

QDI: Guidance for Applicants

Decisions on Applications:

Decisions on applications are made by the QDI consortium, which consists of one representative from each of the networks on the QDI project. Decisions are made using the selection criteria provided with these guidance notes. The application form has been designed to address the points in the selection criteria and you should ensure that your application answers these points as fully as possible.

Guidance on Application Form:

If you have any queries about how to fill out the form or to answer any specific questions please contact the QDI Project Coordinator who will be happy to go through the questions with you. Notes on how to answer some of the specific questions are set out below:

Question 5:

It is very important that you read all the commitment conditions in question 5; they must be ticked & agreed by both staff & Management Committee. The purpose of the project is to focus on the development of your advice service. This process requires time and commitment both from staff, volunteers and members of your management committee.

The assessment and action planning are part of this development process. The bursary money is linked to the development needs of your organisation.

The assessment and action planning will require at least one member of the Management Committee and one member of staff/volunteer to meet with the development worker for two 2-hour meetings. Staff, volunteer and management committee time will also be required to implement the recommendations from the assessment.

Your organisation should therefore look carefully at the commitment conditions at the end of the application form to ensure that you are able to meet them.

Question 6: This question focuses on why your organisation requires support from the QDI Project. It is the most important question on the form and is the main question that the QDI panel will use to assess your application to decide whether it meets the aims of QDI as set out in the selection criteria.

Your organisation's development needs will be addressed during the development work undertaken by QDI but you will need to have some clear ideas about why you need support from the project. You should address what you want to develop & improve and how QDI can help with this. Examples could be:

Organisational Management:

- To address organisational issues such as planning and funding to ensure the advice service functions effectively.

Advice Management:

- To review how you are delivering your advice service and the practices you need to have in place to deliver it effectively
- To create better links with other local advice providers and develop a referrals process

Service Development:

- To look at ways of making the advice service more accessible

Additionally you need to address how the improvements will benefit your client group, examples could be:

- Addressing organisational issues will lead to a healthier organisation able to concentrate on the delivery of the service
- Training of staff and volunteers ensures clients receive accurate and up to date advice
- Clients can access your service better and are clearer about what your service can offer them

You also need to show how these developments will contribute to advice needs in your area. Examples could be:

- Clearer about type and level of advice you offer and how this links with other advice agencies in the borough
- Services made more accessible to a particular client group
- Meeting the needs of a specific client group or specific area of advice

Question 7: You need to state clearly when your advice service is open and how it is delivered. This needs to be distinguished from general opening & office hours. You may be providing other services as well as advice but the application form is looking specifically for the hours that the advice service is delivered. If you have a service leaflet this should be attached to the application form. QDI is aimed at organisations that *already* have an established advice function, this may be a service in need of a good deal of development. However organisations wishing to develop an advice service from scratch are not eligible for QDI.

Questions 9&10: Only tick the areas of advice that apply to your service, you can be providing one or more areas of advice. Ensure that you have read the QDI definitions of advice in page 2 of 'QDI – how the project works'.

Question 11: Only give details of staff & volunteers in the *advice* service, other staff & volunteers involved in different work are not taken into account by QDI.

Question 12:

QDI needs to know if you are receiving or have received in the past 2 years any development support from another source. This is to ensure that any work QDI undertakes does not duplicate any previous/ongoing development work. Agencies already receiving development support from another source will only receive support from QDI to focus on other areas of development not currently being addressed. This will ensure that QDI complements the development work already being undertaken. Please provide information about who has provided this support and what the work covered e.g. a freelance consultant helping with your business planning, the local council for voluntary service providing help on financial management etc. Any documents related to this development support should be attached to the back of the application form.

Question 13: This section is looking for the links you have with other *advice* agencies to gain information on the relationships you have with other agencies and the role you play in the borough, examples could be

- Attending regular advisers' meetings e.g. local welfare benefits advisers forum
- Telephone contact with a worker in another advice agency who provides you with guidance and support on complex cases
- Referral arrangements with a local advice agency
- You provide outreach services in another advice agency's premises or they provide an outreach service in your premises

Contact Details:

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Deadlines for applications is 20th September 2002.

QDI is funded by:

