



*Comhaltas in Britain*  
*60th Anniversary*

Fundraising workshop

Convention 2017

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# Introduction

Comhaltas as is a continually evolving organisation

- We are not the same as we were in 1957
- Your branch is not the same as it was when it started
- The Irish community is not the same as when you started
- and the world is not the same now as It was when you started.

While many of our branches and activities operate on a yearlong some of our activities do not fit into this academic or Comhaltas year.

Fundraising is one of those activities which is continual and should progress all year round...

Through this workshop we will explore the process of a fundraising strategy and look at how to ensure your project or activity meets the needs of your branch and the potential funder.

## In the beginning.....

Looking for money is not the start of the process.

To successfully raise funds from any source you need to be clear on what you want to raise money for. – Why you want to raise money – you need a strategy.

A Funding strategy is simply a plan for what you want to do and how to resource it

## 7 Steps

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**1. What are the aims of the organisation? – Everything you do needs to help advance these aims in some way.**

**2. What are your current objectives? → What's the need?**

What is the problem or issue you want to address?

What evidence is there that this need exists?

What are the reasons for the need?

Have you carried out any research?

Why have you prioritised this need?

Have you consulted with the members, musicians, people your project will benefit?

**3. How are you planning to meet these needs?**

**→ What are you going to do about it?**

**So you've identified an issue and you have decided to do something about it....but how is your idea going to fix the problem or address the need?**

Why is your project an appropriate response to the need?

What do you want your project to achieve? What is the outcome you are looking for?

What impact will this have on your branch / your members?

Based on each need (or a group of needs) how are you going to achieve your outcomes?



#### 4. What resources do you need for your project or activity

Consider each activity or plan separately and work out what resources you need to find. *Money isn't the only way to get things done!*

- Volunteers
- Teachers
- Premises
- Equipment
- Instruments
- Musicians
- Tea?

#### 5. Draw up a budget what's it going to cost?

What can you contribute as a branch? Branch funds, donations, in kind support, volunteer time and expertise?

Include everything in your budget, even if you know you can get some things for free.

#### 6. How are you going to fund your activity?

 Where's the money coming from?

- Statutory bodies (local, regional, national government?)
- Charitable trusts
- Lottery funding
- Business (Sponsorship, advertising)
- Individual donations
- Raise it yourself
- Earned income

*There's no such thing as money for nothing!*

Different sources of funding need different approaches but none of them will provide money without getting something in return.

Grant funders will want to see how their money is being put to good use. Businesses and sponsors will want advertising and press coverage (and probably free tickets) even individuals or people who make donations will want to know their money is being put to good use and have that warm fuzzy feeling!

You need to identify what possible funding sources will help with your activity/project.

Don't think of a great idea and wait for an application to come alone. Similarly don't see a possible funding source and then try and make up a project to get your hands on the money!

## 7. Evaluate

If you are successful in getting funding most funders will expect you to monitor and report on the funding and evaluate the success of your activity.

Who took part or benefitted from the activity – including how many

Did the project achieve its aim?

Did you meet your outcomes?

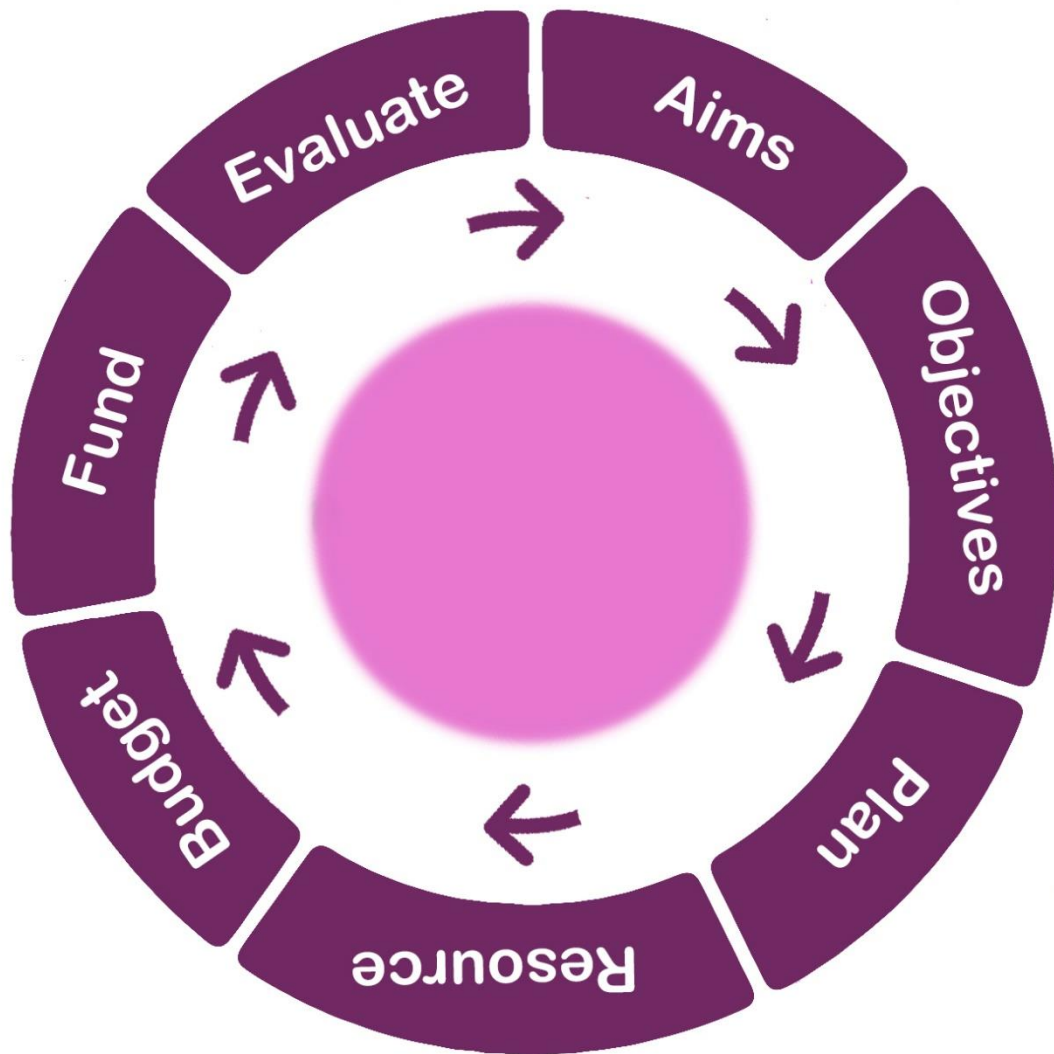
How many 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> generation Irish took part? Can you show the funder what they wanted?

Did you or your funders get bang for their buck?

How could you do it better next time

What's next?

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Fundraising takes time – grants have deadlines and often take weeks or months before you hear if you are successful. Keep copies of all applications and make sure you supply all the supporting material requested.

Businesses and companies are unlikely to give you money unless they know who you are – it takes time to build the relationship. Keep a record of who you asked, what you asked for, when you asked and what their response was. Keep copies of letters and funding applications. Records will help you to decide in future what worked, what was a waste of time etc.

If an organisation or business has funded you before they are likely to do so again, but you need to monitor how often you ask

Maybe a fundraising subcommittee would work for your branch?

Use the skills you have in your committee

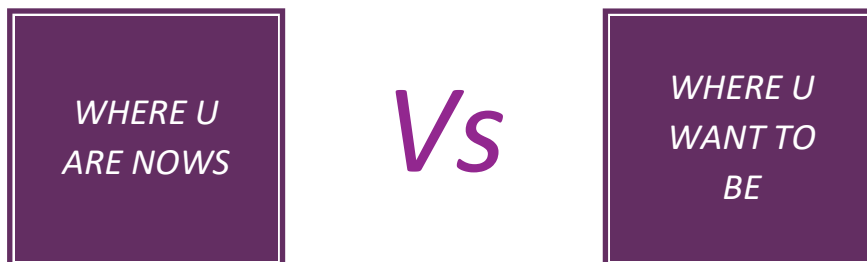
# The Impact (Outcomes) Approach

Funders are increasingly looking to understand the difference their money makes  
With cuts to funding, austerity and increased public scrutiny means anyone who gives you money wants to feel they are making a difference in the right way.

You must have clarity about what you want to achieve if you are going to achieve anything.

It's not enough to say that money is going to help your music class, or promote Comhaltas you need to be much more specific in what you ask.

Think about where you or the branch is now. You then get some funding or run a project or activity then what will your branch be like at the end of it? Who has benefitted, how have things improved?



Funders want to know how their money has made a difference

How do you identify this change? Collect data, measure the impact and outcome?

Some funders look at this outcome approach when deciding how to divide up their funds and what to support. More and more funders are taking this approach.

Many funders now specify what outcomes they want to achieve with their funding. i.e. to help people get into employment and have less unemployed.

Target specific funders - many funders will have specific areas based on this outcomes approach. Even down to the age of people they want to help, which borough or city they live in etc.

Value for money – it's important to funders that they are getting value for money – It should be important to you!