

Competency reference number and title	A3: Managing and using financial and other resources
Level of attainment claimed	Level 4
Development period: Overall dates in which competency was developed for this assessment level	██████████ - ██████████

Context

Give a brief outline of the context in which you developed this competency. For example, your previous and current job roles or responsibilities

I developed this competency in my current role as Head of Archive at ██████████. With support from a finance officer, I am responsible for managing the non-salary lines of the archive’s budget, totaling £9000 in 2020. In this role I also gained my first experience of project budgeting, fundraising, and advocating for internal funds.

Activity

Give a brief description and examples from your professional activity and practice which demonstrate your competency at this level. Link this section to the competency definition in the Framework.

I meet with the Foundation’s finance team representative once a quarter to account for the archive’s use of resources and any disparities against the budget, and to contribute to the quarterly forecast by detailing expected expenditure for the next period. This process helps to identify areas of spending that are favourable or adverse to forecast, and I use that information to adjust the team’s spending. For example, in the ██████████ financial year I used resource originally allocated to the preservation supplies budget line to fund the short term employment of a museums professional to catalogue and photograph our objects collections.

At the end of each financial year I work with the financial representative to allocate the lines of the following year’s budget, and advocate for increased budget where necessary. For example, by demonstrating the benefit over a shorter period using existing funds in this financial year, I negotiated a small increase in the archive’s budget to fund an increase in a permanent colleague’s hours of work.

Becoming familiar with the budget and budget processes at my place of work made it clear to me that the funds available to the archive were never going to be sufficient to allow the team to do everything we would like to, in terms of outreach and digitisation projects and tackling our cataloguing backlog. As a result, I began to look at external sources of additional funding.

Progression & Learning

Give a brief summary of how your skills, knowledge and experience within this competency have developed or been maintained during this period. Include examples of the different skills, knowledge and experience developed and the types of learning undertaken such as formal training, study or research, work achievements, contributions to the profession etc.

During this period I learned to understand financial processes at my place of work, and financial terms and concepts more generally, chiefly by asking for help from colleagues in the financial team and my line manager, but also through a project budgeting module that was part of the National Archives’ Fundraising for Archives training scheme.

Taking part in that scheme helped me to develop the skills needed to write my first funding bids and think

about fundraising strategies for the archive more generally. I have developed these skills further by seeking advice from colleagues with fundraising experience when writing the bids, and feedback from funders after submission.

Between [REDACTED] I submitted funding applications to the Business Archives Council, Townsweb Archiving and the Archives Revealed scheme, receiving some in-kind funding from Townsweb and seeking detailed feedback from the other funders. I also submitted three project enquiry forms to the HLF, one of which I have since progressed to a full application (for a project involving running educational archive workshops for school-aged children). In 2019 I established a partnership with [REDACTED] through which the archive received Big Lottery funding to employ a colleague with learning disabilities on an eight-month contract.

The management training I undertook in-house when I first moved into my current role included a session on being persuasive in the workplace, which has helped me to develop my negotiation skills when advocating funding for the archive, from both internal and external sources.

Reflection

Reflect on and evaluate what you have learned from the activities you have undertaken to develop or maintain this competency. For example, what went well/not so well? What would you do differently next time?

Managing the part of the archive budget for which I am responsible has taught me to think creatively about how I can use the resources available to best meet the needs of the archive. During this period I learned to plan ahead more effectively. Between [REDACTED] I used this budget to fund the employment of five different colleagues and the expenses of many volunteers. This meant that I needed to commit large sections of the budget in advance while leaving contingency to allow me to cover any unexpected costs without compromising commitments made to volunteers and colleagues on casual or freelance contracts.

Forward planning has also proved important in my fundraising experiences. The funding applications I submitted during this period, and the training I received, taught me a lot about project planning and bid writing. Some of my earlier attempts failed partially because I did not sufficiently demonstrate the need for the projects. As a result I learned to take a more organised approach to project planning – ensuring that any evidence of need that has to come from third parties is secured well in advance of funding deadlines, and thinking early about the kind of data the archive might need to collect in the long term to demonstrate the need for project work in future.

I have also developed my writing style for use in funding bids – both as a result of the formal fundraising training and of feedback from my line manager on draft bids. In particular, I have learned to use more positive language ('We will' rather than 'we would' etc.) and to prioritise clarity and ease of reading by, for example, making full use of bullet points.

The TNA cohort training also opened my eyes to different sources of funding, beyond the usual archives and heritage grant funders, which has changed my thinking about fundraising going forward.

Follow Up

How have you applied your skills, knowledge and experience within this competency since? What do you intend to do next to maintain or further develop this competency?

I made stakeholder needs the starting point for my most recent funding application (a Heritage Fund bid for a school workshop project). My colleagues and I consulted teachers and ran pilot workshops. We secured

the funding and I am looking forward to learning more about managing funded projects over the next two years as a result.

Following feedback from funders that projects benefiting the business are less likely to receive funding, I have prioritised and emphasised public benefits in recent applications, highlighting the business' existing contributions to the archive and the charity it sits within. Focusing on the potential benefits to volunteers and the wider archive sector, I managed to secure a small Testbed grant from the National Archives for a volunteering project involving [REDACTED].

Additionally, I recently set up a chargeable reprographics service, which creates a small pool of unrestricted funding for the archive.