

Action Kit



Introduction

Because Beboers care passionately about their communities, Bebo and UnLtd – the foundation for social entrepreneurs, have created the **Be Cause Awards** to reward those of you who are making a positive impact on society. Whether it's through entrepreneurial solutions to social issues, innovative charitable projects, or simply a desire to make a difference, the **Be Cause Awards** are designed to help you realise your ideas for getting involved with your local community.

UnLtd is a unique and dynamic organisation whose mission is to reach out and unleash the energies of people who can transform the world in which they live. We call these people social entrepreneurs. We do this by providing a complete package of funding and support, to help these individuals make their ideas a reality.

Bebo is the next generation social networking site where members can stay in touch with their college friends, connect with friends, share photos, discover new interests and just hang out.

UnLtd and Bebo have developed this *Toolkit* as a resource to support social entrepreneurs and individuals wanting to make a positive difference to their communities by developing themselves and their projects.

This toolkit hopes to provide you with a guide to generating ideas to impact the issues you care about and a range of tools you will need to effectively plan and manage your project.

Remember the most important thing is to do something you're truly passionate about and to have fun along the way!



What's in this toolkit

1) Reflect on the issues

Research and think about the issues that you care about. What effects them and what are the changes you would like to see happen.

2) Generating an idea

Think about how you can impact the issue yourself, in your school, your community, your local area, your country or even the world! What are your interests and passions? What skills do you have and what will be needed to pull the idea off?

3) Is it a good idea?

Is it original? Is it achievable? Can you make it happen? What will change because of this idea?

4) Plan, plan and plan again!

Planning is crucial. Identify the projects main goals; break these down into smaller milestones and the tasks that are needed to reach each objective. What is the most effective path to achieve your goals: you know where you want to go, how are you going to get there?

5) Putting it all into context: time, resources and money

Every great project is limited by time, skills, support and the budget. Set achievable deadlines for the tasks involved and leave room for those inevitable 'hi-cups' along the way. Also review your budget to be sure it is thorough and reflects all your costs – remember you don't want to be out of pocket!

6) Keeping track of progress

It's important to track the progress the project is making and to think about how you'll do this before you start; constantly assess if it is achieving its aims and targets, monitor the challenges you are facing and the lessons that you are learning and once the project is completed be able to communicate what worked and what didn't, and the reasons for this. This should hopefully help you to demonstrate your project's success and enable you to take it to the next level.

7) Implement

You have a plan of action and are now ready to take on the world.

1) Reflecting on the Issues

What issues do you care about?

Research and think about the issues that you care about, what effects them and what are the changes you would like to see happen.

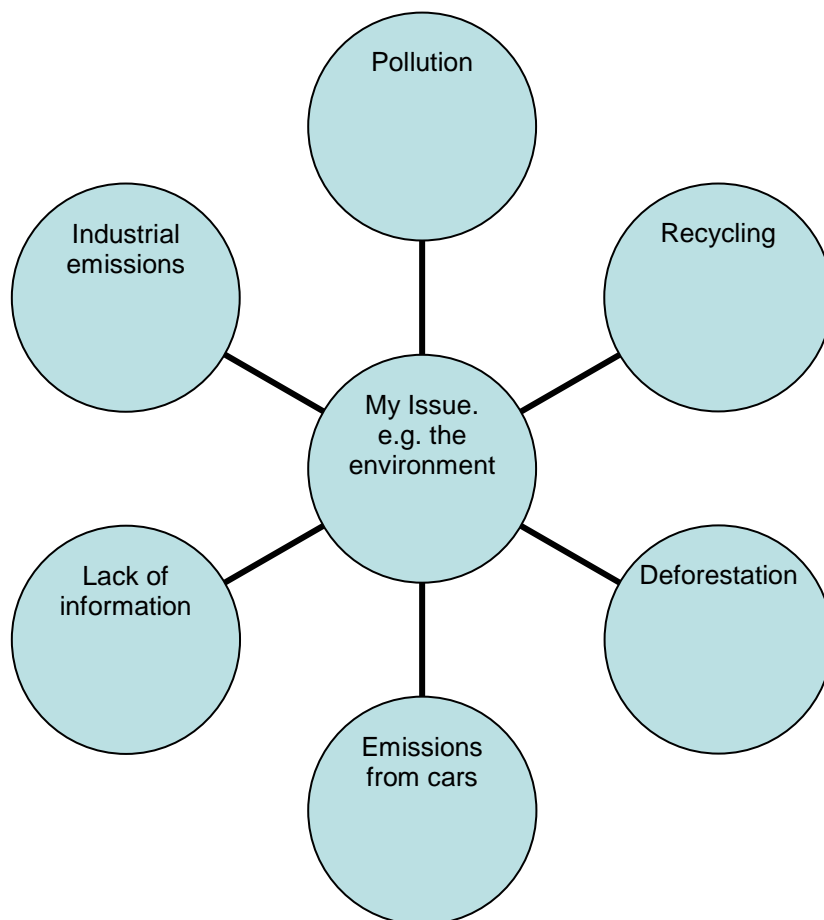
Make a list of the top-5 issues that you care about:

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

What affects these issues?

Tip: Try doing some research! You could use <http://www.wikipedia.org/>

Create a map of the issue!



Ask your friends and family what they think about the issues, connect with members that have similar interests and always remember to take note of any helpful resources you find! (Tip: you could use <http://www.delicious.com/> to store and access all your bookmarks in one place)

2) Coming up with an idea

Big issues are very complex and affected by a myriad of things and at different levels, from the way we lead our lives all the way up to how governments and big companies behave. It is impossible to have an impact on all the issues that affect global warming and to influence change at all levels.

You need to narrow an issue down, figure out the element you want to focus on, and the level you want to make an impact on.

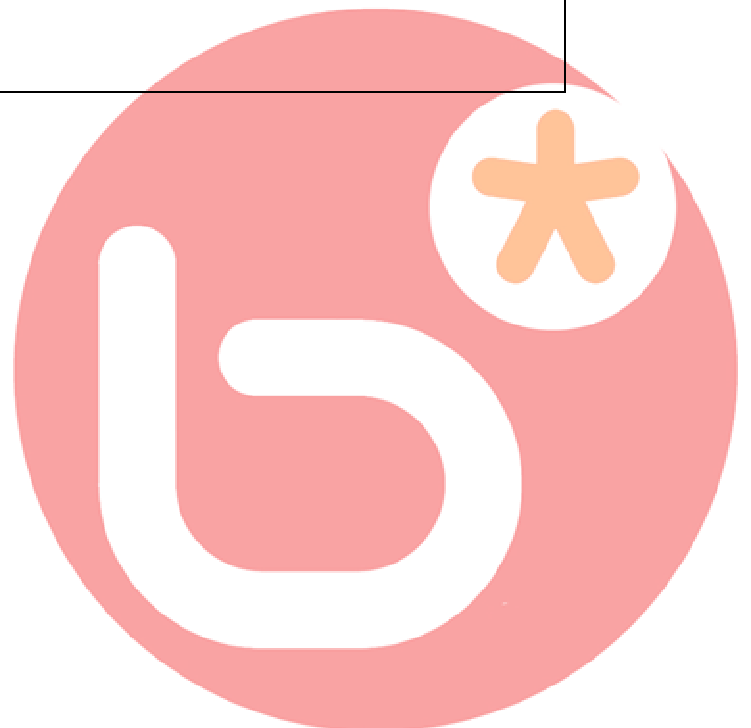
Think about how you can make a positive difference to the issues facing your school, your community, your local area, your country or even the world! What are your interests and passions?

Find a problem that you think you can fix and consider how you can fix it; use your skills and passions to come up with a solution. For example: focus on a fundraising event or recycling in your school, or raising awareness in your community or launching a petition to send to your local MP.

How do the issues that you are interested in impact your life?

Using the top 5 issues that you wrote down on the previous page, think of three ways that this issue impacts on your life and write them in the box below.

Issue	1) 2) 3)
Issue	1) 2) 3)
Issue	1) 2) 3)
Issue	1) 2) 3)
Issue	1) 2) 3)



Let's narrow this even more: decision-time!

Now pick the two issues that you feel most impact you and consider how these impact others on a wider scale, using the grid below.

How do these issues affect the world around you?

Issue	You	Your School	Your Community	Your Local Area	Your Country	The World

Which of these problems can you fix?

Tips: use a highlighter in the table you just created and circle the areas with the most opportunities, you can also use the map of the issues that you previously did, this should help in deciding!

Which of these problems do you want to fix? Pick the one you're going to focus on!

Now, think about what you're interested in:

Things you like	Things you're good at and your skills
E.g. Films	E.g. video editing
E.g. Music	E.g. Organization
E.g. Photography	E.g. Creative Writing
E.g. Magazines	E.g. Motivating people
	E.g. Taking Photographs

3) What's the idea?

It's time to come up with the big idea!

Brainstorm some possible combinations between the issue you're passionate about, the things you're interested in, your skills and some possible actions!

For example; I am passionate about the environment and raising awareness in my school and I'm interested in films, the Internet and I am good at organizing events. So, I could create a documentary about the environment, or engage students in a film festival in my school. Also I would definitely want to share the videos online.

Now that you've got several ideas, you need to pick the one you're going to go with. To help you decide think about which is the most original and creative one and the one that could have the most impact, but also consider if it's achievable and what you would need to make it happen!

The Idea	Why is it original and creative, what are the strengths of your idea?	What will change and what are the opportunities the project will create?	Is it achievable?	What risks are involved, what are the weaknesses of your idea, and what challenges will you face?	What will you need to make it happen?
My Great Idea					
My Great Idea					

4) It's all about planning!

You've got a great idea, you need a plan. Planning is crucial and bad planning is the number one reason why projects fail.

To start of with, you need to identify the projects main goals; these are the **mission** of your project. It is important to set very specific and focused goals and always keep them in mind so that you can work towards achieving them. 1-3 goals are more than enough!!!

E.g. I want to create a short documentary and organise a film festival to raise awareness about the environment in my school.

Objective:

It's time to figure out what your mission looks like, this means breaking down your objective/s into smaller aims and activities and considering what actions and tasks are needed to achieve your goals and the most effective way to get there.

You need an action plan!

Tips: numbering your activities and tasks helps to identify them in other tools you'll create for the project (such as a time-line) and remember the more detail you plan for, the higher the chances your project has of being a great success!

Activity	Task	Outcome
1. Script & Storyboarding	1.1 ideas for storyline 1.2 developing idea as storyboard 1.3 taking notes of related resources needed 1.4 1.5 . . .	Develop final storyboard for a 15 minute documentary and overview of related requirements.
2. Finding Resources for documentary	2.1 researching equipment 2.2 costing 2.3 pinning down external help needed 2.4 logistics plan 2.5 2.6 . .	

3. Filming	.	
4. Gathering Submissions for festival	.	
5. Application Process	.	
6.	.	
7.	.	
8.	.	
9.	.	

5) Putting it all into context: time, resources and money

You know where you want to go, how are you going to get there?

You've got a great idea, the skills, passion, determination and a plan. Now you're ready to answer the tough questions: What other support and help do you need? Where will you find the resources you need? How much funding do you need?

The first step is to pin-down the resources that you need (such as skills, funding, involving friends, creating a team etc...)

Description	What help do you need?	Where are you going to get this?	Are there costs involved?
Flyers	A designer	A friend	
Flyers	Printing	A printer	
A camera to film the documentary	Yes
Promoting the event	Getting others involved	Use my profile page and friends network on Bebo	
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...

Knowing your requirements is only half of the job! You now need to find and get what you need.

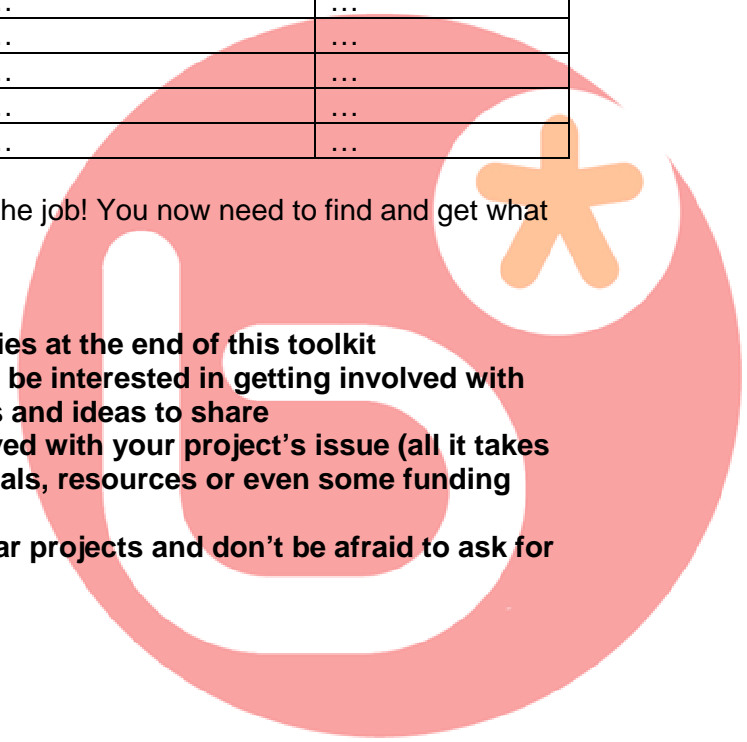
Here are some tips:

#1 check out the links of funding agencies at the end of this toolkit

#2 search for other members that might be interested in getting involved with your project, or might have experiences and ideas to share

#3 look for organisations that are involved with your project's issue (all it takes is a search), and see if they have materials, resources or even some funding that they could provide

#4 look for people who have done similar projects and don't be afraid to ask for their advice



And a quick guide to budgeting...

Writing a budget is an important part of project planning or writing a funding application. It will help you stay in control of your project and will ensure that you know about potential cash-flow problems in advance. Budgeting helps you set out your financial targets, helps you anticipate problems and allows you to compare what actually happens with what you expected. Try to keep your budgets regularly updated for 12 months ahead.

Make a table, or two lists, showing all costs for the project and their likely income and expenditure. You can use this in a funding application, or just to give yourself a realistic idea of your likely costs and how you will meet them. For example:

ITEM	EXPENDITURE	£	INCOME	£
	Volunteers' expenses		Trusts and charities	
	Travel costs		Local authority	
	Equipment hire		Awards	
	Launch event		Support 'in kind'	
	Advertising/marketing		Fundraising	
	Insurance			
	Back-up fund			
	Total		Total	

This simple exercise should give you an idea of whether you're on target with funding, or whether you need to scale down your project to make the balance sheet – well, balance!

It is important to break down your costs so that you can see where you are going and if you are keeping on top of things.

Timings of cash movements:

It is important to note down the monthly dates of your outgoings and incomings and try and arrange your bill dates so that it suits you. Some people prefer to sort out all their bills at one time and get everything out the way and others prefer to spread it out over the month. This all depends on your funding situation and when you have access to your money. The last thing you want is all your bills to come out a few days before your money comes in. That's bad planning!

Maintaining good records:

- Every time you buy anything that is related to your project you must get a receipt and make a record of it, even cash purchases. Make up a template like the one above and attach copies of your receipts to it. Make sure you file all your records in an easily accessible way and then you will always be able to find things if you need to.
- Whenever you pay a bill, make sure that you have an invoice and that you write the date, supplier and amount on the stub. This is a further back up of your records that will make sure that everything balances.
- When you get your bank statements, check and double check that your statement reflects your records. Anyone can make a mistake, even the bank and bank fraud is common - so be vigilant!

Assessing your budget in practice:

After you've planned how your money will be spent and when, make sure that you compare this to the reality of the situation. At the end of each month, see if your estimates on spending and income were correct.

- If you guessed that you would spend more on bills and outgoings than you actually did then that's great and it allows you to use that money in another way...although be careful. Don't get carried away with the idea of extra money. Be cautious until you are sure that your bills won't go up again!
- If you didn't allow enough money, be wary! You now need to sit down and reassess your budget, it is always better to be over cautious than to get carried away. Having a little bit extra is always better than being caught short.

Remember to keep checking that your budget is working out, things can change! It's a good idea to sit down every month and make sure that your plan is working out. You must always be in control and aware of your money. If you do this then you will always do well.

Every great project is limited by time – both by time that we have and by the time it takes to achieve our aims. Above all things always take longer than what we think. For this reason it is really important to consider the time it takes to complete each project's task and always keep in mind the links between tasks (for example I cannot start filming if I haven't bought the camera that I need, and if I haven't promoted the festival then probably not many people are going to come to it!)

Building on your action plan, you now need to put your project into a timetable:

Task	Milestones (Outcomes)	Start Date	End Date	Resources (what is needed) and Responsibility (who will do this)	Dependency (tasks that need to be completed before you can move onto this)
1					
1.1					
1.2					
1.3					
1.4					1.2
1.5					
2.1					
2.2					
2.3					2.2
2.4					
2.5					
2.6					
2.7					
2.7					
3.0					
3.0					
....					
....					

Or you could use a chart instead:

Item/Time	Jan	Feb	Mar	April
1.1				
1.2				
2.1				
2.2				

6) Keeping track of progress

It's important to track the progress the project is making and to think about how you'll do this before you start; constantly assess if it is achieving its aims and targets, monitor the challenges you are facing and the lessons that you are learning and once the project is completed be able to communicate what worked and what didn't, and the reasons for this. This should hopefully help you to demonstrate your project's success and enable you to take it to the next level.

An easy way to monitor your project is assign specific aims and targets to your different activities, so that you can always check if you're on track. Note the challenges you're facing and at the end of the project evaluate the success of your project in achieving the objectives that have been set.

Tips: make your targets achievable, realistic, and easily measurable. Get feedback from those that participate in your project, from partners and beneficiaries: this is the best insight into how your project really went and you could also get some great ideas for future developments or projects!

Project Component	Targets (what you hope to achieve)	Outcome (what you have achieved)	Notes (what worked/didn't work)
Short-documentary on environmental issues	e.g. develop new skills involve # people in filming raise awareness places/venues you want to show the film	Skills you developed # of people you involved Examples of awareness being raised Venues that have shown/will show the documentary	
Students submitting short videos for film festival	e.g. # of videos you hope to gather # of people you hope to involve	# of videos submitted	
Film Festival			

Tips: to help you keep track of your projects progress, you can use the project diary that comes with this tool-kit.

You could also create a blog (with pictures and video!) to share the project's progress with your friends to get their thoughts, ideas and comments as things develop.

Once your project is complete, remember to create a report about how things went. This could include:

- brief background of objectives and aims of the project
- history of the project
- key achievements
- key challenges and lessons learned
- the completed above (monitoring and evaluation table)
- planned next steps
- and a link to your blog!

The report could be used to look for more funding in the future, to share the lessons you have learned with others and to help to expand your project.

7) Implementation

You have a plan of action and are now ready to take on the world. Always remember that things take time, and they don't always go as planned, so be persistent and above all have fun and do not forget what it is that you're passionate about and why you started the project to begin with!!!



Additional Resources

Further Funding

At some stage in the development of your project, you may want to think about applying for further funding to take you that step further. This may be frustrating and take a long time, but its well worth persevering. This brief guide aims to help make the process as painless as possible; it also lists the organisations that may be helpful to talk to. If they can't give you money directly they should be able to point you in the right direction.

How do I go about getting further funds?

There are many different approaches you might use to bring resources into your project and all of these can be considered fundraising. For example, you might apply to a charitable trust or government body for money, or you might hold a raffle or a jumble sale. Fundraising doesn't have to be all about money either – it might involve asking companies to donate goods or human resources.

Next steps

1. Identify the need

It is important that you are sure there is a need or demand for what you want to do. Once you have shaped the idea, you will need to think about what resources you need to make it happen. It is important that you are clear about this before you start developing your strategy. At this stage, you should try to think through as many options as you can – although you probably have an idea in your head about how you want to do things, there might be viable alternatives that are easier or more cost effective.

2. Develop a fundraising strategy

The next stage is to develop a strategy which will show how you intend to raise the money required. A fundraising strategy sets out what a project's funding needs are likely to be over a future period and outlines how resources will be identified and raised to meet those needs.

A good funding strategy will include what the money is for, where it will come from, how much will be sought and when it is needed – and depending on the funding type, how the investors will get their money back. The table below provides a template for a simple funding strategy. In this example, the budget item in question is hire of premises for one year. The person has identified an overall target as well as specific potential funders, including their deadlines and the amounts for which each will be approached. A fundraising strategy for an entire project might include a number of small tables, each detailing a different budget item.

Budget item:	Premises 1 year hire
Target:	£12,450
Where from/How much/When by:	
Local authority/£8000/Sept 2005 Jumble sales/membership/£1000/Oct2005 Local trust/foundation/£3450/Oct 2005	
Total	£12,450

It is important when developing your fundraising strategy that you do your research. Different funders will have different priorities and deadlines, and the most successful fundraisers know that the best approach is to target funders whose criteria you fit with. It is better to apply to a few well chosen applications than hundreds of speculative ones; this will save you time and disappointment!

3. Put your strategy into action!

Once you have developed a strategy you are happy with and you think is realistic, the next step is to get started. This means getting your applications and appeals out the door, as well as planning for any non-application based activities, such as raffles, jumble sales or events. Where applications are concerned, as a general rule, the more funding you ask for, the greater level of information you will need to provide. Some funders will have an application form, and others will ask you to submit a few pages explaining your request. Either way, you will need to make sure you can explain clearly why you are asking for money, who your project will benefit, why it is necessary, how you will do it and what you will achieve. Remember to include the human face of your project – a few well explained case studies can be very compelling! Don't forget to be clear about the difference the money will make and what won't happen if you don't get it. Any application will take at least four to six months to be processed and can often take longer. Plan this long lead time into your strategy.

4. Managing the money and relationships

Once you have approval, you really need to build a good relationship with your benefactor. Write to them and thank them for their support. Make sure you fill out any reports they need, and send them regular updates about your project and your plans for the future. Make sure anyone who has given you money knows how important their support is to you and how valuable it is for everyone in your group.

There might also be some administration you need to deal with before you can actually receive the money. Read the terms and conditions carefully so that you understand the commitment you are making. Think about the reporting requirements and how you will address them. It is also important to remember that keeping any business alive is an ongoing process – if you have raised all your money, congratulations! Now is the time to start the cycle all over again.

Finding funds

Funderfinder
www.funderfinder.com

Directory of Charitable Trusts and funding resources.

Government Funding
www.governmentfunding.org.uk
Comprehensive and up to date site with lots of information.

Charitynet
www.charitynet.org
Wide range of useful information.

Or start with an Internet search!!

Funding help & advice

Charities Information Bureau
www.cibfunding.org.uk
Source of advice on wide range of issues relating to funding. Sign up for funding e-bulletins.

National Council for Voluntary Organisations
www.nacvs.org.uk
Information on local councils for voluntary services.

Business Link
www.businesslink.gov.uk
Advice and information to new businesses including social enterprises.

Funding news & information

Social Enterprise
www.socialenterprisemag.co.uk
Monthly magazine aimed at social enterprise, available online.

Newstart
www.newstartmag.co.uk
Weekly publication for community and voluntary sector.

Volresource
<http://volresource.org.uk>
Information and news for voluntary and community sector.

CIVICUS Civil Society Toolkits
www.civicus.org/new/content/civitoolkits2.htm
Toolkit on writing a funding proposal.

Fundraising training

Open University
www.open.ac.uk
Has specific fundraising courses available.

Business Link
www.businesslink.gov.uk
Runs various courses, mostly free.

Social Enterprise London
www.sel.org.uk

Community Matters
www.communitymatters.org.uk
National & regional training opportunities.



Shout about your project: making the most of the media

A guide to the perfect press release

Press releases are a great way of getting your story into the newspapers. The aim of a press release is to give the journalist just enough information to make them interested in what you have to say, so that they want to publish your story in their paper or magazine. You need to accept that you aren't going to be able to give the whole picture – just the basic story and supporting facts.

Some pointers:

- Remember to always write in the third person (even about yourself)
- Make sure your headline is short and to the point
- Make sure the first paragraph outlines the story in a way that would appeal to a journalist
- Don't use jargon or abbreviations
- Try to give at least one useable direct quotation
- Be active - use an active voice rather than a passive one
- Be positive - take out all negatives from the writing
- Don't bury the story - put it in the first paragraph, come straight to the point and spell out concisely what you want to say
- Keep it brief, between 150 and 200 words
- Make every word count
- Get a second opinion - once you have prepared the final version of your press release always ask someone else to read it

Generally, press releases follow a set template:

Headline – this should grab the reader's attention and tell them the nub of the story and also, where possible, act to draw the person in so that they want to know more.

Main body text – Use one and a half or double line space with good sized left margins on either side. This is so that the editor can make notes easily on the page. The main body text is where you outline the context, implications and explanations of what you're saying. It can be up to around 6 short paragraphs in length.

“For further information” – this is important basic information. You must give the journalist a contact name, home and work telephone numbers. Journalists often work outside office hours, so you may get a call early evening or Sunday morning!

Press release template

Your Logo Here

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: (date)

Put the date that you want the information to be released

“Headline here” (Example: Youth Club Given New Lease of Life by Enterprising Students)

1st paragraph: This should be brief but explain all important points. It should be anywhere from three to five sentences and should include the event or project that’s going on, the date, time and important people.

2nd paragraph: This goes into more detail. For example, it could explain the importance of the event and why it’s taking place. In general, remember that most important information should be placed at the beginning of the press release - information at the end is less likely to be read.

3rd paragraph: This section could talk about the need for your particular programme(s). This is where you’ll go in detail about how it got started and what services you offer. You could also use this as an opportunity to give quotes from people about your work.

The very last paragraph is usually no more than two to three sentences and can highlight related information that you want people to know about, or mention any plans for the future. (Example: The students hope to use the experience they have gained through the project to advise children from other schools who wish to set up similar projects. They also plan to set up a group. To encourage entrepreneurship among schoolchildren.)

END

Note: If you run over a single page type the word MORE in the bottom right hand corner of the page, and number succeeding pages.

For further information, contact:

Name (the main contact/spokesperson for your project)

Address

E-mail

Website

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