We wanted to give some tips on fundraising and sponsorship following recent presentations by Adrian Stores of ACROBAT FCSM who is working with the English Schools' Football Association as a sponsorship broker, and here is our starting 'Line Up'.

E S F A

WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO GET FUNDING FOR?

- You'll need to be clear about this to make sure your research is effective

RESEARCH

- Try to match what funders are looking for with what you do. Some selected sources of information are listed overleaf

THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX

- You know better than anyone else what benefits schools' football brings so don't restrict yourself to sports/education funding. Schools' football develops wider skills - teamwork and responsibility, for example, so "citizenship" funding might be appropriate. Think about the obvious health benefits and look for anti-obesity or related health funding, as well as exploring community cohesion or local/geographically restricted funds

PREPARE YOUR STORY

- Funders will want to know what their investment "buys", whether that be more teams/players, or health benefits, for example. Be prepared to show off! BUT, target your message. However proud you are of the health benefits schools' football brings, a funder who is interested in community cohesion won't be interested
- Statistics are often helpful (eg team numbers, parental reach) but remember the power of testimony, particularly if it comes from those directly involved

SHOUT ABOUT WHAT YOU DO

- Not only in funding applications. Consider web-based fundraising such as crowdfunding and use social media to generally celebrate your work, to increase your profile and demonstrate your impact

USE EXISTING RESOURCES

- Parents will often support fundraising, seek donations from employers, or otherwise support your drive for income.
- Sustain relationships with former players. They may not go on to be millionaire footballers but they may be successful in other fields and wish to pay back those who were influential in their school careers

LEARN FROM WHAT YOU DO

- Have you been excluded from seeking funding because, for example, you're not a formally constituted charity?
- If funders accept your bid/pitch but then don't agree to fund it, find out why
- What might you need to do differently to position yourselves more strongly for the future?

WHERE TO LOOK

Reference and/or guidance on funders

- National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) – www.NCVO.org.uk
- The library – see if they have an old version of the Hollis Sponsorship and Donations yearbook. No longer in circulation, but still contains useful information on corporate sponsors and their propensity to grant fund.
- Sport England
- www.fundingcentral.org.uk
- Your Local Authority
- Your local County Sports Partnership
- Your local Chamber of Commerce

Funders themselves:

- The police force locally. Some have "proceeds of crime" funds which they will use to support good causes
- The Mayor's office
- Your local supermarket. Many now run token schemes whereby customers vote for a local good cause, and the cause with the most tokens gets a proportion of the plastic bag sales income
- If you're near a motorway service station, try them. Some have funds dedicated to good causes in their localities
- Housing associations. Many have funds to develop community engagement, so starting a district team with help from residents for the children in association residences may qualify
- Funders connected with local activity or industry. For example, if you live in a mining community, the Coalfields Regeneration Trust (www.coalfields-regen.org.uk)may have funding which you could bid for
- Large employers. Some have community development funds, particularly around their geographic headquarters. Your local authority economic development department will know who the big employers are locally, if you don't.

Commercial sponsors:

- Think who a local sponsor might want to sell to. So if you have an under 18 team and a local garage, for example, they might want to promote their used car sales to new drivers.

Capitalise on on-line and technological developments

- There are a number of "cashback" platforms which give good causes a commission on any on-line purchases from major retailers when those purchases are accessed via the cashback platform. Easyfundraising.org.uk is one, but there are others. Harness the purchasing power of parents and spectators!
- Match your activity to a sponsor by advertising your sponsorship opportunity on a matching website, such as Sponsorseeker.co.uk, or Sponsormyevent.co.uk, for example. Check the small print though – there are fees payable, usually a proportion of the sponsorship you gain.