

APPLICATION DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK



**WORLD
RUGBY**

Application Development Framework

A practical frame for building stronger World Rugby and member union funding applications

Introduction

Securing funding for sport-for-development programmes is a competitive process that requires organisations to clearly articulate their work, demonstrate need and present credible evidence of impact.

While many unions deliver meaningful and impactful programmes, translating this work into strong, structured funding applications can be a significant challenge.

This framework has been developed to support rugby unions and delivery organisations in strengthening the quality of their sport-for-development funding applications.

It provides practical, step-by-step guidance on how to present key components of an application, ensuring that proposals are clear, coherent and aligned with funder expectations.

Grounded in sport-for-development principles, the framework emphasises the importance of positioning rugby not simply as a participation activity, but as a tool to achieve broader social outcomes such as youth development, gender equity, inclusion and community wellbeing. It guides users in demonstrating how their programmes respond to real community needs and how proposed activities lead to meaningful and measurable change.

The document outlines the core elements of a strong application, including organisational overview, needs analysis, programme design, outcomes, impact measurement and sustainability. Each section is

supported by practical guidance, examples and common pitfalls to help organisations improve clarity, strengthen credibility and ensure alignment across their application.

By using this framework, unions and delivery partners will be better equipped to communicate the value of their work, develop high-quality funding proposals and increase their ability to secure investment for sustainable, development-focused programmes.

How to use this document

Step 1: Read the funder question carefully and identify what it is really asking for: need, delivery, outcomes, impact, sustainability, risk or organisational credibility.

Step 2: Build the one-page application frame before writing. This prevents repetition and ensures that need, activities, outputs, outcomes and measurement all connect.

Step 3: Use the relevant guidance section to strengthen the answer. Not every prompt needs every element; select the points that are most relevant to the word count and funder priority.

Step 4: Draft in the funder's language while keeping the tone factual, confident and evidence-based. Avoid long history, generic claims and unsupported impact statements.

Step 5: Check that the finished application has a visible golden thread: the problem you identify is the problem your programme addresses and the outcome you measure.

Organisational Overview

What Makes a Strong Organisational Overview

- A clear, concise statement of why the organisation exists and what it aims to achieve.
- Ensure the focus is on sports for development, not sports excellence or sports participation.
- Outline the target population and geographic focus.
- A sentence or two linking the organisation's goals and purpose with the funder's priorities - recommend doing this subtly, whilst using the language of the funder.
- Mention key partners/stakeholders who are relevant to the application and/or will be of interest to the funders.

- A brief background to the organisation's history and a mention of major accomplishments.

Not all of these need to be included all the time - it'll be dependent on the word count available to answer this question. The most important elements are why the organisation exists, the target population and geographic focus, whilst the other elements are added extras.

Example Organisation Overviews

World Rugby

World Rugby is the international federation for rugby union, responsible for the global growth, governance and development of the sport across more than 130 national member unions. The organisation exists to harness rugby's values and reach as a tool for positive social change, using sport-based programming to improve wellbeing, promote gender equity and strengthen inclusive community participation.

Through structured, values-driven initiatives delivered in schools and community settings, World Rugby prioritises access for girls, young women and underserved populations, particularly in emerging

rugby nations. Its sport for development approach aligns with global priorities around safe sport, youth empowerment and equitable participation.

Working through six regional associations and in partnership with national unions, education systems and safeguarding bodies, World Rugby's development programmes reach millions of young people annually. The organisation has established global standards in safeguarding, coach and referee education, and inclusive programme design, positioning it as a key leader in leveraging sport for social development outcomes.

Member Union - Kenya

The Kenya Rugby Football Union governs and develops rugby across Kenya's urban and rural regions, using the sport as a platform to support positive social outcomes for young people. The union exists to expand equitable access to safe, structured sport environments that promote education retention, life skills development and gender inclusion.

Operating nationwide with a focus on underserved communities, the union targets young people - particularly girls and marginalised groups - who face barriers to participation and safe recreational spaces. Through school-based programmes, community rugby hubs and leadership pathways for young women

referees and coaches, the union delivers rugby as a tool for empowerment rather than performance alone.

The union works closely with schools, community organisations and national sport stakeholders to align its programming with broader youth development and safeguarding priorities. Building on strong youth engagement and a growing national footprint, Kenya Rugby Union has established scalable models for using rugby to support education, wellbeing and inclusive community development.

Context - why is your programme needed?

What Makes a Strong Need Section - Suggested Framework

- What is the problem? Clearly define the issue.
- Who has the problem? Identify the specific target population or community affected.
- Why is this a problem? Explain the consequences of not addressing it.
- What happens if it is not addressed? Establish urgency.
- How do you know this? Use community consultation and beneficiary quotes to reinforce need statements.

Problem Analysis Guidance

How to Analyse Need

1. Wider contextual analysis using national data
2. Direct quotes/insight from beneficiaries
3. Stakeholder consultation (players, parents, teachers, referees)
4. Link to Sustainable Development Goals (health, education, gender equality)

Key Elements to Reference

- Root causes (social norms, access, safety)
- Immediate barriers (cost, facilities, role models)
- Consequences (dropout, inactivity, social exclusion)
- Long-term impact (health inequality, reduced leadership opportunities)

Common Mistakes

- **Reliance on national and local data** - anyone can research stats and figures, funders want to understand how well you know your community, what they've told you the issues are, how you've consulted with them etc.
- **Need statements not aligned to funder priorities** - whilst the evidence you're presenting in this section could be accurate, it is irrelevant if you're talking about issues that funders aren't interested in or aren't linking these need statements to the funder's priorities.
- **Community consultation seems tokenistic and not organic/sustained** - funders can see through weak evidence of community consultation, they need to know that communities have had regular opportunities to share their feedback in open and non-judgemental forums. Examples include Youth Voice Panels, having members of the community on trustee boards/sub-committee boards, regular community forums and direct quotes from target group members. Other ways to evidence organic consultation include quotes from multiple stakeholders/target groups, evidencing a range of consultation methods (surveys, questionnaires, forums) and evidence of ongoing feedback loops.

Example Programme Need Sections

World Rugby

Sport plays an important role in supporting youth development, promoting gender equality and strengthening community wellbeing. However, access to structured and inclusive sport opportunities remains uneven across many regions where World Rugby member unions operate. In many communities, young people face barriers that limit their participation in organised sport, including limited school sport provision, a shortage of trained coaches, gender inequality and concerns about safe and inclusive sporting environments.

This challenge primarily affects children and adolescents, particularly those in underserved communities where schools and community organisations have limited resources to deliver structured sport programmes. Girls face additional barriers to participation. Cultural expectations, a lack of female coaches and role models, and limited access to safe sporting environments often lead to girls leaving sport earlier than boys.

Globally, participation in sport declines significantly between the ages of 12 and 17, with girls disproportionately affected. In several emerging rugby

nations, girls represent less than one-third of youth participants, despite strong interest in sport during primary school years. Without accessible entry points into sport, many young people miss opportunities to develop physical literacy, confidence and important life skills such as teamwork, leadership and respect.

Schools and community organisations increasingly recognise the value of sport in supporting young people's wellbeing and social development. However, many lack the capacity or training required to deliver structured programmes that combine physical activity with safe, inclusive and values-based learning.

Consultations with World Rugby member unions, educators and community partners consistently highlight three key needs: accessible entry points into sport for children; increased opportunities for girls' participation and leadership; and structured sport programmes that promote wellbeing, respect and inclusion. Addressing these gaps is essential to ensuring that sport remains accessible and beneficial for young people in communities where opportunities to participate are currently limited.

Member Union - Brazil

In Brazil, rugby has experienced steady growth in recent years, with increasing interest among young people and schools. However, access to grassroots participation opportunities remains uneven across regions and communities. Many schools and community organisations lack the resources, trained coaches and structured programmes required to introduce rugby safely and sustainably.

Consequently, many children do not have the opportunity to try rugby or participate in organised team sport within their school environment. This gap is particularly significant in communities where school sport programmes are limited and where teachers have little experience delivering rugby-based activities. Girls are especially underrepresented in youth rugby, often due to a lack of female role models, limited awareness of the sport and fewer inclusive participation opportunities.

Consultations conducted by Confederação Brasileira de Rugby with school sport coordinators, community organisations and youth participants identified several key barriers to participation. These include limited

awareness and understanding of rugby within school sport programmes, a shortage of trained coaches able to introduce the sport safely, low participation of girls and a lack of structured entry-level opportunities for young people.

A 2024 consultation survey across partner schools in São Paulo and Curitiba highlighted strong demand for new sport opportunities. More than 65% of students reported interest in trying a new team sport, yet fewer than 25% reported having access to organised rugby activities at school. Teachers also emphasised the need for sport programmes that build confidence, teamwork and respect among students.

Parents and educators expressed strong support for school-based sport programmes that prioritise safety and inclusion. Stakeholders highlighted the importance of introducing rugby through non-contact formats and structured learning environments, ensuring the sport is accessible to beginners and welcoming for girls. Expanding structured entry-level programmes is therefore critical to meeting growing interest and ensuring equitable access to sport.

Programme Overview

What Makes a Strong Programme Overview Section

- **Clear programme details** - a funder should be able to read this section and theoretically be able to deliver the programme. They should also be able to understand the dosage - how many people, engaged for how long, engaged over what length of time, what activities each participant will have access to, etc. Activities delivered are clearly linked to need.
- **Inclusion strategy** - outline how you will reach the target group (referral partners, engagement routes, etc.) and what you've put in place to overcome the barriers they face to participation. Safeguarding should be integrated into this section to show that these procedures are part of everyday delivery and not just a standalone policy.
- **Community engagement** - evidence how community consultation has fed into programme activities and/or how learning from previous delivery has been used to improve this iteration of the programme.
- **Lived experience** - reference how lived

experience has fed into programme development and delivery. Are you coaches from the target group that you're looking to engage or do they share lived experiences? Will you have an all-female delivery team for female-focused programmes?

- **Delivery partners/stakeholders** - make sure to name any organisations that are supporting referrals, delivery or exit routes and outline what their roles and responsibilities are.
- **Sustainability** - whilst this will usually be expanded on in a separate section of grant applications/proposals, it is important to show consideration to programme sustainability through reference to exit routes, next steps for participants or target end outcomes.

Again, as with the organisational overview section, not all of these need to be included every time, depending on available word counts. The most important elements are programme details, engagement routes and community engagement.

What Supports Strong Programme Development

- Theory of change - a simple yet effective way to explain how your work creates change. It helps you map the pathway from your activities, to the results you expect, to the long-term change you are working towards.
- A programme plan defining key activities, who is responsible for delivering them, who is

engaged in each activity and programme KPIs.

- Delivery timeline with key milestones outlining what you want to achieve and by when.
- Risk register - identifying key delivery risks, mitigations and the individual responsible.

Common Mistakes

- Activities are not linked to the identified need.
- Lack of detail around programme activities makes the programme feel unstructured and unplanned.
- Referral and partner organisations are not named, meaning these plans lack credibility and will lead to funders doubting how planned the programme is. This weakness is made worse if the organisation has no previous track record in engaging this target group, as it

makes funders doubt they have the ability to reach the community group identified.

- Considerations are not being made to facilitate the engagement of hard to reach target groups.
- No evidence around how the community has fed into the delivery - funders want programmes to be delivered for target groups, not to them

Example Programme Overview Sections

World Rugby

World Rugby will deliver the Get Into Rugby programme as a global grassroots participation initiative designed to introduce children and young people to rugby in a safe, inclusive and development-focused environment.

The programme targets children aged 6–14 and is delivered through partnerships with schools, community organisations and national member unions.

Using a structured, non-contact introduction to rugby, the programme provides a positive first experience of sport while promoting values such as respect, teamwork and integrity.

Through its global network of member unions, World Rugby will support the delivery of Get Into Rugby sessions across multiple regions, prioritising countries where access to organised youth sport remains limited.

The programme combines coach education, curriculum resources and safeguarding frameworks to ensure consistent quality and safe delivery standards across all participating unions.

World Rugby will provide technical guidance, training materials and monitoring systems, while national unions will lead local delivery through trained coaches and partnerships with schools and community

Programme Scale and Deliverables

Across participating countries, the programme will aim to achieve the following delivery outputs over a 12-month implementation period:

Participation

- Introduce rugby to 10,000–15,000 children aged 6–14 across participating countries
- Deliver activities in 80–120 schools and community organisations
- Achieve at least 45% participation by girls

Session Delivery

- Deliver 1–2 structured sessions per week per school or community site
- Each delivery site will run 12–20 sessions over a 3–4 month programme cycle
- Sessions will last 45–60 minutes, using the Get Into Rugby non-contact curriculum
- Total programme delivery expected to exceed 1,500–2,000 sessions globally

Coach and Facilitator Development

- Train 200–300 teachers, community coaches and youth leaders through accredited introductory coaching courses
- Ensure at least 30% of newly trained facilitators are women
- Provide safeguarding training and programme orientation for all facilitators prior to delivery

Programme Monitoring

- All participating unions will register sessions and participants through the Get Into Rugby monitoring platform
- Collect participation data, including age, gender and session attendance
- Conduct pre- and post-programme feedback surveys with participants and facilitators to measure confidence, enjoyment and skill development

Example Programme Overview Sections

Member Union - Fiji

The Fiji Rugby Union will deliver the Get Into Rugby as a school-based initiative designed to expand access to safe and inclusive sport opportunities for children across both urban and rural communities.

While rugby is deeply embedded in Fiji's national culture, access to structured introductory programmes remains uneven, particularly in smaller island communities and among younger age groups.

Through this programme, the union will partner with primary schools across targeted provinces to introduce students aged 7–13 to rugby using the Get Into Rugby curriculum.

Programme Deliverables

Participation

- Introduce rugby to 1,200–1,500 children during the programme year
- Deliver activities in 20 primary schools across targeted provinces
- Achieve at least 45–50% participation by girls

Session Delivery

- Deliver one structured rugby session per week per school
- Each school will run 12–16 sessions over a 3–4 month period
- Sessions will last 45–60 minutes and be delivered during physical education classes or after-school activities
- Estimated 300–350 total sessions delivered across all participating schools

Coach and Teacher Training

- Train 40 teachers and community coaches in introductory rugby coaching
- Recruit and train 10–12 female coaches or youth leaders to support girls' participation
- Provide safeguarding and child-protection training to all facilitators

Community Engagement

- Conduct community awareness sessions with parents and school leaders in each participating community
- Organise 3–4 school rugby festivals bringing together 100–150 participants per event

Sustainability and Pathways

The programme will strengthen links between schools and local rugby clubs to ensure that children who develop an interest in the sport have opportunities to continue participation beyond the school environment.

- Establish formal partnerships between at least 10 schools and local rugby clubs
- Support 200–300 interested children to attend introductory club training sessions
- Identify student youth leaders in participating schools to support future programme activities

Through this approach, the Fiji Rugby Union aims not only to increase participation in rugby but also to use sport as a platform for youth development, teamwork and community engagement.

Example Programme Overview Sections

Phased Delivery Model

The programme will operate through a structured three-phase model.

Phase 1 – Programme Preparation (Months 1–3):

Participating unions will identify target schools and communities, establish local partnerships and train programme facilitators. This phase will include:

- *Identification of 15–25 delivery sites per participating country*
- *Training of 10–20 local coaches and teachers per country*
- *Community orientation sessions with schools and parents to introduce the programme*

Phase 2 – Programme Delivery (Months 4–9): *Regular school-based sessions will introduce children to rugby through games and skill-based activities.*

- *Weekly sessions delivered across participating schools*
- *20–30 children per session group*
- *Delivery of basic rugby skills, movement activities and values-based learning modules*

Phase 3 – Pathways and Sustainability (Months 10–12):

The final phase will strengthen pathways from introductory participation into continued sport engagement.

- *Establish links between schools and local rugby clubs*
- *Host local rugby festivals or participation days involving 100–200 children per event*
- *Identify youth leaders or volunteers to support future programme delivery*

By combining global technical expertise with locally led delivery, the programme will expand access to sport, particularly for girls and young people in underserved communities. The international model allows for adaptation to local cultural contexts while maintaining consistent safeguarding standards and development outcomes.

What Difference Will Your Programme Make?

A strong outcomes section clearly explains the change that will occur because of the programme - not just the activities delivered. Funders are looking for credible, measurable and realistic change statements that link directly to the problem identified earlier in the application.

What Makes a Strong Outcomes Section

- Distinguish clearly between:
 - Activities (what you do – e.g., deliver 40 sessions)
 - Outputs (what is produced – e.g., 800 young people reached)
 - Outcomes (what changes – e.g., improved confidence, increased retention)
- Outcomes are specific and measurable. Weak: “Girls will feel empowered.” Strong: “70% of participating girls report increased confidence and intention to continue in sport after 6 months.”
- Underpinned by a ToC, meaning that each outcome responds to a barrier or challenge described in the need section and is directly linked to programme activities.
- Include both quantitative and qualitative change
 - Quantitative: participation numbers, retention rates, accreditation figures
 - Qualitative: aspirations, attitude, sense of safety, leadership behaviours
- Outcomes are realistic and evidence-informed - targets should be based on previous delivery data or pilot results where available.
- Sustainability is demonstrated - outcomes should show lasting change (e.g., trained female coaches remain active beyond the funding cycle, increasing community capacity for inclusive sports provision).

Example Programme Outcome Sections

World Rugby

The international delivery of Get Into Rugby will expand equitable access to organised sport for children who may otherwise have limited opportunities to participate in structured physical activity. By introducing rugby in a safe, non-contact and inclusive format, the programme will create positive first experiences of sport that build confidence, teamwork and a sense of belonging among young participants.

A key outcome of the programme will be increased participation of girls in organised sport. By prioritising inclusive delivery models and supporting the development of female coaches and facilitators, the programme will help address gender disparities that exist across many sport systems. Girls participating in the programme will benefit from safe spaces to engage in sport, develop confidence and build peer networks that encourage continued participation.

Gender equity outcomes include:

- *Minimum 45–50% female participation across programme delivery sites.*
- *At least 30% of newly trained coaches or facilitators are women.*
- *75% of girls reporting increased confidence to participate in sport following programme engagement.*
- *At least 25% of participating girls progressing to ongoing rugby or sport activities in schools or community clubs.*

The programme will also strengthen community sport ecosystems by developing local coaching capacity. Through accredited training programmes, teachers,

volunteers and community coaches will gain the skills required to continue delivering rugby activities beyond the life of the grant.

Capacity-building outcomes include:

- *150–200 teachers, coaches and community volunteers trained through accredited introductory coaching courses.*
- *90% of trained facilitators delivering at least one follow-up rugby activity within six months of training.*
- *At least 60 schools or community organisations integrating rugby activities into regular physical education or extracurricular programming.*

At a broader level, the programme will demonstrate the role of sport as a tool for social development. Participants will develop life skills including communication, leadership, resilience and respect for others.

Life-skills and social development outcomes include:

- *80% of participants demonstrating improved teamwork and communication skills based on facilitator assessments.*
- *70% of programme sites incorporating structured life-skills modules within rugby sessions.*
- *Evidence of positive behavioural change reported by teachers or community leaders in at least 65% of participating schools.*

Example Programme Outcome Sections

Member Union - Federación Colombiana de Rugby

Through the implementation of Get Into Rugby, Federación Colombiana de Rugby aims to increase access to organised sport opportunities for children in communities where structured extracurricular activities are limited.

The programme will introduce rugby to young participants through school partnerships and community organisations, providing safe and inclusive environments where children can develop physical skills, confidence and positive social relationships.

Participation outcomes include:

- *1,200–1,500 children introduced to rugby across programme schools and community sites.*
- *Delivery in at least 20 schools and 10 community organisations in targeted regions.*
- *75% participant retention across a series of introductory sessions.*

The programme will make a particular contribution to increasing girls' participation in sport.

By creating welcoming and inclusive entry points into rugby and promoting female role models within coaching and leadership positions, the programme will support greater gender equity in school sport participation.

Gender equity indicators will include:

- *Minimum 45% female participation among programme participants.*
- *At least 10 female teachers or coaches trained to deliver introductory rugby sessions.*
- *80% of participating girls reporting increased confidence and willingness to take part in sport.*

In addition to participation outcomes, the programme will strengthen community capacity to deliver youth sport programmes. Teachers and local coaches trained through the programme will continue delivering introductory rugby sessions within schools and community settings, creating sustainable pathways for youth engagement in sport.

Sustainability and pathway indicators will include:

- *40 teachers and community coaches trained through accredited introductory coaching courses.*
- *At least 70% of trained facilitators continuing delivery of rugby sessions after initial training.*
- *Formal partnerships established between 10 schools and local rugby clubs, creating pathways for children to transition into regular club participation.*

How Will You Measure Programme Success?

This section is often decisive in funding decisions. Strong impact measurement sections demonstrate credibility, accountability and learning capacity - not just data collection.

Funders are looking for evidence that you:

- Understand what meaningful change looks like
- Have systems to measure it reliably
- Will use findings to improve delivery
- Can report clearly and transparently

It must be recognised that no single type of evidence

can fully capture the value of your work. Different types of data work together to give donors both the proof (numbers) and the meaning (stories) needed to understand your impact and feel confident in your work.

You can communicate your organisation's impact through a combination of quantitative data, qualitative insights, testimonials, case studies, and observed community changes. The goal is to show what you did, what changed, and why it is important, helping donors see the real value of their support.

What Makes a Strong Impact Measurement Section

1. Clear link to outcomes

Measurement methods must align directly with the outcomes listed earlier. Each stated outcome should have:

- At least one indicator
- A data collection method
- A timeline for measurement

2. Baseline and Endline Comparison:

- Baseline data (before the programme begins - if baseline data is unavailable, state clearly how it will be collected in the first phase.)
- Midline (optional for multi-year programmes)
- Endline comparison to demonstrate change

3. Mixed-Methods Approach

High-quality impact sections combine:

- Quantitative, such as -
 - Participation numbers
 - Retention rates
 - Gender ratios
 - Accreditation completions

- Qualitative, such as -

- Participant insights (confidence, safety, belonging)
- Focus groups with participants
- Case studies
- Coach/staff/teacher feedback

4. Learning and Adaptation

Strong applications explain how data will be used, for example:

- Quarterly review meetings
- Adjusting session content based on feedback
- Sharing learning across national member unions
- Annual impact report shared with stakeholders and national member unions

Common Mistakes

- Listing indicators without explaining how they will be collected
- Measuring only participation numbers
- Utilising evaluation methods that aren't suitable for the target group engaged
- No baseline data
- No explanation of who is responsible for M&E
- No budget allocated for evaluation
- The complexity of measurement tools does not align with the size of the grant
- Not aligned with ToC

Example Impact Measurement Sections

World Rugby

World Rugby will measure the success of the Get Into Rugby programme through a structured monitoring and evaluation framework that combines participation data, programme quality indicators and participant feedback. A centralised reporting system will enable participating unions to record participant numbers, demographic data and session delivery information. This system allows World Rugby to monitor participation trends across regions and to ensure that programmes are reaching target populations, particularly girls and young people from underserved communities.

Participating unions will collect baseline and end-of-programme data to assess changes in

participation levels, gender balance and participant engagement. Surveys and structured feedback tools will also be used to capture qualitative outcomes, including participants' confidence, enjoyment of sport and perceptions of safety within the programme environment.

World Rugby will support unions in implementing consistent monitoring standards and will conduct periodic programme reviews to assess delivery quality and identify areas for improvement. Aggregated programme data will inform global reporting and learning, allowing World Rugby to strengthen the effectiveness of grassroots rugby development initiatives continuously.

Member Union - The Philippines

The Philippine Rugby Football Union will measure the success of the Get Into Rugby programme through a combination of participation monitoring, participant feedback and partner evaluations. Coaches will maintain attendance records for each session to track participant numbers and retention across the programme cycle.

At the beginning and end of each programme cycle, participating young people will complete short surveys designed to assess changes in confidence, enjoyment of physical activity and interest in continuing participation in sport. Staff members will also

provide feedback on young people's engagement and behavioural outcomes observed during programme delivery.

Programme staff will conduct periodic school and community organisation visits to observe session delivery and ensure that activities align with World Rugby coaching and safeguarding standards. Data collected throughout the programme will be reviewed by the union's development team to identify lessons learned and to refine future programme delivery.

Sustainability – how do you plan to sustain your programme following the end of the funding period?

The sustainability section reassures funders that their investment will create lasting change beyond the grant period. A strong response demonstrates financial, institutional and community sustainability - not simply an intention to “seek further funding.”

Funders want to see:

- Long-term ownership
- Reduced dependency on external grants
- Embedded capacity within communities
- Clear transition planning

What Makes a Strong Sustainability Section

1. Institutional sustainability (capacity building) -

explain how skills, systems and knowledge will remain after funding ends, for example:

- Training local coaches, teachers and volunteers as certified deliverers
- Developing female leadership pathways
- Embedding safeguarding and EDI standards into policies
- Creating reusable curriculum resources

2. Financial sustainability (diversified income) - avoid stating that you plan to apply for more grants. Instead demonstrate:

- Co-funding commitments
- In-kind commitments
- Government or key stakeholder partnerships
- Corporate sponsorship prospects
- Participant contribution models where appropriate
- Integration into national member union operational budgets
- A clear fundraising plan/strategy

3. Community ownership - programmes are more sustainable when communities value and own them, for example, through:

- Parent engagement
- School leadership buy-in
- Youth leadership committees
- Local volunteer networks
- Partnership involvement

4. Systems integration - demonstrate how the programme aligns with the larger context that you're operating in, for example, through:

- National sport strategies
- Education curricula
- Safeguarding regulations
- Gender equity action plans
- Local or national government plans, policies and strategies
- UN SDGs

5. Scalable model design - if relevant, explain how:

- Pilot phases inform national scale-up
- Resources are modular and replicable
- Training-of-trainers models reduce long-term cost

6. Exit or transition strategy - for time-bound funding, describe:

- Gradual reduction of grant contribution
- Community capacity building
- Sustainability review in the final year

Not all of these sustainability elements need to be covered in every sustainability section, depending on the space provided. The most important elements are financial sustainability, institutional sustainability and community ownership.

Common Mistakes

- Stating “we will look for additional funding” without evidence or detail
- No clear ownership beyond the delivery staff
- No financial transition plan
- No integration into existing systems
- Sustainability is treated as an afterthought rather than designed from the beginning

Example Sustainability Sections

World Rugby

World Rugby's approach to sustainability focuses on building the capacity of national member unions, coaches and educators to continue delivering grassroots rugby programmes independently.

Through accredited coach education systems, digital learning resources and standardised curricula, World Rugby ensures that programme knowledge and tools remain available beyond the initial funding period.

By embedding Get Into Rugby within school systems and national rugby development strategies, the

programme creates long-term structures for continued participation.

The training of teachers and community coaches allows sessions to continue within schools even after external funding concludes.

World Rugby also works closely with national unions to integrate grassroots participation programmes into their strategic plans and operational budgets, reducing reliance on external funding over time.

Member Union - USA

USA Rugby will sustain the Get Into Rugby programme by integrating the initiative within its national youth development and school engagement strategy while strengthening partnerships with school districts, community sport organisations and local rugby clubs. Through the programme, teachers and physical education instructors trained in the Get Into Rugby curriculum will continue delivering introductory rugby activities within school sport and physical education programmes, ensuring that students have ongoing opportunities to participate beyond the life of the grant.

The programme will also build a network of trained community coaches and volunteers who will support after-school sessions, youth rugby festivals and introductory club programmes. These volunteers will work alongside school staff and local rugby organisations to provide structured pathways for students who wish to continue participating in rugby

outside the school environment.

Equipment provided through the programme will remain with participating schools and community partners, allowing sessions to continue with minimal ongoing costs. USA Rugby will further support sustainability by linking participating schools with existing youth rugby clubs and regional development programmes, ensuring that students who develop an interest in the sport can transition into community rugby opportunities.

By embedding Get Into Rugby within established school partnerships and community sport structures, and by investing in the training of teachers and volunteer coaches, USA Rugby will ensure that the programme continues to expand access to safe and inclusive sport opportunities for young people long after the initial funding period has ended.

Experience and Knowledge of Delivery Staff

You don't need to include a comprehensive CV – cherry-pick the knowledge, skills, and experience that make your team best-placed to deliver the work. Funders

want to know that the people behind your work can represent their goals also – especially as it becomes public knowledge that they're funding you.

What Makes a Strong Delivery Staff Section

1. Relevant Experience in Sport for Development

Funders want to see that staff understand how sport delivers social outcomes - not just how to coach.

- Highlight experience delivering life skills, education, wellbeing or inclusion outcomes through sport
- Reference work with similar target groups
- Show understanding of barriers faced by participants
- Demonstrate experience in community or school settings

2. Appropriate Qualifications and Training

Include formal credentials that demonstrate quality and safety, such as:

- Coaching certifications (relevant level)
- Safeguarding training
- First aid certification
- Youth work or education qualifications
- Gender inclusion or disability inclusion training (where relevant)

3. Safeguarding and Duty of Care Capacity

- All staff are safeguarding trained
- Clear background checks (e.g., DBS or national equivalent)
- Understanding of safe sport principles
- Experience working in protected environments (schools, youth programmes, etc.)

4. Lived Experience - funders value delivery teams who understand the local environment.

- Staff recruited from the local community
- Experience working in the target geography
- Cultural or linguistic relevance
- Understanding of gender or inclusion barriers

5. Ongoing Professional Development

This shows organisational maturity and quality assurance.

- Regular refresher training
- Mentoring or supervision structures
- Continuous learning in sport for development approaches
- Monitoring of coaching quality

6. Delivery Structure and Support

Funders want confidence that the staff are well managed. Include brief clarity on:

- Who supervises delivery staff
- Coach-to-participant ratios (if relevant)
- Use of session plans or curriculum
- Quality assurance processes

The most important elements to include in this section are lived experience, relevant experience and appropriate training/qualifications, with additional elements being included when a question provides enough space to add it.

Common Mistakes

- Listing elite playing history without development relevance
- Being vague ('experienced coaches')
- Forgetting safeguarding
- No mention of target group experience
- No quality assurance or supervision
- Overly long staff biographies

Organisational Expertise

In this section, funders want to be told why they should support your organisation to deliver the activities you're outlining. They want to know what makes you qualified to deliver it, whether you have a track record of delivering the outcomes you've outlined and what connections you have that support your delivery.

1. Clear Track Record of Relevant Delivery

- Demonstrate experience delivering similar programmes
- Reference years of delivery
- Show reach and scale (participants, locations, partners)
- Highlight work with the same or similar target groups

2. Evidence of Sport for Development Approach

- Uses sport to achieve education, wellbeing, gender, or inclusion outcomes
- Has structured curricula, programme models or ToC
- Integrates life skills or values-based learning
- Measures development outcomes, not just participation numbers

3. Demonstrated Results and Impact

- Key outcomes achieved
- Evaluation findings
- Retention or progression data
- Behavioural or social changes observed
- External validation where possible

4. Strong Safeguarding and Quality Systems

- Organisational safeguarding policy and procedures
- Safe recruitment practices
- Coach training and supervision
- Monitoring and quality assurance processes
- Risk management systems

5. Partnerships and Delivery Ecosystem

Funders like organisations that are embedded and collaborative.

- NGOs and Development Organisations - NGO partners bring expertise in social development, safeguarding, gender equity and youth engagement. Examples: Collaboration with organisations specialising in girls' empowerment. Partnerships with health NGOs delivering wellbeing education.

- National Rugby Federations and Sport Bodies - National unions and regional rugby bodies provide technical standards, coach education and competition pathways. Examples: National federation delivering coach and referee accreditation courses. Integration with national youth competition pathways. Alignment with national participation strategies.
- Community Organisations - Local community groups help reach underserved populations and provide trusted environments for youth. Examples: Youth centres hosting after-school rugby sessions. Community organisations supporting outreach to girls and marginalised groups. Faith or community leaders helping engage parents and guardians.
- Schools and Education Systems - Schools are often the primary entry point for youth participation programmes. Examples: Delivery of Get Into Rugby sessions during physical education classes in partnership with school sport coordinators. Training teachers as assistant rugby facilitators to ensure sustainability. Integrating rugby-based life-skills modules into school wellbeing programmes.

6. Geographic and Contextual Experience

Show you understand the environment you're working in. Strong examples highlight:

- Demonstrate experience delivering similar programmes
- Experience in the target geography
- Work in similar communities
- Understanding of local barriers
- Established local presence

7. Organisational Learning and Adaptation

Uses sport to achieve education, wellbeing, gender, or inclusion outcomes:

- Use of monitoring and evaluation data
- Adapting programmes based on learning
- Evidence that learning and insight has been used to refine the delivery model over time

Example Organisation Expertise Sections

World Rugby

World Rugby has extensive experience delivering large-scale sport participation and development programmes across diverse global contexts.

Through its network of more than 130 national member unions, the organisation supports grassroots participation initiatives, coach education programmes and safeguarding standards that enable safe and inclusive sport environments.

World Rugby's development programmes have successfully introduced rugby to millions of young

participants through school partnerships and community sport initiatives.

The organisation provides accredited training for coaches, referees and educators and maintains global safeguarding frameworks that ensure participant protection and programme quality.

This combination of technical expertise, international reach and established delivery systems positions World Rugby as a trusted partner for large-scale sport for development initiatives.

Member Union - Scotland

The Scottish Rugby Union has developed significant experience delivering youth participation programmes through long-standing partnerships with schools, local authorities and community sport organisations. Over the past decade, the union has expanded access to rugby through structured school-based initiatives supported by trained development officers, qualified coaches and extensive volunteer networks. These programmes introduce young people to rugby in safe and inclusive environments while supporting broader educational and wellbeing outcomes.

Working closely with education authorities, local councils and grassroots clubs, the union has built a well-established delivery ecosystem that supports

sustained participation pathways from school sport into community rugby. Development staff provide ongoing support and training to teachers and volunteers, ensuring consistent programme quality and safeguarding standards across all delivery environments.

Through this collaborative approach, Scottish Rugby has strengthened grassroots rugby participation while creating opportunities for young people to develop teamwork, leadership and confidence through sport. The organisation's established partnerships and experienced delivery workforce position it well to continue expanding access to rugby for young people across Scotland.

Common Mistakes

- Describing only sport activity, not development outcomes
- Being vague ("we have lots of experience")
- No numbers or scale indicators of reach
- No safeguarding mention
- Listing partners without explaining relevance
- Overly historical narrative with little current relevance
- Confusing staff experience with organisational capacity
- Experience not relevant to the programme or funder

Supporting Documents Most Frequently Required

- Detailed budget breakdown - template developed
- Monitoring and evaluation framework - template developed
- Last three years of audited annual accounts
- Legal registration document
- Safeguarding policy
- EDI policy
- Risk register

Key Recommendations

Go through the full application questions before you start writing	To avoid repeating yourself across questions, manage your capacity, and to avoid last-minute stress at the submission stage.
Tailor your organisational overview to the funder	This is often the first area they'll read about your organisation, so you need to avoid raising questions about alignment and cohesion between yourself and the funder.
Use programme summaries to your advantage	Answer the following questions to give a concise overview of your work and captivate the funder: What is the programme? Where will it take place? Who will it support? When will you deliver it? Why is it needed?
Take time to interpret each question	Understanding nuances in question phrasing (e.g., between 'impact' vs 'outcomes', 'what is the need?' vs 'who will this funding support?') to align your responses with exactly what the funder is hoping to read.
Ensure community involvement is authentic	Funders want to see that your programmes are shaped with, not just for, your communities. Create pathways for involvement (e.g., youth advisory groups, consultations). Go beyond tokenism by giving people training, support and influence to make real decisions. Recruit and train people who understand your community's culture and context so that programmes are relevant and respectful.
Make sure there's a flow between need, outputs and outcomes	This should form the spine of your application for the other responses to be built around and they should be clearly linked. If you are bringing up a problem in the need section of the application, this need should be addressed by the activities in the programme outputs section and the impact of these activities should then be articulated in the outcomes section. There shouldn't be any outcomes listed that aren't linked to programme outputs and vice versa.

Key Recommendations

Break down objectives into tangible milestones	To show the funder that you've got clear success metrics that you'll use to actualise outcomes and long-term impact.
Do not underestimate the importance of impact measurement	By measuring and communicating your impact effectively, you: • Build donor confidence and stand out in competitive funding spaces. • Strengthen your legitimacy and credibility. • Improve programme design and internal decision-making. • Motivate teams and inspire stakeholders. • Deepen trust with donors, partners and communities through transparency.
Avoid 'fact firing'	Interweave your mission, vision, and values within the narrative. E.g., rather than 'our mission is...', consider 'we've taken it upon ourselves to...'. This brings your work to life through active, rather than static, concepts.
Be confident while acknowledging risks	Funders know that no matter how confident you are, there will always be risks that could jeopardise the success of a programme. They want to see that you're aware of these and have incorporated them into contingency planning. Communicate your plans clearly and you will gain trust.
Connect to the wider sector	Regardless of the level at which you're delivering, it's important to be aware of sector updates and the work taking place. This enables you to understand how your work fits within the wider sport for development landscape, identify potential partnerships, and harness research gathered by other organisations to inform your work.