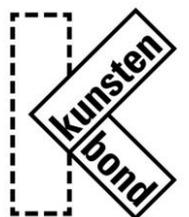


Ready for your first grant application?

The Roadmap for your subsidy application.

2018 version



Have you thought about how to properly prepare your grant application?

Suppose you have a great idea for a project but not enough money to get it going? A subsidy or grant can offer the solution! However, nowadays the demand for subsidy is so great that a sloppy or incomplete grant application will most likely end up on the big pile of rejections. The good news is that there are countless of funds in the Netherland, all with their own criteria for grant applications. We have summed up the basic rules for writing a complete grant application so that you have a better chance of standing out and become eligible for a subsidy.



Step 1. Preparations

Receiving a grant all starts with a good idea. By testing your idea against the opinion of others, you can sharpen and optimize it and you can articulate it more sufficiently. Describe your idea/project in a clear way. View it as a product with a beginning and an ending. You should be able to at least answer the following questions:

- Who am I?
- What is my product?
- What do I want to achieve with it?
- When do I run it?
- How does it differ from other competing projects?
- What is the position of my project in the total range of other projects?

Next up is picking a decent approach. This starts with formulating a unique selling point for your project based on the description you made.

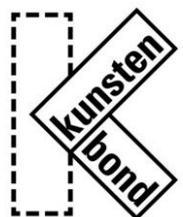
In addition, make a thorough time schedule for the project. This can be done by drawing up a timetable in which you specify all of the logical phases of your project. Describe the main activities per project phase with a schedule of the time you will need for this. You should be able to at least answer the following questions:

- When do I want the project to take place?
- When to rehearse?
- When do I want to have the financing completed?
- Is pre-financing required? If so, how do I arrange that?
- When can I pay the employees and partners?
- How long in advance do I start selling my gigs?
- Is the timetable in line with the application procedures and decision periods of the funds?

Note: Each fund has its own deadlines and decision periods. With some funds you can only submit an application at one time in the year and the decision is made six months later. If you are not prepared for this, it may just happen that the financing of your project will not be finalized until you have already canceled it due to a lack of money.

It is very important that you accurately organize your budget. If your project is still in an early stage, it is usually difficult to get a fully drawn up budget for it. That is why sometimes it is best to make two budgets:

- One minimum budget based on the minimum costs, in which you determine what amount you need to be able to realize the project.
- A desired budget, in which you calculate what amount is needed to do everything as planned.



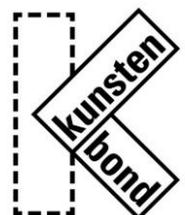
The main rule for all applications is to be realistic. The budget should not be too high, but definitely also not too low. Enter credible amounts and make sure you do not forget any expense items. Also, make sure that the text of your budget is clear, correct and fits well with the financial part. Do not forget to mention your own investments and those of third parties in your coverage. This gives the provider of the subsidy a realistic picture of the size of your project and the involvement of other funds. Make sure you show that you are doing everything you can to arrange the financing of your project as accurate as possible.

Next step is to check which sources for subsidy are available. You can roughly divide the wide range of subsidy sources into the following categories:

- Government funds, which you can subdivide into national, provincial and municipal funds.
- Private funds. A well-known private fund, for example, is the Prins Bernard Cultuurfonds, which houses numerous smaller private funds. We also include banks and private lenders as private funds.
- Funds from copyright and neighboring rights organizations. BUMA, Sena Performers and NORMA, among others, are spent on socio-cultural projects for composers and performing artists. Countless musicians have already benefited from the Sena Performers Music Production Fund.
- Other fund, such as Kiwanis, Rotary and Lions Clubs.

Check what type of subsidy you want to apply for

- A multi-year subsidy for projects that you want to perform with your ensemble, band or orchestra? In this case you can best apply for a Government fund. Prepare yourself for a time-consuming application. You will be assessed on your artistic qualities and your significance for the nation and/ or regional culture, among other things, by the Council for Culture and provincial and municipal assessment committees.
- For a one-time project you can turn to government funds, but also to private funds and local funds from municipalities and provinces.
- You can divide your project into multiple parts and apply for a subsidy from more than one fund. In this case you apply for a subsidy from various funds for each component/cost type. This is a precondition for success because one fund rarely takes care of the total financing of a project. Cost types that are eligible for subsidy are for example: travel costs, publicity costs, costs of a concert in one municipality or region and costs for making a composition for the project or costs for an educational activity.
- For stipends (work and living grants), travel and study grants or the financing of your instrument, you can turn to both national and private funds.



Step 2. Choose and pick

You can now determine which type of subsidy you want to apply for and which type of fund you should approach. This already is a great starting point in the subsidy labyrinth. Before you approach the fund(s) don't forget to check:

- How much subsidy the fund has available.
- If you belong to the funds target group.
- If you fit in with the policy and the region/municipality for which the fund provides subsidy.

Almost all funds have their own website where you can find the answers to the above. After your check up, draw up a top-5 list of funds where you think your application is most promising.

Step 3. Finetuning

Ask the consultant or committee secretary for advice

Almost every fund has a consultant or committee secretary whom you can contact and ask for advice before drawing up a final grant application. Usually they can estimate whether or not it makes sense for you to apply for a subsidy. In addition, they know what requirements, motives and criteria are decisive in the assessment of your grant application, as they generally attend the meetings of these assessment committees. This way, you are not only better prepared but you also avoid submitting an applications to the wrong funds; which saves a lot of time and frustration.

Consider the subsidy criteria as to your own objectives.

It's important to compare the subsidy criteria of your favorite funds to your own objectives to see if they match with the final artistic result you aim to achieve. For this you can repeat the steps from the preparation phase of this roadmap. If it turns out that at this stage you have to completely change your project to find any affiliation with the fund, you will know that the chances of your application getting approved are slim. If necessary, set up a new top-5 list of favorites.

Refine your project description.

Check whether you can bring the description of your project to a higher level based on the advice and information you have obtained from the consultant or committee secretary. Explain your thoughts on the project, to whom it concerns, why you want to carry it out, who



will be carrying it out and where/when it will take place. Keep it concise and clear and always use the standard grant forms from the fund itself for the project description and budget. Make sure that the fund and its decision-makers can find out the core of the project and the required budget within just a few minutes. Based on this description, determine your final unique selling point. Your top-5 list should at this point seamlessly match the criteria of these funds.

Determine the form of organization of this project.

In most cases, you will have to establish a legal entity to be eligible for a subsidy. When describing the form of organization in your application, you indicate what the formal mutual relationships are between institutions, colleagues and partners involved in the project. In other words, who runs the business side of it? Or who has the artistic responsibility? Who takes charge of what? Etc.

Adjust the time schedule.

Check whether the time schedule you made matches the application procedures, submission and decision periods of your top-5 list. Adjust your time schedule if necessary but always keep it realistic.

Make a final budget and coverage plan.

Use your budget as a starting point for your final budget. Funds often have a separate form on which you must fill in your budget. A common requirement is that you receive some sort of a steady income from other sources or invest in your project yourself. Other sources of income are among others:

- Entrance fees
- Fees from the platform involved in the project
- Crowdfunding
- Sponsorship
- Gift and merchandising
- Other funds

Make sure you name these sources in your coverage plan so that the fund and decision-maker have insight into how you want to cover the costs. Make sure that this amount is an amount that the fund can actually cover. Should you ask for an amount that is too high, your application will most likely get rejected right away.



Step 4. Submit your application

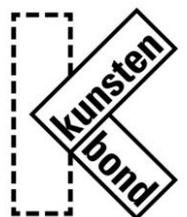
After you have thoroughly gone through step 3 of this roadmap you are ready to submit your application. It usually takes about 3 to 5 months after you have submitted the application before the fund committees give you a definitive commitment or rejection.

Step 5. Report to the one that provides the subsidy

Once the subsidy has been awarded, you must report to the fund periodically. Avoid financial predicaments and inform the fund immediately if important changes occur during the project. It is not wise to transfer money from one post to another without prior authorization of the fund. Make sure you communicate this. Funds often work with advances; you will never receive the whole amount of the grant at once. Therefore, keep in mind that you won't be able to pay the bills and/or submitted invoices in one go. If the final settlement of your project is approved, you will receive the rest of the subsidy amount. In any case, make sure that you are sufficiently "liquid" during production so that you are able to cover all urgent payments.

Step 6. Write a statement

You will always have to give a financial and artistic justification for your project afterwards. Keep in mind that the fund may request an auditor's report. And remember, no matter what, keep all your receipts!



For more information on writing a grant application and a brief overview of the culture funds, visit www.beroepkunstenaar.nl

As a member of de Kunstenbond we offer you a consultation for a fair price, to help you on your way with advice on your financial options. Appointments can be made by calling 020-2108050, available from Monday to Friday between 10:00 – 13:00, or via email info@kunstenbond.nl

