

5 tips to create your own community benefits wish list

1

MAKE IT EASY

Think about the information your suppliers really need to decide if they can grant a wish or not. Minimising the questions has two benefits: it's quicker for charities to fill out the form and more manageable for suppliers to understand what they are being asked. On that note, word limits are your friend, too – it encourages people to be clear about what they need.

2

USE MULTIPLE CHANNELS TO REACH OUT AND ENGAGE WITH YOUR COMMUNITY GROUPS

Focus groups with suppliers, internal stakeholders, procurement team, and community groups will help you create a wishlist that people will not only use but also tell others about. Seek to understand what they do now, their challenges and how they think things could be improved. Find out about the processes and systems they must satisfy and the practical things like how they like to access information.

3

YOUR WISHLIST WILL NEED NURTURING

Send regular emails to suppliers with the updated list and celebrate success stories far and wide. Once people see the list working, it will get more use, which means more opportunities to grant wishes, becoming a beautiful circle. However, this work needs to be done by someone. The Wishlist can be automated, but it will be much more effective if you have someone responsible for communicating with suppliers. Particularly at critical points in the contract and answering questions from the third sector.

4

SUPPLIERS AREN'T CHARITIES

It can be tempting for charities to ask for money, and while that might be helpful, the truth is that often that will drive up the cost of your contract. So instead, we want to create reciprocal relationships where suppliers provide services and products to the local community they already have expertise. For example, a landscaper might donate topsoil or labour. A Corporate could provide their web developer for a while or offer HR templates and policies.

5

ACT AS A MATCHMAKER BETWEEN CONTRACTS AND COMMUNITIES

Being proactive is essential. Think about the contracts you're tendering and then identify community and third sector groups that 'match' the suppliers who deliver them - this is where the magic happens. The work is done for you when a heating systems supplier can help a charity work to combat fuel poverty. Or when a financial services company can assist an organisation which supports people with debt problems.