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Description automatically generated**Check List – Raising Funds for Your Business**

One of the mistakes many businesses make is not preparing for the fact that they might need funding during their lifecycle. If you’ve seen our Masterclass Video on funding and/or have read through our fact sheet, you will know that funding requires preparation. To leave it until you actually need the funds can seriously compromise your ability to get the right financial help for your business and it can add severe stress to you, the business owner, who may already be under pressure.

Below is a checklist of everything you can do and pre-plan for, so that if and when the time comes that you are looking for investment, you will still need to do some research but you’ll be in a really good place to apply.

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| **Action** | **Documents** | **Check** |
| * Make a list of all the projects you have listed within your business plan that you’d like to deliver as your business grows (for example if you have a campsite, you may in the future want to add in glamping pods or an event venue or an outdoor terrace and dining area or even a spa area) | * We recommend that you create a separate folder on your computer hard drive – titled ‘projects’ and then create sub folders under this with each separate project name |  |
| * Work out the current cost for this project to be delivered – ideally by getting estimates from tradespeople or where this might not be possible from getting costs on-line   You will need to review these costs annually, but this will give you a good base point to work from | * For each of the projects, start a budget (excel or google sheets or apple numbers) and list on the left-hand side all of the elements that will be needed for the project to be completed. In the next column insert the estimated cost. In the next column calculate a percentage for inflation. In the final column add the two sums together. Total each sheet at the bottom * Save the trade estimates in the same sub folder so that you can easily find these in the future * Where you have taken costs from the internet. Save the internet page into the sub folder by right clicking on your mouse, click on print and then change your printer drop down box to print to pdf. You can then save in the folder |  |
| * Create a profit and loss forecast sheet for each of your projects and save within the relevant project folder. | * A sample template is included in our resource section, but you don’t have to follow this format. The important thing is for you to assess, once your project is up and running, what income you can start to expect to gain from this and when across the year * You will also need to assess what your fixed operating costs will be and what your variable operating costs will be so that you can see the operating profit * You will also need to include an interest payment for any loan that you may need to fund the project. For now, take an average of the loans you can find on-line * You may need to create a profit and loss sheet for 12, 24, 36 months if it will take this long for you to recover your initial outlay and see the true profit. Essentially, we are looking to see where you break even |  |
| * Review and research current debt and equity lenders in sufficient detail on-line (from online reviews) that you can shortlist 3 lenders from each option that you might want to approach when the time arises.   We recommend you review this list each year as lenders terms change regularly as do lenders that are on the market, and you may find better options when you come to apply for funding | * Under your main ‘projects’ folder, create a new folder titled ‘Lenders’ * Under this folder create 2 sub folders and create one that says Debt and one that says Equity * Save your research under the relevant folder. Where this is internet research you can save pages by right clicking on your mouse, click on print and then change your printer drop down box to print to pdf. You can then save in the folder |  |
| * If you know of grant funders that have historically released funding for the type of project you are looking to undertake or know of organisations such as Business Lincolnshire that can sign post towards funders, then research these now | * Under your sub folder titled ‘Lenders’, create a new sub folder titled ‘Grants’ * Save your research within this folder. Where this is internet research you can save pages by right clicking on your mouse, click on print and then change your printer drop down box to print to pdf. You can then save in the folder |  |
| * The next step is to make sure you have all your financials in place      * You may have a digital accounting system such as XERO, Quickbooks, Freshbooks, FreeAgent which makes it easy for you to pull reports at a click of a button. However, we recommend that you save a copy of the financials you will need to supply any lender or grant funder in a separate folder on your computer hard drive so that it's one less thing for you to worry about | * On your computer hard drive create a folder called Finance * Under the Finance Folder, create separate folders for each year (dating back the last 3 years) and including this current year and create further sub folders called ‘Accounts’ * If you are a limited company save a copy of your final accounts, if you are self employed or your tax returns within each relevant year * You should also save, separately your profit and loss and balance sheet * If you have had any loans, create a loans subfolder under the relevant years within the finance folder and save your loan information * If you have had any grants, create a grants sub folder under the relevant years within the finance folder and save your grant information |  |

This may sound like a lot of planning, but you are much more likely to achieve your goals if you are prepared and organised. If you need any help with any of these phases, please get in touch with the team at Business Lincolnshire [**https://www.businesslincolnshire.com/contact**](https://www.businesslincolnshire.com/contact)