



# REACH

Information for Black and minority ethnic  
voluntary and community organisations

Cover photo: A group of young people from the Windsor Fellowship visiting Cambridge University, July 2008.

Communities and Local Government  
Eland House  
Bressenden Place  
London  
SW1E 5DU  
Telephone: 020 7944 4400  
Website: [www.communities.gov.uk](http://www.communities.gov.uk)

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# About this guide

If you are a small or new organisation, this guide aims to tell you about the different ways of working with other organisations, where you can go for advice, and how you can improve the way you work.

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At the back of this guide, and the end of each section, there are details of where you can get more help and information.

This guide aims to give you information about working with other organisations to help you provide your services and apply for funding.

## **The guide includes the following sections:**

### **Strategies for working together**

#### **Forming a consortium**

#### **The value of networks**

#### **Information about funding**

#### **The different types of funding application form**

#### **Writing a constitution**

#### **Where else to go for help and advice**

As a voluntary or community organisation, you will have a clear understanding of local people's needs and concerns, and how best to provide services to meet those needs. You may want to diversify into other service areas, expand your range of services or improve how you deliver your services. But as a small organisation, you may find it difficult to apply for funding and keep your organisation going so you can deliver your services.

## Background

Black boys and young Black men face serious challenges in every sector of society. They are less likely to do well at school, more likely to be unemployed, and much more likely to become involved in crime.

## The REACH report

The **REACH** report was produced by the **REACH** group, an independent group which has direct experience of working with young Black people. In the report, the group made five recommendations to improve the futures of Black boys and young Black men by raising their hopes, ambitions and achievements.

## Where to find out more on the REACH report

You can see the report and its five recommendations at [www.communities.gov.uk/publications/communities/reachreport](http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/communities/reachreport).

## The recommendation for voluntary and community organisations

The **REACH** group felt that many of the organisations leading the way in tackling underachievement among Black boys and young Black men are small and face significant barriers. For example, many smaller organisations are still not recognised by important organisations such as local authorities and schools.

Despite this, many small organisations are producing spectacular results that contradict the national trends. This success is due mainly to the fact that these smaller organisations have strong roots in the African and Afro-Caribbean community and are best placed to gain the trust of the boys and young men while providing the services they need.

So the **REACH** group recommended that voluntary and community organisations working to support Black boys and young Black men should form consortia, supported by the Government, to raise money, bid for government grants, make their views known, and share good practice and resources.

# Case study: brap R20 programme evaluation

In 2007, Advantage West Midland appointed brap, an organisation whose mission is 'To help people, communities and the organisations that serve them to turn equality into a reality', to manage a new £1million project. The project, called the R20 programme, aimed to help Black and minority ethnic organisations become better equipped to provide services to the public sector. The programme does this by providing a range of different support packages including training, coaching, mentoring, business support and advice.

The evaluation of the R20 programme, published in April 2009, looked at whether the support needed by Black and minority ethnic organisations is different from that needed by other voluntary and community organisations.

## After the evaluation, brap came to the following conclusions:

- While Black and minority ethnic organisations have many of the same needs as other voluntary and community organisations, they also have their own particular pressures and needs.
- Many Black and minority ethnic organisations felt 'disconnected' from the rest of the voluntary sector and were not part of the existing structures for working together.
- Larger organisations that supported the voluntary sector could not provide any information about the number of Black and minority ethnic members they had.
- Black and minority ethnic organisations suffer from falling availability of grants and are more at risk of government funding targeted at specific communities ending.
- There is clear evidence that commissioners (people who offer contracts for providing public services) often showed a limited understanding of the wide-ranging needs of their local communities.
- The Black and minority ethnic sector also includes organisations that support 'chronically excluded' people such as refugees and migrant workers (workers from abroad).

## Challenges ahead

Many Black and minority ethnic organisations face two main challenges.

- Changing from being seen as representatives of their communities to being seen as an organisation that delivers services beyond their own communities.
- Competing with larger voluntary organisation to get funding.

## Where to find out more

There is more information on brap's work, including the report on the evaluation of the R20 Programme, on the website at [www.brap.org.uk](http://www.brap.org.uk).

# Strategies for working together

When people and government work together they can make life better through 'empowering' communities. When communities are empowered, more people can influence decisions about their communities, and more people can take responsibility for tackling local problems, rather than expecting others to.

Government cannot solve everything by itself, and neither can the community. It's better when we work together.

People who offer contracts for providing public services (commissioners) are often looking to increase efficiency and provide value for money. So many contracts will be given to large organisations that cover a broad geographical area.

You may identify a contract opportunity that interests you but which you know you cannot deliver because of the size or scale of activity involved. Entering into a partnership with another organisation might be the most appropriate way to help you meet the requirements of the contract.

At other times, voluntary organisations themselves may need to convince commissioners of the benefits that joint working can bring to a service.

Before deciding to work with other organisations you will need to consider the advantages and disadvantages of working with others outside your own organisation, and the different strategies for working this way. For example, there may be conflict due to different working practices or views.

You may need help to identify the best strategy for you and to gather the evidence you need to allow the strategy you choose to be successful.

In many of the ways of working together, one organisation may need to take the lead and manage matters, including the finances.

In March 2009, the Office of the Third Sector published a short guide that set out some strategies for working together. These strategies include:

**scaling up**

**sheltering**

**merging**

**subcontracting.**

## Scaling up

### What it means

Scaling up means developing a strategy to become a large-scale regional or national organisation that can compete with the current large-scale organisations.

### How it works

To achieve this scaling-up quickly your organisation may need to take over other voluntary organisations working in related markets. However, scaling up too quickly might not help you get contracts. Those assessing bids will look for steady, managed growth in an organisation's accounts.

Scaling up too quickly might also be considered to be the same as merging (see below). For scaling up to help you gain contracts you will need to show that you have the management systems and staff in place to effectively manage your organisations growth with the minimum risk to the contract and your future.

## Sheltering

### What it means

A smaller voluntary organisation becomes sheltered (protected) by a larger 'umbrella' organisation.

### How it works

There are examples of this arrangement in the private sector and there is a range of formal arrangements for the sheltered organisation to become a wholly-owned subsidiary of the larger or 'parent' organisation (that is, an organisation that is owned totally by the parent organisation).

A main advantage of this type of arrangement is that the umbrella organisation can act as a 'guarantor' and accept responsibility for any financial risks. If the umbrella company is considered to be financially secure, this type of arrangement could benefit a small organisation which cannot provide evidence that there would be a low level of financial risk.

A further advantage is that although the 'sheltered' organisation is answerable to the umbrella body in terms of business, it keeps its culture, ethos and method of working.

You could avoid difficulties that could arise with the sheltering arrangement by making sure that all organisations in the arrangement are treated equally, taking account of each other's expertise. There needs to be a clear understanding about each other's financial resources and responsibilities for guiding the projects.



## Merging

### What it means

Similar to 'sheltering', smaller voluntary organisations could merge with related organisations to have the size or reach needed to be able compete for funding with larger organisations.

### How it works

Merging can take one of two forms.

First, one organisation could be 'absorbed' by another. In this situation, the person considering your bid for a contract is likely to ask why this was necessary. Was there a financial weakness which has been addressed? If so, how have any earlier problems been solved?

Another option is that two organisations which offer services that complement each other could come together.

After a merger it can take a year or more to be successful in getting contracts. This is because an organisation assessing your bid will want to see that new policies and procedures have been firmly established throughout the new organisation. They will also look carefully at, and score the financial accounts of, both organisations. The scores will probably not be high enough until the merged organisation has been able to provide its own audited accounts for at least two years.

## Subcontracting

### What it means

You could act as a subcontractor to provide your services on behalf of another organisation that bids for a contract.

### How it works

The organisation subcontracting work to you may be large, medium or even small in terms of their annual turnover. They may come from the voluntary sector or the private sector. If the organisation bidding for a contract has a gap in its range of services, it is unlikely to get the contract. In these circumstances, the organisation will look around for an organisation that could provide those services for them.

Some organisations are wary of being a subcontractor for another organisation because they believe that the other organisation (the main contractor) will 'cream off' all the money. However, the main contractor needs the subcontractor in order to win the contract. This puts the subcontractor in a strong position. So subcontractors can negotiate the price they charge and have this set out in a contract with the main contractor. And it is the main contractor which has to deal with any problems in the process of bidding for contracts.

# Forming a consortium

Voluntary organisations could agree to work together and form a consortium to bid for contracts to provide public services.

## What is a consortium?

A consortium is an association of two or more people, companies, organisations or governments (or any combination of these) with the objective of taking part in a common activity or pooling their resources to achieve a common goal.

A consortium is not always appropriate for organisations that want to bid for public-sector contracts. Having a range of working arrangements is a much safer approach than sticking to a single arrangement.

Working as part of one consortium does not stop you from offering your services direct or as part of another consortium.

Working together in a consortium can give your organisation new opportunities to get contracts which would otherwise not be available to you.

## How a consortium can help your organisation

Working in a consortium can help you to:

- extend your current activities to include new ones for different types of client;
- provide your services in another geographical area;
- bid for a contract which involves an activity you cannot do;
- make sure your organisation continues to provide services to your particular client group; and
- use your resources more efficiently.

## How to form a consortium

Before you take any steps to form a consortium to bid for a grant or public-service contract, or to work closely with others, you need to make sure you have clear answers to some important questions about your own organisation.

- What are your vision and values?
- What is your aim? What drives you or motivates you?
- Why do you want to extend your work, and what do you want to achieve?

- How will you measure your success? Do you have targets? For example, have you set yourself targets for the following:
  - Having more clients take up your services.
  - Reaching a new group of clients such as disabled people or people with mental-health difficulties.
  - Providing services beyond your immediate neighbourhood.
  - Getting recognition from the public sector.

Answering these basic questions will help you decide whether or not to get involved in a consortium, and how it will help your organisation achieve its goals.

## **Main points to consider before forming a consortium**

Below are some main points for you to consider when developing a consortium.

- Be clear about why you are considering it.
- Be realistic about the risks, challenges and costs involved. It takes time, effort and resources to get a consortium up and running. And one organisation may need to take the lead in driving the process forward.
- The different systems and cultures of organisations can be a barrier to them working together as a successful consortium. Spend time understanding the other organisations' practices.
- Agree roles and responsibilities early on in the process and develop ways to review these roles and responsibilities as the consortium develops.
- Create agreements which clearly set out decision-making processes for the organisations involved. In particular, agree who can decide what and when, as well as defining how decisions will be communicated.
- Agree how the consortium's finances will be managed. The largest or most established organisation may be best to take on this role.
- Do a credit check on all of the organisations that would join the consortium to make sure that their business and financial arrangements are sound.
- Get specialist legal advice on the structure of the consortium to make sure that it is suitable for its intended purpose and there is no risk of breaking any relevant law.
- Be clear about what you will do if you do not win the contract and how this will affect your future working arrangements.

# Case study: MENTER

MENTER is a regional network for Black and minority ethnic voluntary organisations and communities. Their aim is to:

- develop priority sectors such as health, education, employment, training, arts and culture, leisure and sport;
- promote race equality and representation for Black and minority ethnic communities; and
- build a strong regional network of Black and minority ethnic organisations.

It is run by a voluntary management board of 20 trustees from member groups plus advisors from race equality councils, Government Office East, COVER (the general voluntary sector regional network) and Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum. They are funded by the Active Community Directorate of the Home Office, Government Office East and East of England Development Agency.

## Some of their achievements

- They have a database of 350 Black and minority ethnic organisations.
- They have set up a regional race equality network.
- They hold regional events on tackling race discrimination and harassment.
- They hold regional events on strengthening communities.
- They work in partnership with others on projects that aim to improve communities and promote 'social inclusion', where no member of society is excluded.
- They have developed a starter pack for new groups and fact sheets on topics such as employment and finance.
- They have links with the Community Fund and the Heritage Lottery to improve Black and minority ethnic organisations' access to lottery funding.
- They have links with the Eastern Region of Sports England to improve Black and minority ethnic access to sporting opportunities and funds for these.
- They play an established role in helping Black and minority ethnic organisations apply for the Community Champions fund.

## Where to find out more

You can get more information off the website at [www.mentor.org.uk/index.html](http://www.mentor.org.uk/index.html).

## Different models for working as a consortium

The Office of the Third Sector has identified three main models for working as a consortium.

**Steering group** – With this approach the consortium members enter into an agreement to work together. The agreement sets out the consortium's legal rights and obligations but does not create a new, independent body (however, the organisation granting a contract may want the consortium to form an entity such as a company, Community Interest Company (CIC) or co-operative). The consortium is led by a steering group made up of one or more of the consortium members. One member will take the role of lead contractor for tendering and contracting purposes.

**Lead contractor** – This is where one organisation in the consortium is identified as being willing and able to carry out the role. The role of the lead contractor involves:

- taking responsibility for the tendering process
- managing the consortium
- accepting responsibility and liability for the contract delivery
- entering into contracts with the consortium member organisations.

The consortium adopts and signs up to a general agreement. There are then separate, detailed subcontracts with each consortium member. Those subcontracts set out the terms, benefits and contribution to the contract.

**Prime contractor** – In this case, organisations bid to manage a contract or range of services on behalf of a government department, primary care trust (PCT) or local authority.

The role of the prime contractor is to manage the supply chain of several layers of subcontractors.

Each organisation enters into a contract with the next link in the supply chain, and finally with the prime contractor. The prime contractor's role could be performed by a financial or corporate institution, which manages the supply chain and makes sure that all the services specified in the prime contract are effectively delivered by the various subcontractors.

The prime contractor does not usually deliver the service itself.

## Legal considerations when forming a consortium

One of the most common pitfalls is the purpose, structure and management arrangements for the consortium not being clear enough.

If your consortium wins a contract, you will be entering into contractual arrangements with the other members of the consortium and the organisation that has given you the contract. All the contractual terms can be enforced in the courts and financial liabilities may arise. Even if you meet the terms of the contract, you may still be liable because of the failure of one of the other members of the consortium.

When forming a consortium you should consider laws on competition. The Competition Act 1998 sets out what public authorities cannot do. In brief, they cannot do anything which in any way prevents competition.

Breaking this law could have serious implications for organisations, particularly for members of their governing bodies, such as trustees.

So you should get specialist legal advice, in the earliest stages of forming a consortium, on drafting the legal documents and making sure the way the consortium is formed, and the way any services would be delivered, does not break competition law.

## Where to find out more about working in a consortium

### **BASSAC** (British Association of Settlements and Social Action Centres)

BASSAC members support local people to take joint action and make changes to their community. Their website at [www.bassac.org.uk](http://www.bassac.org.uk) has a section on different types of joint working and how to achieve it.

### **Office of the Third Sector**

The OTS website has a lot of useful information about working in the voluntary sector, including guidance on funding. The website address is [www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/third\\_sector/public\\_services/public\\_service\\_delivery.aspx](http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/third_sector/public_services/public_service_delivery.aspx).

The OTS guide 'Working in a consortium – Summary Guide' also includes some helpful information about different models of consortiums and what you need to know before you start.

The full text for the Working in a Consortium guide is also available on the website at [www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/third\\_sector/public\\_services/public\\_service\\_delivery.aspx](http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/third_sector/public_services/public_service_delivery.aspx)

### **The National Council for Voluntary Organisations**

The website has a range of useful material on working with other organisations. It has also published guidance on developing agreements between voluntary or community organisations. You can download the guidance from the website at [www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/jointworkingagreements](http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/jointworkingagreements) or you can get a hard copy by phoning **020 7520 2440**.

## The benefits of working in a consortium

Some of the benefits of working with other voluntary and community organisations in a consortium are as follows.

- It can improve outcomes for all organisations within the consortium– with more effective management of the service.
- There are lower overheads.
- Smaller voluntary organisations can provide services on a larger scale than they could on their own.
- There is a bigger ‘pool’ of knowledge.
- The different specialist activities of different organisations could help a service to run smoothly across different areas.
- Organisations can share the risk of providing a service to the public sector.
- Organisations are better placed to negotiate in response to poor funding practice from a particular public body, and to shape future policy.
- There is more trust when organisations have a common culture which is focused on the need for and quality of a service, rather than being focused on making a profit.
- Your organisation’s own areas of expertise, and those of the other members of the consortium, are valued and respected.

# The value of networks

The purpose of networks is to link people in local organisations who have a similar role or interest. Networks can be run on websites, by email or through meetings.

You can use a network to:

- exchange ideas, solutions and information
- provide help and support
- share the joys and pitfalls of your work
- share what works and what does not
- ask questions about the work of local organisations, and
- contribute to national policy affecting local organisations.

## Case study: MiNet (Minority Network)

MiNet is a **London-wide regional Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) network** working to strengthen the voice of London's BAME voluntary sector.

MiNet is funded to 'Promote and support the effective engagement, contribution and influence of the voluntary and community sector as partners in regional policy development and implementation for the benefit of diverse communities across London'. Their funding and services are monitored by the Government Office for London, which is also one of their strategic partners in the region and a link between them and government departments and agencies.

Working in partnership underpins MiNet's agenda. It is for this reason that the network regularly works with both members and non-members to meet its objectives.

### Where to find out more about MiNet

You can get more information on MiNet's membership, reports and activities from the website at **[www.rota.org.uk/pages/MiNet.aspx](http://www.rota.org.uk/pages/MiNet.aspx)**.



## Where to find out more on networking

The National Association for Voluntary and Community Action website has a section devoted to networks, including information on what they can do, and common questions on networking. The website address is [www.navca.org.uk/services/networking/](http://www.navca.org.uk/services/networking/)

## Where to find out about other networks

**BECON** – The North East network for the Black voluntary and community sector – has information on its website at [www.becon.org.uk/index.cfm](http://www.becon.org.uk/index.cfm).

**Black South West Network** – provides access to information on policy and funding programmes, supported by an online service. You can get more information off the website at [www.bswn.org.uk/](http://www.bswn.org.uk/).

**One North West** – the regional network for the Black and ethnic-minority voluntary and community sector in the North West of England. They provide a voice for the Black and minority ethnic voluntary and community organisations and influence regional policies. They have a membership of over 300 organisations that are either Black and minority ethnic-led, support Black and minority ethnic Voluntary and Community Sector or are organisations that provide services to those communities. There is more information on the website at [www.onenorthwest.org.uk/control.php](http://www.onenorthwest.org.uk/control.php).

**Uni Network** – Uni Network's role is to represent the interests of the Black and minority ethnic voluntary and community organisations in 19 local areas across South East England. There is more information on the website at [www.theuninetwork.org.uk](http://www.theuninetwork.org.uk).

**West Midlands Race Equality Advisory Board** – their vision is to have 'a region which proactively responds to the challenges of race inequality and empowers the Black and minority ethnic third sector and communities. There is more information on the website at [www.wmreab.org.uk](http://www.wmreab.org.uk).

**Yorkshire and The Humber BME Information Service** – promotes effective community and voluntary sector networks. There is more information on the website at [www.bme.org.uk](http://www.bme.org.uk).

# Information about funding

## Different types of funding

You need to find out more about the different types of funding available, and consider which is the right way of funding your organisation.

There are various different types of funding including:

- grants
- money made through fundraising activities
- income from some form of trading activity, and
- payments for contracts to deliver services.

## What the funding organisations look for in an organisation

In order to be able to approach a funding organisation, your organisation needs to have a formal constitution (a set of rules that govern it) and a bank account.

You need to think about whether your organisation's constitution is suitable for your needs. (See page 23 for more information on constitutions for small organisations.)

The clearer you are about what you want to achieve (your aims) and how you are going to achieve them, the easier it will be to identify how much funding you need.

This may involve thinking about whether:

- registering as a **charity**
- setting up as a **company**, or
- being a relatively **informal association**.

will best meet your needs and the needs of the group you are trying to help.

## Where to find out more on funding

The **FunderFinder website** at [www.funderfinder.org.uk/advice\\_pack.php](http://www.funderfinder.org.uk/advice_pack.php) gives advice to voluntary and community organisations looking for funding.

The **South Yorkshire Funding Advice Bureau** has a range of information sheets on fundraising aimed at small groups, including information on different sources of funding. Their website is at [www.syfab.org.uk/infosht.php](http://www.syfab.org.uk/infosht.php).

The Big Lottery Fund website at [www.lotteryfunding.org.uk](http://www.lotteryfunding.org.uk) has a great deal of information on lottery-funded projects, including a section on how to apply for grants and the most common questions about lottery funding.

The site also has useful document called 'Explaining the difference your project makes'. Find the document at [www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/er\\_eval\\_explaining\\_the\\_difference\\_large.pdf](http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/er_eval_explaining_the_difference_large.pdf).

If you don't have access to the internet, you can call the Big Lottery Fund on **0845 275 0000**.

## Finance Hub website

The Finance Hub website at [www.financehub.org.uk/funding\\_fundamentals/default.aspx](http://www.financehub.org.uk/funding_fundamentals/default.aspx) has lots of useful information, including sections on managing relationships with funders and writing a funding application.

The Funding Central website at [www.fundingcentral.org.uk](http://www.fundingcentral.org.uk) is a free resource for the whole voluntary and community sector, providing access to thousands of funding and finance opportunities plus a wealth of tools and resources to help organisations develop ways of earning an income.

# The different types of funding application form

Application forms vary a great deal. Some are quite short, others are long and more complicated. The type of application form you fill in will often depend on how much money you are hoping to get.

Some of the smaller funding organisations have short and simple application forms, some only ask for a letter. The larger grant-makers, including some of the National Lottery programmes, have extremely detailed application forms.

All the funding organisations, whatever their size, have a limited amount of time and resources for their decision-making process. And most receive far more applications than they can fund.

The funding organisations have to be able to assess the applications that best meet their criteria and are most likely to make good use of their funds. They can only make these decisions based on the information you provide.

It is important that your application:

- is clear, concise and easy to read
- is credible and convincing, and
- gives all the information needed to make a decision.

## Put yourself in the funding organisation's shoes

Think about your application from the funding organisation's point of view.

Even if your organisation is well-known and established, always assume that the funder does not know about the work you do or the people you are hoping to help.

But also remember that funding organisations read lots of applications, so they will probably have a very good working knowledge of current needs and trends, and the typical costs of a project. They will be able to spot information that is inaccurate.

## Allow plenty of time

Check when the funding organisation's deadline is and allow yourself plenty of time to meet it.

Even if it is relatively easy to make a simple application for a small grant, you might still need to check some details before you can finish it.

It may take a long time to make a more complicated application for a larger amount of money. It is important to check whether your organisation has applied to the funding organisation before or had funding from them in the past. If you have had contact with them, mention that in your application.

Some funders will ask for a reference from an independent professional who knows your organisation's work and is willing to support your application. So it is a good idea to have such references on file.

## Top tips for filling in the application form

- Allow plenty of time to develop your application to meet the deadline.
- Read the funding organisation's criteria very carefully.
- Gather all the information you will need before you start filling in the application form.
- Put yourself in the funding organisation's position. Do you think you would be able to make a funding decision based on your application?
- Write the application in plain English and do not assume that the funding organisation will know what you mean.
- Avoid jargon and spell out acronyms.
- Keep it clear and concise.
- If the funding organisation says that you do not need to provide extra information with the application, don't be tempted to include information that you think might interest them.
- Get someone to read your first draft and ask them the following questions.
  - Does the application make sense?
  - Does the application do the job and persuade the reader that you should get the funding?
  - What is missing?
- If you have included details of someone else involved in the application, make sure they're up to date with the project.
- Don't start your project until you have received confirmation that you have been awarded a grant. Most funding organisations will not pay for a project that has already happened.

## Where to find out more on applying for funding

There are several organisations that offer free help and advice on filling in funding application forms.

The Apply Yourself section on the funderfinder website at **[www.funderfinder.org.uk/applyyou.php](http://www.funderfinder.org.uk/applyyou.php)** can help you write effective funding applications. You can use it to draft a letter or a proposal. As you write, click on buttons and text to get advice about what you should include in your application and what funding organisations will expect to see.

You can:

- look up the definitions of jargon
- use the examples for ideas
- print out the questionnaire to help you assess your application, and
- use the checklists to make sure you haven't overlooked something.

**The Finance Hub** site at **[www.financehub.org.uk/funding\\_fundamentals/writingafundingapplication/default.aspx](http://www.financehub.org.uk/funding_fundamentals/writingafundingapplication/default.aspx)** also has a section devoted to filling in their application form.

**Futurebuilders** offers the 'consortia fund', which is a combination of loans and professional support for consortiums aiming to work together to win public service contracts. You can get more information off the website at **[www.futurebuilders-england.org.uk/what-we-offer/consortia-fund/consortia--fund/](http://www.futurebuilders-england.org.uk/what-we-offer/consortia-fund/consortia--fund/)**

# Writing a constitution

Funding organisations often look for good management and administration systems when they assess your application. A good way of showing that your organisation has good management is to have an agreed constitution.

A straightforward constitution, written in plain English, has been designed by the Association for Research in the Voluntary and Community Sector to meet the needs of small groups looking to formally establish themselves. A small group needs to have an income of less than £5,000 a year (which is below the amount needed to be registered as a charity). You can find the constitution at **[www.governancepages.org.uk/faq/Constitution\\_for\\_small\\_groups\\_-\\_Dec07.swf](http://www.governancepages.org.uk/faq/Constitution_for_small_groups_-_Dec07.swf)**.

## Why it is important to have 'good governance'

Governance means the way your organisation is set up and run. It is partly about the procedures, policies, documents and management arrangements you have in place for the way you run your organisation, including its finances and doing what it has been set up to achieve.

Good governance is also about your organisation's relationships with other 'stakeholders' and your organisation's aims and objectives. The main stakeholders will include trustees, people and groups who use your services, directors and employees. Other stakeholders include professional services, banks, regulators and the community at large.

Most funding organisations have got limited funds. This means they must make sure their money is going to organisations that can effectively provide projects for those most in need, and that the funding genuinely benefits the community.

Funding organisations will only make awards to organisations which can show that they have good governance in place to hold the funds 'on trust' while they deliver the project.

## Where to find out more on good governance

The Association for Research in the Voluntary and Community Sector website at **[www.governancepages.org.uk/faq/Constitution\\_for\\_small\\_groups\\_-\\_Dec07.swf](http://www.governancepages.org.uk/faq/Constitution_for_small_groups_-_Dec07.swf)** has a range of pages on good governance, including the new plain-language constitution for small groups.

The Big Lottery Fund website has a good governance guide at **[www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/good\\_governance\\_guide2.pdf](http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/good_governance_guide2.pdf)**.

# Where else to go for help and advice

## Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE) and Rural Community Action Network

[www.acre.org.uk](http://www.acre.org.uk)

### Address

Somerford Court  
Somerford Road  
 Cirencester  
 Gloucestershire  
 GL7 1TW

01285 653477

### Regional Structure:

East Midlands  
West Midlands  
East of England  
South East  
South West

Yorkshire & Humber  
North East  
North West

## Black Training and Enterprise Group (BTEG)

[www.bteg.co.uk](http://www.bteg.co.uk)

### Address

2nd Floor, Lancaster House  
31-33 Islington High Street  
London  
N1 9LH

020 7843 6110

### Regional Structure:

National

## Capacitybuilders

[www.capacitybuilders.org.uk](http://www.capacitybuilders.org.uk)

### Address

77 Paradise Circus  
Birmingham  
B1 2DT

0121 237 5100

### Regional Structure:

East of England  
East Midlands  
London  
North East  
North West

South East  
South West  
West Midlands  
Yorkshire & Humber



## Council of Ethnic Minority Voluntary Sector Organisations (CEMVO)

[www.cemvo.org.uk](http://www.cemvo.org.uk)

### Address

Boardman House  
64 Broadway Stratford  
London  
E15 1NG  
020 8432 0200

### Regional Structure:

London  
South West  
North West  
South East  
Scotland  
Wales

## Centre for Voluntary Service (CVS)

[www.navca.org.uk/liodir](http://www.navca.org.uk/liodir)

### Regional Structure:

Local and regional offices

## Future Builders

[www.futurebuilders-england.org.uk](http://www.futurebuilders-england.org.uk)

### Address

5th Floor  
6 St Andrew Street  
London  
EC4A 3AE  
  
Level 14  
Cale Cross House  
156 Pilgrim Street  
Newcastle-upon-Tyne  
NE1 6SU  
  
0191 261 5200

### Regional Structure:

National

## **The National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO)**

[www.ncvo-vol.org.uk](http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk)

### **Address**

Regent's Wharf  
8 All Saints Street  
London  
N1 9RL

020 7713 6161

### **Regional Structure:**

National

## **National Association for Voluntary and Community Action (NAVCA)**

[www.navca.org.uk](http://www.navca.org.uk)

### **Address**

The Tower  
2 Furnival Square  
Sheffield  
S1 4QL

0114 278 6636

### **Regional Structure:**

National

## **KnowHow NonProfit**

[www.knowhownonprofit.org](http://www.knowhownonprofit.org)

### **Address**

Online only



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