

## Charity Search's Guide to Applying to Charities

**A.** Charities often change their eligibility criteria, so please make sure that the charity can accept an application directly from you. Some charities require a third party professional to apply on your behalf, which could be someone like a social worker, social services, Citizens Advice Bureaux (CAB), occupational therapist, physiotherapist, mental health nurse, nurse, or a similar welfare professional. We only give the details of those specific charities to your elected third party and you must get their permission to agree to make applications for you before you give us their contact details.

**B.** Every charity has very specific criteria and application forms vary; some are very simple asking for basic information whilst others are very detailed and ask for a great amount. If you are not confident about filling in forms, it would be a good idea to ask someone you trust to help you complete them.

**C.** Charities that may consider helping you often need to ask you a lot of questions. This information they require from you is confidential, so your permission will be requested if they need to share it with other agencies or charities that may be interested in helping you. Once again, it varies from charity to charity.

**D. Disability Equipment-** If you are looking to fund a wheelchair, scooter, or similar equipment, the charities might want to see a copy of an assessment which has been carried out by an occupational therapist. This is because they need to know the equipment is safe, and suitable, for you to use.

**E. *Never*** pay for anything up front. This cannot be stressed too much, even if you have only paid a deposit. Charities will take the view that once you have paid, even if you have had to borrow the money, you are able to afford it. They will not be able to re-reimburse you, or pay the remaining costs.

### Completing Application Forms

**F.** It is always a good idea to use ***black ink*** when completing forms as this produces clearer photocopies. If you can, take copies of any applications that you make, and the date you posted them. It can also be helpful to enclose a stamped address envelope. (Some charities will ask for this on application)

**G.** Let the charity know if you have any health problems or disabilities, and, if you are approaching a health related charity, it is important to enclose a letter of recommendation from your doctor or third party health professional such as physiotherapist, occupational therapist or mental health nurse or similar, supporting your request for help.

**H.** Fill in everything they ask you to, as leaving sections out might cause a delay in the application process. Don't forget to enclose any documentation that they ask for; some charities may ask for copies of documents showing the benefits or pensions you receive.

**I.** When completing the section on how much the item or service will cost, always send *at least one* written quotation and remember that unless you are applying for ongoing help, the charity may want to make their grant payable directly to the supplier. You ought not to be charged for obtaining a quote; this service should always be free.

**J.** If it is a large amount you are looking for remember to ask for 'any amount towards the total'. It is also important to let each charity know of any other charities you may be applying to and any funds you have already been granted. If you have already been awarded a grant towards your particular need, this could be helpful with other applications, since many charities are more likely to make a grant toward an item if other charities have already considered that your need is valid.

**K.** Give the charity a clear picture of your circumstances and need; this is very important as it will help them to decide whether they wish to support you.

**L.** It may seem obvious but please make sure that you let the charity know your name, date of birth and your marital status.

**M.** If the charity is linked to a former or current occupation let them know the way you are linked to them by informing them of the type of work you did and length of time you worked in that occupation.

Example: If you worked in a newsagents for a while, then you need to say; Sales Assistant, Newspapers and Confectionary, 6 years.

**N.** The charities may ask you for an outline of your weekly income and expenditure, the budget form you completed in our questionnaire will prove helpful for this. If they ask you for your weekly expenses, they do mean weekly and not monthly.

**O.** Don't forget to sign and date their forms.

**P. PLEASE** keep in mind that charities are there to help those people struggling to overcome an urgent need, such as assistance to pay for a financial necessity, or for something that will improve their well-being. This is not to deter you from asking for things that would improve your quality of life, or for something that would make a great difference to you and your loved ones. All charities have their different priorities, and they will only assist those that fit their charitable aims. With this in mind please be very specific about your most urgent need, this may make a difference to your chances of finding the help you require.