

GRANT MANAGEMENT TOOL

Funding Pipeline Tracker

A Comprehensive Tool for Managing Grant Applications, Forecasting Cash Flow, and Optimising Funding Success for NZ/AU Not-for-Profits

VERSION

1.0

YEAR

2025

PUBLISHER

AmplifyData.org.nz

Pipeline Stages

Cash Flow

Success Analytics

Funder Relations

Compliance

NZ/AU Calendar

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Executive Summary

Effective funding pipeline management is critical for sustainability

Effective funding management is critical for not-for-profit sustainability. Many NGOs in Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia struggle with fragmented tracking of grant applications, missed deadlines, and poor visibility into their funding pipeline.

Common Challenges

Cash Flow Crises

Funding gaps aren't anticipated, leading to programme disruption and staff uncertainty.

Missed Opportunities

Overlooked funder deadlines and lack of systematic prospecting leave money on the table.

Lower Success Rates

Rushed, last-minute applications reduce quality and win rates.

Compliance Risks

Late acquittals and reporting damage funder relationships and future funding prospects.

Benefits of a Funding Pipeline Tracker

+25%

IMPROVED SUCCESS RATE

3-6mo

CASH FLOW VISIBILITY

Zero

MISSED DEADLINES

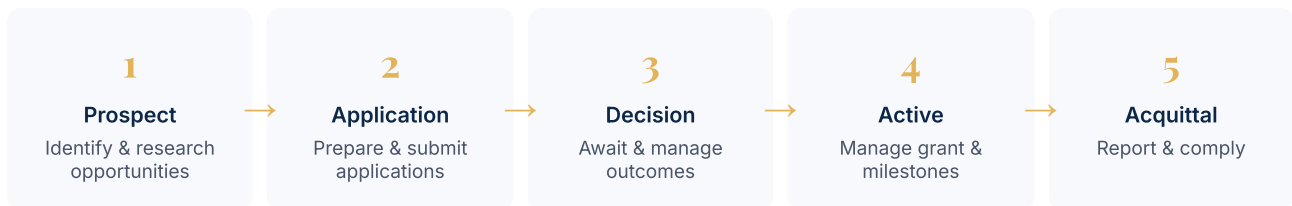
100%

ACQUITTAL COMPLIANCE

Pipeline Stages Overview

The stages from prospect identification to acquittal completion

The Funding Pipeline



Stage Details

STAGE	KEY ACTIVITIES	SUCCESS PROBABILITY	KEY METRICS
Prospect	Research, eligibility check, fit assessment	10–20%	Opportunities identified, fit score
Application	Writing, budgeting, attachments, submission	25–40%	Applications submitted, quality score
Decision	Waiting period, follow-up, outcome recording	30–50%	Win rate, average decision time
Active	Grant management, milestone tracking, reporting	90–100%	Milestone completion, budget variance
Acquittal	Final reporting, financial reconciliation	95–100%	On-time acquittal rate, funder satisfaction

Prospect Stage

Identifying and evaluating funding opportunities



Funder Research Checklist

Eligibility Assessment

- Organisation type eligible (registered charity, DGR)
- Geographic area matches our operations
- Funding focus aligns with our programmes
- Grant size matches our needs
- Application timeline achievable
- No exclusion criteria apply

Strategic Fit Assessment

- Funder priorities align with our strategy
- Previous grantees similar to our org
- Reporting requirements manageable
- Multi-year funding available
- Relationship-building opportunity
- Reputational alignment

Prospect Tracking Template

FIELD	DESCRIPTION	EXAMPLE
Funder Name	Organisation name	Lottery Grants Board
Fund/Round	Specific programme	Community Matters Fund
Amount Range	Min/max funding	\$5,000 – \$50,000
Deadline	Application due date	31 March 2025
Fit Score	1–5 alignment rating	4/5
Priority	High/Medium/Low	High
Status	Current stage	Researching
Assigned To	Team member	Jane Smith
Notes	Key information	Need partnership letter

Funder Fit Scoring Matrix

SCORING GUIDE (RATE 1-5 FOR EACH FACTOR)

Mission Alignment: How closely do funder priorities match your work?

Size Match: Is the grant size appropriate for your needs and capacity?

Relationship: Do you have existing connections or prior history?

Competitiveness: What is the estimated success probability?

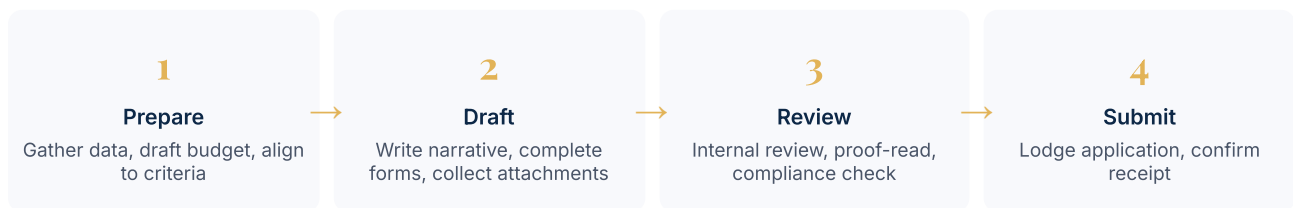
Strategic Value: Beyond money — reputation, connections, multi-year potential?

Total 20–25: Must apply | **15–19:** Strong candidate | **10–14:** Consider | **Below 10:** Deprioritise

Application Stage

mission tracking, quality control, and deadline management

Application Workflow



Application Quality Checklist

Content Quality

- Clear problem statement with evidence
- Specific, measurable outcomes defined
- Activities logically linked to outcomes
- Budget realistic and well-justified
- Evaluation plan included
- Sustainability plan addressed

Compliance & Formatting

- All questions answered completely
- Word/character limits respected
- Required attachments included
- Authorised signatures obtained
- Submitted before deadline
- Confirmation of receipt saved

Timeline Planning

RECOMMENDED APPLICATION TIMELINE

8 weeks before deadline: Begin research and outline

6 weeks before: Draft narrative and budget

4 weeks before: Collect supporting documents and letters

2 weeks before: Internal review and revisions

1 week before: Final proof-read and sign-off

2–3 days before: Submit and confirm receipt

Decision & Active Funding

Managing outcomes and active grant obligations



Outcome Management

Successful

- Record outcome and conditions
- Accept terms and sign agreement
- Set up milestone tracking
- Schedule reporting dates
- Thank funder and start relationship building

Unsuccessful

- Request feedback from funder
- Document reasons for decline
- Assess if reapplication appropriate
- Update funder relationship notes
- Identify alternative funders

Partial Funding

- Assess if partial amount is viable
- Revise budget and scope
- Negotiate terms if needed
- Identify co-funding sources
- Communicate revised plan to funder

Active Grant Management

MANAGEMENT AREA	FREQUENCY	KEY ACTIONS
Financial Tracking	Monthly	Track expenditure against budget, flag variances >10%
Milestone Monitoring	As per agreement	Track deliverables, document evidence, report progress
Outcome Measurement	Quarterly	Collect data, assess progress toward KPIs
Funder Communication	As required	Progress updates, change requests, relationship building
Risk Management	Monthly	Identify delivery risks, plan mitigations

Acquittal & Compliance

Supporting requirements and compliance management



Acquittal Checklist

01

Financial Acquittal

- Reconcile all expenditure to budget
- Prepare income/expenditure statement
- Gather receipts and invoices
- Note any budget variations with explanations
- Get financial sign-off from treasurer/CEO

02

Programme Acquittal

- Report on all agreed outcomes/KPIs
- Provide evidence of activities completed
- Include beneficiary numbers and demographics
- Share success stories and testimonials
- Document lessons learned

03

Supporting Documents

- Photos and media from activities
- Participant surveys/feedback
- Partner letters of support
- Audit report (if required)
- Annual report (if required)

04

Relationship & Re-application

- Thank you letter to funder
- Invite funder to visit programme
- Note opportunities for re-application
- Update funder relationship score
- Schedule next touchpoint

ACQUITTAL DEADLINES ARE CRITICAL

Late or incomplete acquittals are the #1 reason funders decline future applications. Set calendar reminders at **90, 60, 30, and 14 days** before the acquittal deadline.

Success Rate Analytics

Measuring and improving your funding win rates



Key Metrics to Track

Win Rate % OF APPLICATIONS SUCCESSFUL	\$ per Hour REVENUE / TIME INVESTED	Pipeline Value TOTAL \$ IN PIPELINE	Conversion Rate PROSPECTS TO FUNDED
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Success Rate Benchmarks

CATEGORY	BELOW AVERAGE	AVERAGE	GOOD	EXCELLENT
Overall win rate	<20%	20–30%	30–45%	>45%
Existing funder renewal	<60%	60–70%	70–85%	>85%
New funder win rate	<10%	10–20%	20–30%	>30%
Large grants (\$100K+)	<15%	15–25%	25–35%	>35%

Improving Win Rates

Better Targeting Only apply where fit score is 4+ out of 5. Quality over quantity — fewer, stronger applications outperform a scatter-gun approach.	Stronger Relationships Engage funders before applying. Attend info sessions, meet programme officers, share impact stories throughout the year.	Better Applications Use data and evidence, tell compelling stories, align precisely to funder priorities, and allow adequate preparation time.
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Funder Relationship Scoring

Assess and strengthen your funder relationships

Relationship Scoring Framework

Level 5	Strategic Partner	— Multi-year funding, regular contact, proactive communication, invited to events/advisory
Level 4	Strong Relationship	— Repeat funder, knows your team, positive feedback, responsive communication
Level 3	Established	— Have funded before, standard relationship, meet at events occasionally
Level 2	Developing	— Applied once, initial conversations, building awareness of your work
Level 1	New/Unknown	— No prior contact, cold application only, need to establish connection

Relationship Building Activities

TIMING	ACTIVITY	PURPOSE
Before applying	Attend info sessions, meet staff	Build awareness and demonstrate interest
During application	Ask clarifying questions	Show diligence and engagement
After successful	Thank you, invite to programme	Strengthen relationship
After unsuccessful	Seek feedback, thank for consideration	Maintain relationship for future
During grant	Progress updates beyond required	Build trust and demonstrate impact
Between grants	Annual report, impact stories	Stay on radar and demonstrate value

Cash Flow Forecasting

dicting and managing your funding cash flow

Cash Flow Forecast Template

BUILDING A 12-MONTH FORECAST

For each funding source, estimate when cash will arrive (not when the grant was approved). Factor in:

- **Confirmed funding:** 100% probability — signed agreements with known payment dates
- **Highly likely:** 80% probability — verbal approval, awaiting paperwork
- **Probable:** 50% probability — strong application submitted, good relationship
- **Possible:** 25% probability — application submitted, uncertain outcome
- **Pipeline:** 10% probability — identified opportunity, not yet applied

Cash Flow Risk Indicators

Red Flags

- Cash reserves below 2 months operating costs
- Single funder provides >30% of revenue
- >50% of funding expires within 6 months
- No confirmed funding beyond current quarter

Healthy Indicators

- 3–6 months cash reserves
- No single funder >25% of revenue
- Mix of short and multi-year funding
- Pipeline value 2x+ of annual needs

NZ/AU Funding Calendar

dates, seasonal patterns, and planning guide

10

NZ Funding Calendar

QUARTER	KEY FUNDERS/ROUNDS	PLANNING NOTES
Q1 (Jul-Sep)	Lottery Grants Board, COGS, many community trusts	New financial year — many funds open
Q2 (Oct-Dec)	Foundation North, Pub Charity, community trusts	Pre-Christmas rounds close
Q3 (Jan-Mar)	DIA Community, gaming trusts, corporate	Plan early — holiday slowdown
Q4 (Apr-Jun)	End of FY rounds, government contracts	EOFY corporate giving opportunity

AU Funding Calendar

QUARTER	KEY FUNDERS/ROUNDS	PLANNING NOTES
Q1 (Jul-Sep)	Federal grants, state government rounds	New FY — government programs open
Q2 (Oct-Dec)	Corporate philanthropy, community foundations	EOCY giving season
Q3 (Jan-Mar)	State grants, philanthropic trusts	Plan applications before holiday season
Q4 (Apr-Jun)	EOFY corporate, DGR-focused giving	Tax-time giving peak

Gap Analysis & Planning

Identifying and addressing funding gaps

Funding Gap Analysis Framework



Gap Response Strategies

Revenue Strategies

- Accelerate pipeline applications
- Approach emergency/discretionary funders
- Launch targeted fundraising appeal
- Explore earned revenue opportunities
- Negotiate advance payments from confirmed grants

Cost Management

- Defer non-essential expenditure
- Reduce discretionary spending
- Renegotiate supplier contracts
- Explore pro-bono/in-kind alternatives
- Prioritise programme spending by impact

Reporting & Best Practices

Dashboard views, board reporting, and top tips

Pipeline Dashboard Metrics

Pipeline Value

Total \$ value of all opportunities in pipeline, weighted by probability

Win Rate

% of applications resulting in funding over rolling 12 months

Time to Decision

Average days from submission to outcome notification

Funder Diversity

Number of funders and concentration risk (% from largest)

Board Reporting Template

MONTHLY/QUARTERLY BOARD REPORT SHOULD INCLUDE

- **Pipeline Summary:** Number and value of opportunities by stage
- **Recent Outcomes:** Applications won, lost, and pending with values
- **Cash Flow Forecast:** 6–12 month view of confirmed vs projected funding
- **Risk Assessment:** Concentration risk, upcoming expiries, gap analysis
- **Success Rate:** Rolling 12-month win rate vs target
- **Upcoming Deadlines:** Next 90 days of application and acquittal deadlines

Top 10 Best Practices

01

Start Early

Begin applications 8+ weeks before deadline for quality submissions.

02

Quality Over Quantity

5 excellent applications beat 15 mediocre ones. Focus on high-fit opportunities.

03

Build Relationships

Engage funders year-round, not just when you need money.

04

Track Everything

Consistent data enables better analysis and decision-making.

05

Never Miss Deadlines

Set multiple calendar reminders. Late applications are dead applications.

06

Diversify Funding

No single funder should represent >25% of your total revenue.

07

Learn From Outcomes

Always seek feedback from unsuccessful applications and apply learnings.

08

Acquit Promptly

On-time, thorough acquittals are your best ticket to re-funding.

09

Use Data & Stories

Combine compelling narratives with solid evidence and measurable outcomes.

10

Plan for Gaps

Maintain 3–6 months cash reserves and maintain a 2x pipeline.

AmplifyData.org.nz

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