

Evidence and impact

A strong way to show the need for your project in a funding application is to include quotes, statistics, or research from external sources. This helps funders understand the wider context and scale of the issue you're addressing.

It's also important to gather local insight from your members or the wider community. This can show clear demand and the direct impact your work has on your audience.

It's useful to build a picture of who your audience is, looking at who you're already engaging and/or who you would like to engage. This also builds a picture of your local area and how well you know it.

In the tables below, you'll find some sources for different types of evidence:

External sources

Source	Description	Link
Indices of Deprivation - Main website	Ranks small areas of England from most to least deprived using data on employment, education, health, crime, etc.	IMD
Indices of Deprivation - Interactive map	Interactive map of Index of Multiple Deprivation; filter by income, health, employment deprivation, etc.	Indices of Deprivation 2015 and 2019
Explore Local Statistics - ONS	Census data for England & Wales providing population, demographic, household, and socio-economic characteristics.	ONS Local Stats Search - Office for National Statistics
Nomis - Ward profiles	Census area profiles by postcode, ward level and Local Authority level	Nomis
UK Local Area Website	UK postcode search for local area information including census statistics, house prices, school results, council tax, energy prices, and street-level crime	UK Local Area
Office for National Statistics - Crime & Justice Data	Crime Survey for England & Wales and police-recorded crime data, showing trends and local comparisons.	ONS Crime & Justice
Public Health England / UK Health Profiles	Health statistics by type (dementia, disability, cancer, health inequalities) for local areas.	Public Health Profiles
Sport England - Active Lives	Measures physical activity levels of adults and children across England; interactive tools	Active Lives
Local Authority Specific Sites	Many Local Authorities have their own open data/research and insight portal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E.g. Home Surrey-i • Home Brent Open Data • Hampshire County Council

Local consultation

Local insight can help you both show the need for your project and demonstrate the impact of your work. This table offers some practical ideas for doing both.

Source	Type	Description / How to Use
Surveys	Local Evidence of need	Structured questions to gather feedback from your members or the community. Online forms, paper questionnaires; can measure satisfaction, needs, or barriers.
Feedback / Evaluation Forms	Impact Evidence	Structured post-session feedback capturing outcomes, satisfaction, and learning points. Online forms, paper questionnaires
Case Studies	Impact Evidence	Detailed examples of a participant, coach, volunteer or families showing the real-life impact of your work. Include impact on their wellbeing, or changes
Anecdotal Evidence	Impact Evidence	Informal quotes or stories from participants, coaches, parents illustrating common themes or experiences.
Focus Groups	Local Evidence of need	Facilitated discussions with a small group to explore needs, challenges, and ideas in detail.
Interviews	Local Evidence of need / Impact	One-to-one conversations providing detailed personal insight, gather direct quotes where possible.
Attendance / Participation Data	Local Evidence of need	Shows trends in who attends sessions, audience demographics, drop-offs or demand. Waiting lists are a great way to demonstrate the need and demand for your activities.
Partner Referrals / Letters of Support	Impact Evidence	Evidence from schools, health professionals, or local organisations highlighting need or impact and demonstrates wider recognition/value
Observation Notes	Local Evidence of need / Impact	Staff or volunteer observations about participant behaviour, changes, or barriers.
Testimonials	Impact Evidence	Short, personal statements from participants, parents, volunteers, or partners showing your impact and value.

Storytelling

Funders also respond strongly to storytelling because it brings your project to life and shows the real impact behind the numbers. Short, concise stories can make your application stand out and demonstrate the need your project addresses.

When including stories:

- Use real-life examples: Highlight individuals or families who have benefited or could benefit, keeping details anonymised if needed.
- Show change or impact: Focus on how your project has or will make a difference, not just the problem.
- Combine with data: Pair the story with statistics or trends using information from some of the websites included in the table above
- Include quotes: A direct voice from participants can make the story authentic and relatable.