

Support from Banks and Building Societies



Who Are They?

Banks and building societies have a tradition of helping the voluntary sector. Some of them set up foundations using some of the funds gained from when they demutualised. (eg: Lloyds TSB Foundation)



Who Can Apply?

This varies according to the financial institution. There is a genuine wish by most banks to contribute to charitable and community activity on an international, national or local basis. With some financial institutions this is very organised and structured, sometimes with foundations independently set up disbursing a proportion of their profits through formal and accountable application procedures. The larger of these trusts will be covered in the section on funding from Trusts and Foundations.



What Do They Fund?

Most financial institutions have published donation policies. You will need to consult their guidelines to see whether they can help you.



How Do You Apply?

You will need to do some form filling. The amount will vary according to the financial institution.



How Much?

The amount you can apply for will be set out clearly in the guidelines.



Pros:

- Clear procedures
- Help usually available
- Staff support may be available



Cons:

- Complicated form filling and financial plans may be necessary
- Financial procedures and accounting will probably need to be followed

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➔ Further Information:

• Why do banks give to voluntary and community organisations?

Giving is just part of what they now term 'Corporate Responsibility'. This also covers their impact on the environment and on the communities where they operate, their terms and conditions for suppliers and the working conditions for their workers.

• They give for a variety of reasons:

- Philanthropy
- To generate goodwill in the communities where they have a presence
- To develop a particular image for the company – association with helping schools or hospitals, funding sport and activity, sponsoring opera or theatre
- Conscience – banks often support debt advice services
- To support their staff and develop their relationship with them – time off for charity activity, encouraging their collections for charity
- To take advantage of tax concessions – payroll giving, matching employee donations

Most financial institutions are becoming pro-active in their support for good causes – setting their priorities well in advance and pro-actively choosing the causes they will support, rather than simply responding to requests.

• How do banks give?

As you see banks do not just give money, they give support in a variety of other ways. They also support their employees and their community interests.

- Apart from organised funding, financial institutions may offer help such as:
 - Donations
 - Regular giving from staff salary
 - Support for volunteers – community clean up events, painting the village hall
 - Staff involvement – paid time for staff to give to voluntary work/projects
 - Secondment of skilled staff offering skills and company expertise
 - Sponsorship of local events

• Why banks may not give?

Company image is very important. Financial institutions do not like to court controversy. They like to be associated with causes that are simple to understand and universally popular. Sport for children is more likely to be supported than drug rehabilitation. They will probably avoid giving to animal rights organisations or for political ends. It is worth considering where you fit in the popularity stakes before you start. Unpopular causes may be better placed when applying to trusts and foundations.