

Potential sources of support for devising business plans and developing strategy

The Cranfield Trust

The Cranfield Trust offers free consultancy projects to voluntary organisations; these consultancies go beyond strategy and business planning and a full list is on their website <http://www.cranfieldtrust.org.uk> or phone 01794 830338. Typical projects give five to ten days of volunteer input over four or five months. The charities which are supported will need to be involved in 'the prevention or relief of human suffering', broadly interpreted.

The volunteers are all experienced managers from the commercial sector. They usually hold an MBA or other professional qualification. The Trust takes a considerable amount of care in matching projects and volunteers.

The Worshipful Company of Management Consultants

The Company provides consultancy assistance (10 to 12 days) to voluntary organisations which meet the criteria of being a registered charity, based in the City or Greater London, unable to afford commercial assistance, with a minimum annual revenue of £250K up to a maximum of around £7m. Consultants offer support with:

- product development
- business planning
- board and senior staff development
- performance improvement
- management development

For further information see <http://www.comc.org.uk/> and follow the link to 'Consulting – pro bono work for charities' or contact Claire Dyer, Clerk, The Worshipful Company of Management Consultants on clerk@WCoMC.org.uk or 0118 926 8775.

CAF (Charities Aid Foundation) Grant making programme: Consultancy Fund

This Fund supports medium-sized charities by providing fully funded, or low cost, high quality consultants. If you are awarded a grant, you will be allocated a consultant from CAF's Consulting Network. They can provide support to voluntary organisations with:

- a review of your organisation highlighting areas that need immediate attention.
- financial management, budgeting, planning and tax effectiveness
- funding strategy, income generation plans, review of tax effectiveness, membership and trading initiatives.
- board and staff development
- partnerships or mergers

CAF has a range of other funds to support organisations who want to strengthen areas of their operations. For further information see <http://www.cafonline.org/grants> and follow the link to 'Consultancy Fund' or contact CAF by email consultancyfund@cafonline.org or telephone 01732 520 187.

National Council of Voluntary Organisations (NCVO)

NCVO have published 'Tools for tomorrow – a practical guide to strategic planning for voluntary organisations'. The toolkit is a straightforward guide that will help trustees and managers find a suitable pathway through the stages of strategic planning. There are sections on getting the direction right, environmental analysis, options and choices, planning, implementation and evaluation. Each section is accompanied by practical tools and exercises. The guide costs £35 and is available from NCVO tel 020 7713 6161 or go to www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/tgt

Pilotlight

Pilotlight matches small, innovative charities with business leaders who donate their time *pro bono* to help charities in various ways including finance, organisational development and marketing. Pilotlight project managers oversee a three-stage process of needs assessment, strategic planning and project advice. To be eligible, charities must have been operational for 2 years, have a turnover of up to £5million, be tackling the problems facing disadvantaged people in innovative ways, be serving communities in and around London. For more information go to <http://www.pilotlight.org.uk/> or telephone Ellis Lawlor on 020 7396 7414.

The Baring Foundation – updated July 2005