prove this? Do you have statistics about the number of people in your community who are over 65? Have you had a meeting with them or sent them a survey to find out about if they feel isolated and why? What have other organisations told you? What is your solution and why is this the best solution? How will older people in your community be part of setting up and running this project? This is possibly the most important part of your application so take some time to talk to your community and gather evidence to prove why it is needed.

The Big Lottery are particularly keen to see data about why your project is needed, and whilst other funders do not need so much detail it is good practice to ensure your project addresses a need and is at the very least informed by the community themselves. It's not wise to start a project just because you believe it is a good idea, without the evidence to back it up.

Bear in mind that some funders will want to see a track record, if you're a new group, you might want to consider working with an already established organisation with similar aims. They may be able to apply for funds for you as a partner, which means you have the added advantage of their good reputation and track record. They could also help manage the money. It's a good idea

to start thinking as soon as possible about how you can prove that you're making a difference. For example, if your project aims to build confidence of young women, ask them when they join your project to tell you about their current level of confidence, perhaps through a survey or interview. In six month's time you can then go back to them and ask them again and compare this to what they initially said. Funders love measurable results!

There are many many guides on how to write application forms, as well as training courses. See resources at the end of this guide.

Finding funders

There are around 9,000 grant-making foundations in the UK, funding a wide range of issues. Thankfully there are a number of databases, guides and organisations that can help you find the right ones.

Funding Central (www.fundingcentral.org.uk) is a website with thousands of funding opportunities listed which you can search for free. There are other lists of funders you can search but you usually have to pay for them, your local Council for Voluntary Service may be able to give you free access to GrantFinder and TrustFunding. A good tip is to look at similar groups to yours and find out where they got their funding from. If they are a registered charity you can read their annual accounts on the Charity Commission website.

When looking at foundations and considering whether you should apply, you should read their guidelines very carefully. A call or email to the funder can save you wasting your time on an application that's unlikely to be successful. Make sure you meet their guidelines but also that when you write your initial letter, or full application, that you show them clearly how you meet this criteria. For example, if they want to fund innovative projects, make sure you tell them how your project in a new approach that has not been tried before. Some funders have a long list of what they will and will not fund, it's really important you read every line. Ask a friend to go through it with you to double check. Make sure you have made note of the deadline for applications too, if there is one.

Remember that many funders support a whole range of groups and issues. It's important you write clearly and concisely, without jargon and acronyms or assumptions that they have knowledge that they might not have.

Most foundations want to fund 'projects' rather than the running costs of your group, like travel costs, phone bills and office rental. When you write your budget for a project, it is usually acceptable to add around 10% to cover your core operating costs. You will need to write up the work you want funding for as a separate piece of work, with a start and end date and specific aims.

What happens next

Make sure you understand what the funder expects of you after you've received the funding.

Some expect you to keep receipts for everything you've spent on the funded project and report regularly on your work, whilst others are more relaxed. If they have many requirements think about if your group can cope with this.

4. Ethical concerns with foundations

Philanthropy is a result of unequal power and wealth in society; it would not exist in an equitable world. Will philanthropy ever put itself out of business by challenging the status quo?

Sadly, in many cases people and companies become wealthy by exploiting others. They may then decide to set up a foundation, through which they give their money away to people in need, and whilst this may be a good thing to do, it's important to look at the wider context and the impact it has.

Whilst many people want to alleviate the suffering of others, most people with wealth do not want a truly equitable society. In an equal world everyone would have what they need and would not have to rely on wealthy people and institutions to give them donations to get by. But rich people would not be rich if we lived in an equal society, so many would prefer that everything stays the same, that they can become rich, and that they can choose if and when they give money away, and who they give it to. When people give money away, they often do so in a way that helps others in the short-term, but does not aim to fundamentally change society.

This criticism of philanthropy has existed for centuries, perhaps as long as philanthropy has. In 1792, women's rights campaigner Mary Wollstonecraft said "It is justice, not charity, that is wanting in the world".

The first foundations

Even the very first foundations raised questions about the true motives of philanthropy.

The first of the large American foundations were set up around 1913. At the same time an investigation began to look at working conditions of labourers, lead by Frank Walsh. During the investigation a company owned by Rockefeller was involved in the Ludlow Massacre, where guards attacked 1,200 striking coal miners and their families, killing around 20. This was only around a year after John D Rockefeller set up his foundation. He was found to be involved in forcing horrific working conditions on the workers which had resulted in the strike. This made Frank Walsh question the real reasons for setting up the foundation. Critics pointed out that the foundation's aims included justifying the status quo, appeasing badly treated workers and promoting anti-union views. Following investigations the United States Commission on Industrial Relations identified the new philanthropic foundations as "thinly disguised capitalist manipulation of the social order".

Could John D Rockefeller really care about people when he did not even care about the welfare of his own workers? Walsh felt that the foundations were a "menace to the welfare of society" and existed only to justify the way in which companies operate. Setting up foundations to share some of the company's money and help the poor meant that people were less likely to complain and protest about the fact that they had nothing whilst others had so much, it made people less angry and less likely to demand real change.

Modern day foundations

Since 1913 many thousands of foundations have been set up. Whilst there are many great foundations, the same concerns about philanthropy still exist today.

Some corporate foundations, set up by banks, supermarkets, energy companies and other businesses, use their charitable giving to provide a mask for their unethical practices. For example, the Shell Foundation has a climate change programme, which from the outside might make customers feel that they are concerned with the environment. However, Shell's business of oil drilling is well known to be a major cause of climate change and environmental damage. If they were really concerned with the environment, they would not be drilling for oil, especially not in very sensitive and risky areas like the Arctic.

When you look closer at how foundations invest their money, it can be difficult to believe their aims are to do good for society. For example, Pew Charitable Trusts, which is one of the biggest funders of environmental causes, earns more money from their investments in environmentally polluting businesses than they give away to groups aiming to protect the environment.

How grant funding might affect your group

You should think carefully about whether you want to seek grant funding as it could have impacts on your work.

As more and more foundations have appeared, more organisations have become reliant on them for funding. This can become very problematic. Groups can find themselves:

- Developing projects to fit funding guidelines instead of doing what really needs to be done;
- Watering down their message so they are more acceptable to funders;
- Registering as charities to access funding only to then be limited on what they can do;
- Playing it safe to ensure funding is not withdrawn (eg when they would normally challenge or be critical of government and big business);
- Feeling disheartened as application after application is turned down (one in five might be successful if you've picked the right funders);
- Spending huge amounts of time researching foundations, applying for funds, keeping records, writing reports – becoming more focused on raising money than doing the work;
- Competing with other groups and being protective about information on funding;
- Having to discontinue projects because the grant that funded it has run out.

Because of these issues some groups have decided to go back to their roots and have given up funding, and the paid positions, office space etc that it allowed, so that they can do the work they want to do rather than what they can get funding for.

It's crucial that you have other sources of funding, as many different sources as possible. There are many great projects and groups that have come to an end because the grant ran out and they had no others funds to keep them going. Many small groups make the mistake of applying for a grant without ensuring they have wider support from the community.

The biggest risk of becoming dependent on grant funding, is that you are allowing others to influence you, and therefore influence the community you work with. Usually the funder has their own agenda and is looking for organisations that can help them fulfil this.

2. Alternatives to grant fundraising

1. Grassroots fundraising/ raising funds from individuals

More traditional grassroots fundraising can be a lot of work, but the benefits go beyond the money and you can use the funds how you want to.

Many organisations rely on funds from individuals to support their work, rather than foundations or government. Some have decided to stop raising funds from foundations and to instead go back to grassroots fundraising so they can be free to do what they need to do, rather than tied to funders expectations. In particular, organisations involved in trying to change society, perhaps by campaigning against unethical companies and government policies, usually raise most of their money from many individuals as there are few foundations that support this work. Individual fundraising can work on a very large scale, as well as on a local level, for example, Friends of the Earth in the UK has an income of around £10 million and 90% of this comes from individuals. To raise this amount of money they have a team of fundraisers who raise money through their website, emails, mail, phone, events, street fundraisers and also many volunteer fundraisers.

Raising money from individuals is a crucial part of fundraising for small community groups. Money from individuals is flexible, unlike money from foundations it is not usually tied to a particular activity, which means you can use it how you need to (including the running costs of your group). If your funds come from many different people, individual donors have very little influence on what you do. Raising money from individuals can also be part of your day-to-day activities. In almost all projects it is necessary to spread the word about what you are doing, whether you've opened a new social centre or you've launched a campaign to stop a development which threatens your community, you need to let as many people as possible know about it.

Talks at other organisations can both raise awareness of your work and raise money. The same can be said for organising car boot sales, street stalls, cake sales, selling t-shirts (with your message on them perhaps), sponsored walks, collecting money on the street or organising fundraising events. Many of the larger charities have guides to fundraising on their websites for their volunteers, it's well worth a look! Although many of these activities might seem like your traditional charity fundraising activities and not something for a radical social change group, it's a good way to get your message out beyond your usual circles.

Events

Events are a great way to raise the profile of your group and can have benefits beyond the money raised on the day.

Fundraising events are time consuming and sometimes they don't raise as much money as you'd hope. But there's more to it than just the money. Events are a great way to raise the profile of your organisation; if you've done a good job in promoting the event many people will find out about you even if they can't attend. Websites like EventBrite make it easy to promote the event online and collect people's contact addresses to follow up with later. The process of contacting people to take part in the event, such as speakers or performers, can also give you the incentive to reach out and work with others. Events also give people the opportunity to meet you in person, which can make all the difference. There can also be many social benefits to events, bringing like-minded people together to relax and enjoy themselves and be inspired by each other's work. Consider organising an event with other organisations, that way you have a wider

network to help run the event, including promoting it, and it could be used to bring people from different movements together.

You must prepare well in advance, ideally you need at least two months to promote the event. Promote it through your networks but don't forget the local papers, radio, What's On listings, other organisations that may have a connection (eg if you're organising a music night, contact local arts organisations) and putting posters up in the area. It is also worth thinking about what kind of event people might like to attend, you could send a survey to supporters to find out what might make them come along. Ideally you want the kind of event people want to go to, rather than going out of a sense of obligation. Make sure that there are lots of ways to encourage people to give once they've arrived, such as tombola's, raffles, auctions, food and drink. Some groups organise tattoo festivals where people get a tattoo on the day and the tattoo artist donates some, or all of the fee. This could work other services too.

Asking for donations from individuals

Grow your supporter list, keep in touch, ask for money!

One of your main priorities should be building up a list of contacts. In everything you do (eg events, petitions, surveys), ask people if they would like to receive news from you or would like to support you. It's worth thinking about ways that you could encourage people to sign up to your newsletter or follow you on social media (although newsletter is often better than social media). Often on Facebook groups ask for help for new followers when they are at eg. 950 followers and want to get to 1,000. Fundraising is often a numbers game, the more supporters you have, the more you are likely to raise.

Write to supporters regularly to let them know what you're doing. Share stories of the impact you're having. You can use services like MailChimp, which is free for groups with less than 2,000 subscribers, to create newsletters and keep track of how many people open them. It's really easy to set up a nice template so that your newsletter is easy to read. Riseup and NoFlag also offer mailing lists and are a good alternative to Google and Yahoo services.

When the right moment comes, for example, you have a particular project you need to raise funds for, or need to launch an urgent campaign, send a fundraising appeal to your newsletter list and promote it via social media. There is no great skill or science to it, the most important thing is that you ask. In fact, the top reason why people don't give is because they haven't been asked. So we really have to get our head around how we can do this without feeling uncomfortable!

Often when groups use more radical tactics, such a direct action, there is good coverage in the media. Be prepared for increased traffic to your website and ensure there is an easy way for people to support you financially as well as other ways.

There are loads of online guides to how to write appeal letters, which are worth reading. Bear in mind though that your supporters are not the same as everyone else's, you might need to experiment to see what people respond best to. Generally the most successful appeals:

- Have a sense of urgency (having a deadline and a target amount can work but it's better if the appeal is related to an urgent situation)
- Are for something very specific
- Are clearly written (no jargon)
- Are personal (eg use stories, sign-off with a name)

- Are easy for people to donate to (eg one click takes you straight to donation page, rather than multiple clicks or having to make a bank transfer or send a cheque)

Crowdfunding sites have also become very popular. These sites allow people to give online to support a cause. You set up a page with a target amount and (usually) a deadline and the number of supporters and funds raised is instantly updated on the page so people can see how close you are to the target. It works well for relatively small amounts. Some groups create an appeal and then keep promoting throughout the year, whereas others set up new ones for different fundraising needs. There are charges associated with these sites and each works slightly differently so check it out properly. For example, many of them have a condition that you have to raise the target amount by the target date or you don't receive any of the funds. Some also only allow registered charities to use them. GoFundMe and GoGetFunding are good options for more informal groups.

Crowdfunding sites seem to work particularly well for projects where the supporter can benefit in some way by giving. For example, if you are producing a film or report, people will give if they want to see the film or read the guide. Often crowdfunds offer incentives for people to give (eg IndieGoGo), which could include a free copy of the film or report. This is also a good way of finding out how much interest or demand there is for what you want to do. If you are lucky enough to have a supporter who could offer to match donations up to a certain amount, this really helps motivate people to give too.

When asking for donations, consider asking for a monthly donation rather than a one-off. It's surprising how few groups do this. You only need 25 people giving £10 per month to raise £3,000 a year; a huge amount of money for many groups. Crowdfunding sites don't allow for this but contacting people after they've given a one-off donation and asking them to sign up to a monthly donation is a commonly used tactic, and often with a good success rate.

An online donation system like GoCardLess (www.gocardless.com) can also make fundraising much easier. They manage monthly donations for you and it's very easy to set up. Services like Charity Checkout (www.charitycheckout.co.uk) can also help with online fundraising and processing donations. You can also use PayPal but charges are higher and some groups have had problems with funds being frozen, especially if they are not formally registered. But don't expect to raise lots just by putting a donate button on your website, you will need to give people a clear reason to donate (as above).

At some point you might want to introduce your supporters to the idea of leaving a gift to you in their Will. Organisations like Remember a Charity (www.rememberacharity.org.uk) and Legacy Fundraising (www.legacyfundraising.co.uk) offer support in this area.

2. Earning income

Charging for services raises some ethical questions but can provide a useful, flexible income.

With foundation money becoming harder to come by, more groups are developing ways to earn money by charging for services or selling goods. When you look at some of the larger organisations, that run on many millions of pounds, they often adopt this same strategy. For many of us who object to the capitalist society we live in, the thought of charging for something rather than providing it for free or in exchange, is very uncomfortable. Some groups get around this by having different levels of charges according to people's incomes or having a suggested donation amount. Other specifically aim to provide services to those who can afford to pay the

going rate, which can be used to offset the costs for others. You will need to decide what is right for your group and supporters.

Some services that charities charge for include running workshops on their areas of expertise, selling reports, services in the community (eg gardening, shopping), refurbishing and selling second-hand clothing and other items, scrap metal collections, running cafes, holding events, selling music CDs and publications or selling ethical, locally produced goods. The model of having lots of supporters making and selling a particular item (eg quilts, cookies) works very well for larger organisations.

Some of the best ideas involve providing a service that can be run by volunteers and doesn't require producing any goods where there might be issues around ethical sourcing. For example, some groups make money by running the lock-up at festivals or coat check-ins at night clubs. At least in these settings there is little risk of excluding people who cannot afford your service. Of course, for some people, the simplest option for earning funds is to get a weekend or evening job and use those funds to support the group.

Selling goods and services, or trading, will affect your tax status so you might want to set up a separate trading arm. Get some advice on this to be sure. Again, your local Council for Voluntary Service is a good start. www.navca.org.uk/directory

3. Mutual aid - sharing, collaborating, exchanging

Before banks and charities we were much more used to helping each other deal with a lack of money and resources.

Fundraising has become a professional career. Most large charities have trained fundraisers who spend all day applying to foundations for grants, as it often requires specialist knowledge and skills. There are also well-paid positions for people who raise money from companies, government and individuals. It's hard to believe that fundraising is actually quite new. We now have many charities and community groups which need money to pay salaries, office rent, telephone bills, travel costs and all kinds of others costs associated with the work they do, and many pots of money (foundations, wealthy individuals, companies) to raise money from. It's become an industry in itself. The charity sector in the UK has come a long way from the days of communities helping themselves.

When you look at countries in Africa, Asia and South America there are many examples of how communities support each other without charities or fundraisers. Many countries in these areas do not have such a developed charity sector as we do, and the work is done by informal community groups on the ground, rather than large charities.

Community self-help

Adopting community self-help strategies can build solidarity and give independence from the system.

In the times before modern day insurance companies, banks and government benefits, communities relied more on self-help and mutual aid. Groups of people would often come together to form Friendly Societies (or Mutual Societies), where each member would pay money into a fund and then those funds would be available to members in times of need; perhaps ill health or to pay for funeral costs. When it came to making decisions about the organisation

every member had one vote each, regardless of how much they might have invested or any other factor. Social get togethers were often a major part of being a member of a Friendly Society, and in some cases this was an important way for communities to support each other emotionally as well as financially. Sometimes members offered their services free to other members.

By the late 1800's there were around 27,000 registered Friendly Societies in the UK, by the end of the 19th century, over 80% of British working age men were a member of one or more Friendly Society, but only a couple of hundred exist today (www.friendlysocieties.co.uk). However, they are popular in other parts of the world, known under the term Rotating Savings and Credit Association (ROSCA), all of which involve groups of people putting money into a shared fund which is then given out to members in various ways.

In South Africa ROSCAs are known as 'stokvels' (or gooi gooi or umgalelos) and are a very popular way to save up money for a variety of purposes. One of the most common forms raises money to cover funeral costs but there are also those to save for groceries, school fees and other costs.

Stokvels are savings clubs where around ten people pay into a pot every month (or sometimes weekly or fortnightly). Each month a different member receives the money which they can use as they wish. For example, twelve people pay £10 each into the pot. Every month one person from the group gets £120. The stokvel can run for a year, so each person gets one payment, or can continue for many years. Each person has to pay their £10 every month for the year, even if they have already received the £120. As the group is small it is uncommon for anyone to fail to pay their £10 as everyone else will know. The same model is seen all over the world, but known under other names for example sousou in Trinidad, keh in Korea, rounds clubs in Zimbabwe, partna or pardner in Jamaica, arisan in Indonesia, likelembas in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, xitique in Mozambique, djanggis in Cameroon and chit funds in India.

Despite changes in society away from community self-help, and the fall of small, more informal organisations like friendly societies, we still have many organisations based on the same principles today. For example, there are 500 credit unions in the UK which are owned and run by their members and offer financial services to them at low cost. There is also a growing co-operative movement, with now almost 6,000 in the UK (www.uk.coop/performance-co-operative-economy). Co-operatives can take many forms, there are workers co-operatives, run by the employees of a company, housing co-operatives, run by people who live together and there are consumer co-operatives run by people who use an organisation's services. The co-operative movement has its beginnings in the late 1800s, alongside Friendly Societies and other self-help organisations, and have continued where others have fallen away. The values of co-operatives are self-help, self-responsibility, democracy and equality, equity and solidarity.

Sharing and exchanging

Perhaps one of the most powerful ways of opposing capitalism is to collaborate and share instead of competing and consuming.

A downside of fundraising is that it often makes us competitive - competing against each other for grants and supporters. What can we learn from these more co-operative approaches? Perhaps it might be possible to set up stokvels that involve a set of groups who contribute each month but also invite others to donate too? If we could collaborate and share more we'd have less need to raise funds.

Mutual aid is a powerful way to build skills and resources and to be independent of funders and other institutions. For example, if you want to hold a fundraising event, could you find a venue that would be willing to take profits from the bar in exchange for free use of their space? Could you share your skills with a group in exchange for them sharing their skills with you? Do you have access to a meeting space that you could offer? Or a printer? What can we do to help groups support each other?

3. Help with fundraising

There are many books about fundraising, with many just about how to complete funding applications forms! Organisations like Directory for Social Change (www.dsc.org.uk / 08450 77 77 07), Institute of Fundraising (www.institute-of-fundraising.org.uk / 020 7840 1000) and Know How NonProfit (<http://knowhownonprofit.org>), National Council for Voluntary Organisations (www.ncvo-vol.org.uk / 020 7713 6161), Charities Aid Foundation (www.cafonline.org / 03000 123 000) offer information, training and other resources on fundraising.

Foundation for Social Improvement (www.thefsi.org) and Small Charities Coalition (www.smallcharities.org.uk) are particularly focused on offering training and support to smaller groups.

The National Association for Voluntary and Community Action (NAVCA) is a national network of organisations that offer help to community groups in setting up and running their projects and fundraising. Many of them have expert Funding Advisors who can help you find the right funders and to complete their forms. They may also run training courses. To find your local branch visit their website www.navca.org.uk or call 0114 278 6636.

Further reading and resources

See Edge Fund website:

Help with fundraising (including list of resources and organisations that can help):
<http://edgefund.org.uk/resources/help-with-fundraising>

List of funders:
<http://edgefund.org.uk/resources/other-funders>

Books and articles on fundraising and philanthropy:
<http://edgefund.org.uk/resources/books-and-articles>

4. A final note

Ultimately, if we want to create a society where everyone has the resources and freedom to live a full, happy and healthy life, we need society to change. To start with, society needs to change to one where we all have an equal say in making the decisions that affect us, so we can all determine our own futures. We can't rely on the people and organisations with money to help us, after all, they are unlikely to want to change the very systems that enabled them to accumulate such wealth in the first place. We must therefore work with each other to find and share the resources we need for our work.

This guide is not attempting to provide in-depth information to the many forms of fundraising as there are plenty of resources available for free online and elsewhere (see pages above). We hope it has provided an introduction, provided some useful links and has helped you to think about what might be right for your group.

This is an ever-evolving draft, so please send us some feedback by emailing info@edgefund.org.uk or calling 0300 123 1965. We'd also love to hear about your experiences of fundraising and what's working for you so that we can help share ideas. We're always up for talking about new ways of resourcing ourselves that embody the values we're all working for so please do get in touch!