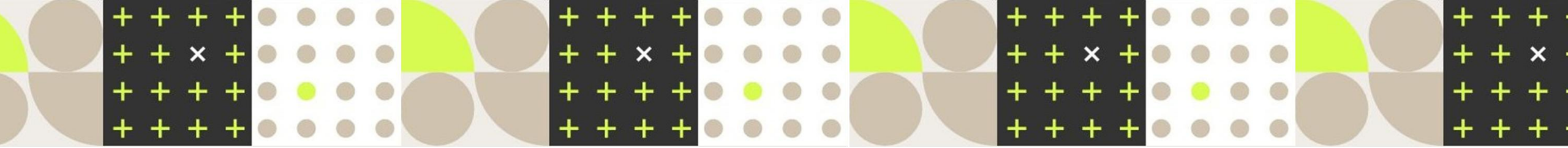
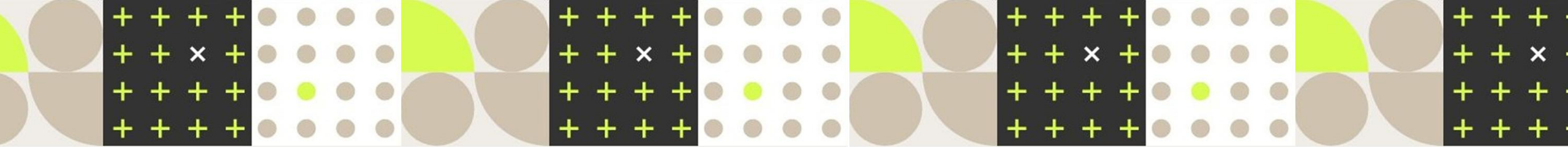


Why your last grant application might have been rejected...

...and how to fix it!

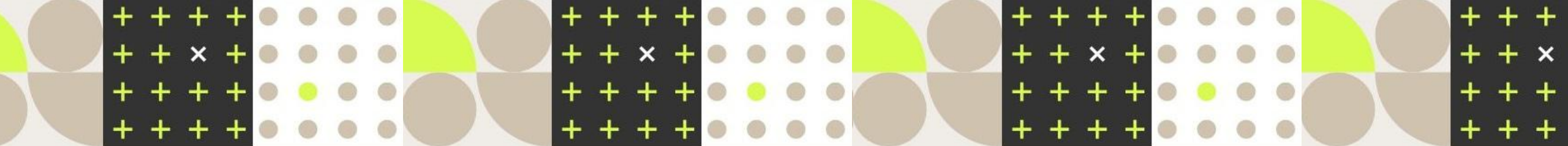


Welcome



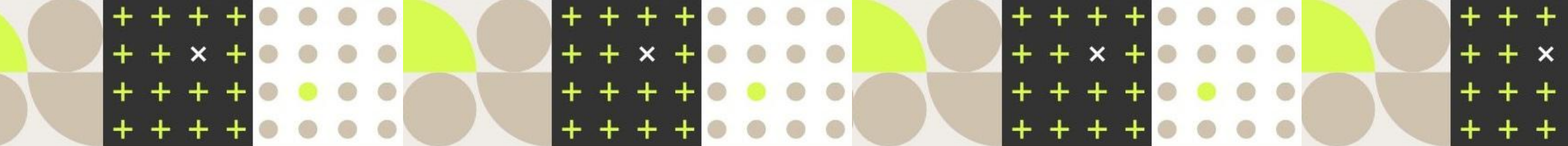
We will be covering...

- Setting the scene – The state of play in UK grant funding
- The income mix – Why grants matter
- Why bids fail – The main reasons why applications are rejected
- What you can do to avoid failure
- Smart moves



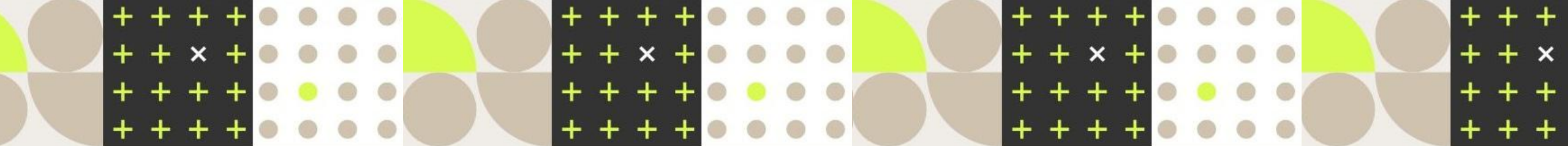
The general context – Grant funding

- Overall, the amount of money being distributed by grant funders has risen by around 12% year on year since Covid
- Demand has seen a significant increase - grant applications have increased by 20% –50%, with some foundations seeing their number double
- Grant applications are typically requesting larger amounts from funders
- Public Sector and Lottery funding makes up over 2/3 of grant funding for Youth Work



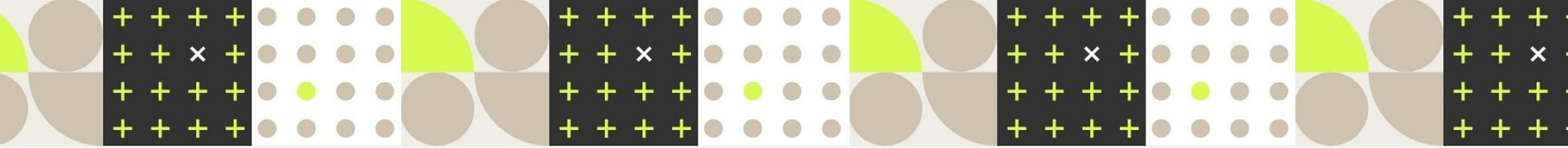
The wider fundraising context

- Public Sector funding contracting – real terms decrease of 33% since 2021/2
- Lottery funding contracting – real terms funding decrease of 21% since 2021/2
- Other trusts and foundations real terms increase of 3%
- Major funders are significantly oversubscribed



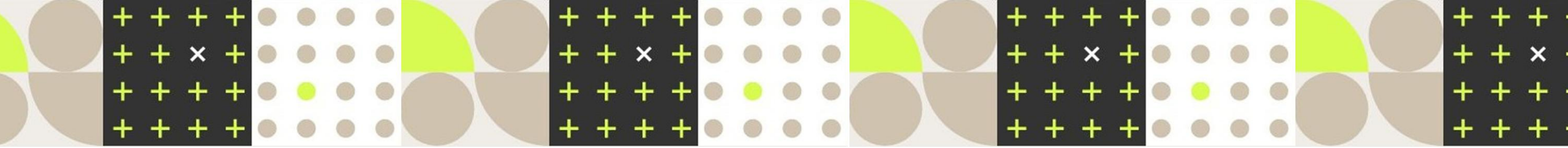
The general context – Examples

- John Ellerman Foundation, Cripplegate Foundation and Essex Community Foundation saw applications increase by 20%, 20% and 30%
- Paul Hamlyn Foundation's grants requests totalled £106.5m - £2.9m more than the previous year despite fewer applicants
- The National Benevolent Charity saw that almost all applications received during 2022– 23 were requesting the maximum grant amount.
- The National Lottery Community Fund awarded £767m in 12,708 grants last year, compared with £686m in 13,720 grants in 2024



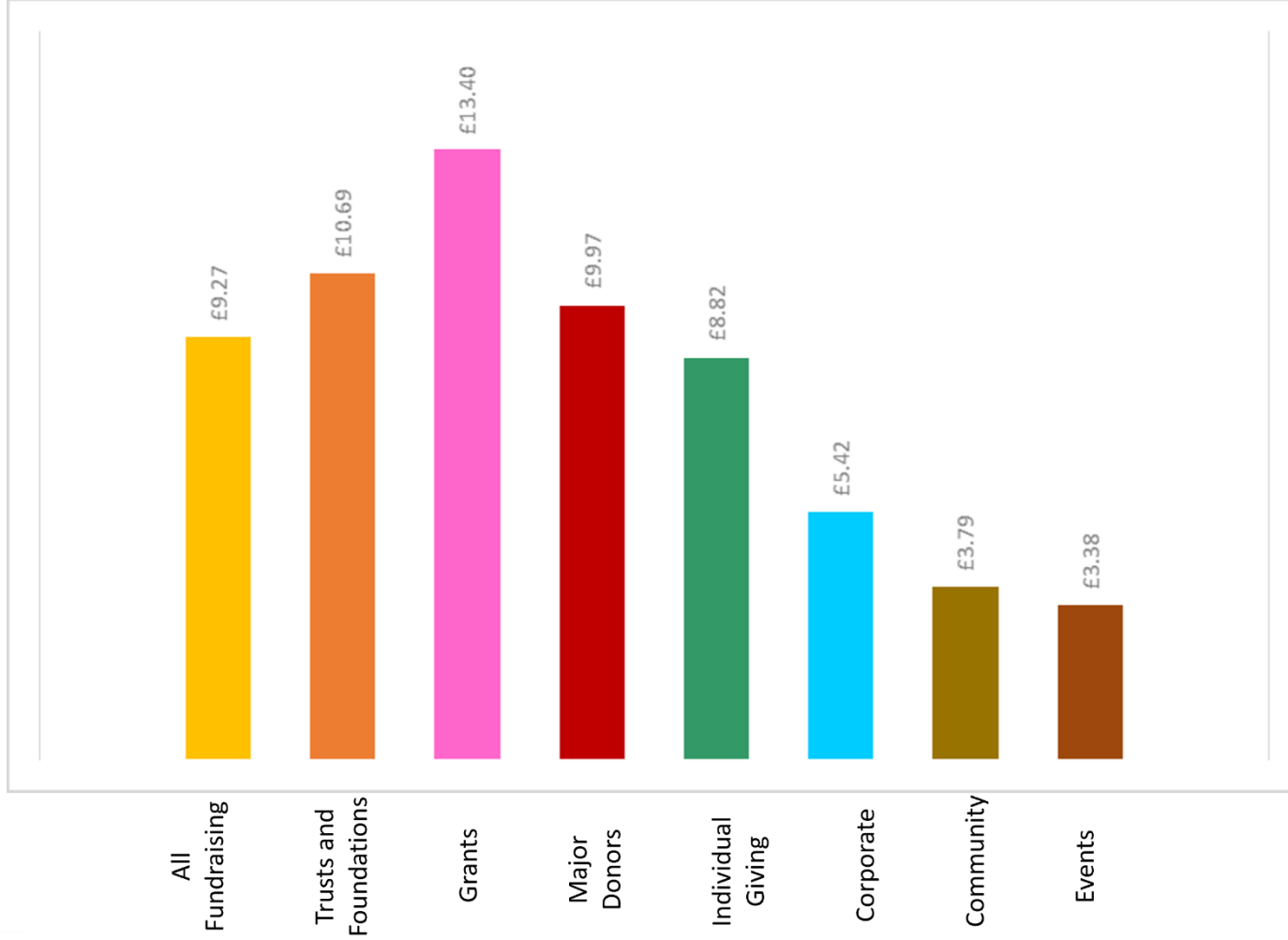
The wider fundraising context

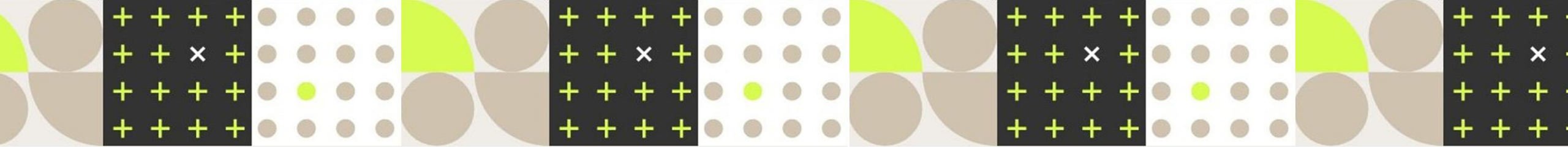
- More specific calls around theme, leadership and demographics – reflecting a wider move to define strategy within the larger funders
- Increasing focus on understanding of need
- Increasing focus on leadership by the people experiencing need
- Shorter call windows for EOI



The Income Mix







Public Funders

Who

Government Departments
Local Authorities
Health Service
Mayors / Combined Authority

Key Facts

Published process
Standard Terms & Conditions
Defined Period
Monitoring
80% Move from grant to contracts

National Lottery

Who

TNL Community Fund
TNL Heritage Fund
Arts Council England
Sport England
BFI
UK Sport

Key Facts

Public fund – open and accountable
Accessible to All
Different applications for each fund
£300 - Millions

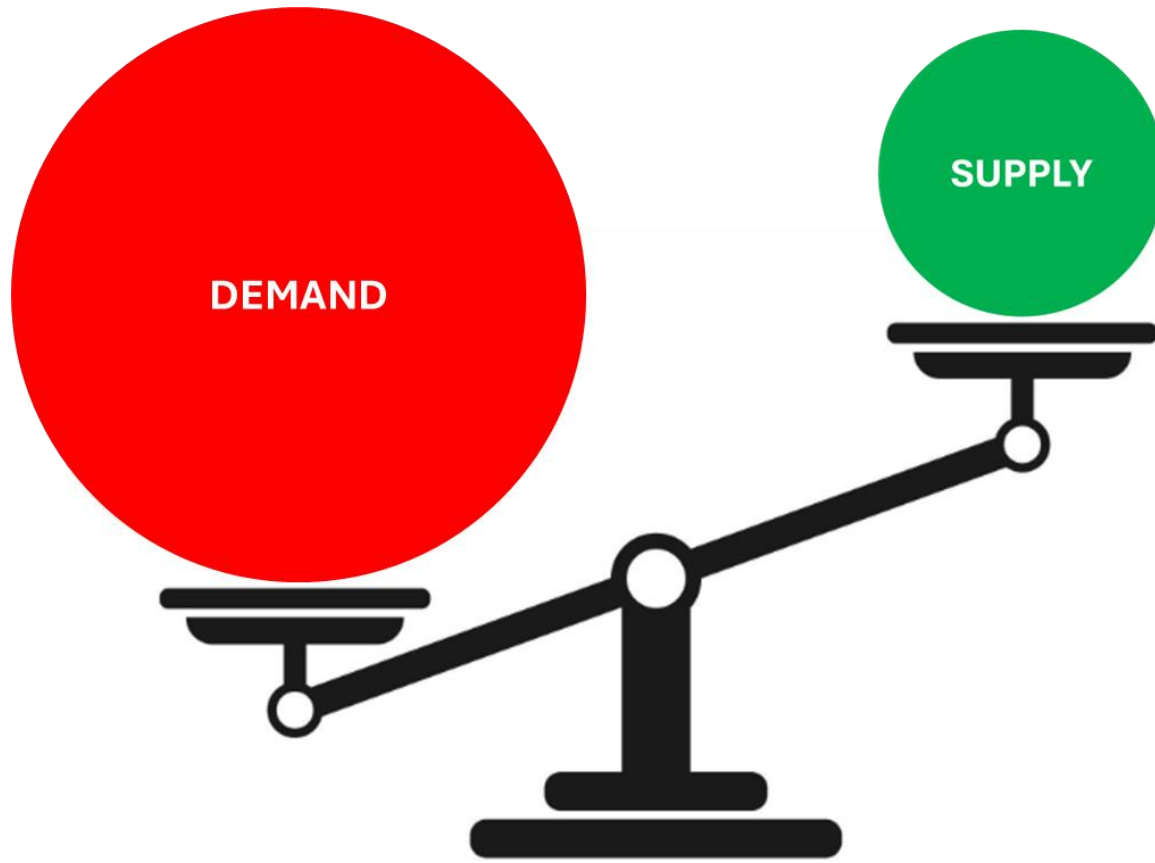
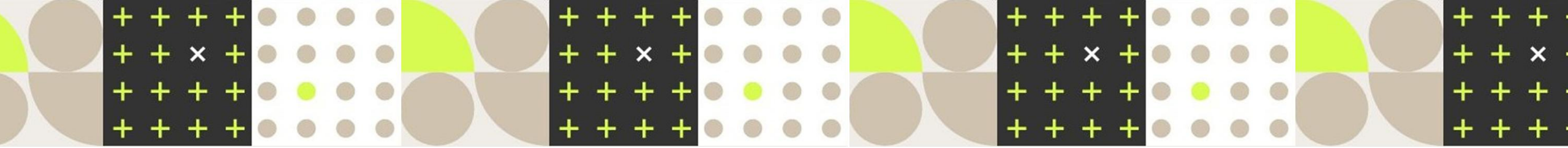
Trusts and Foundations

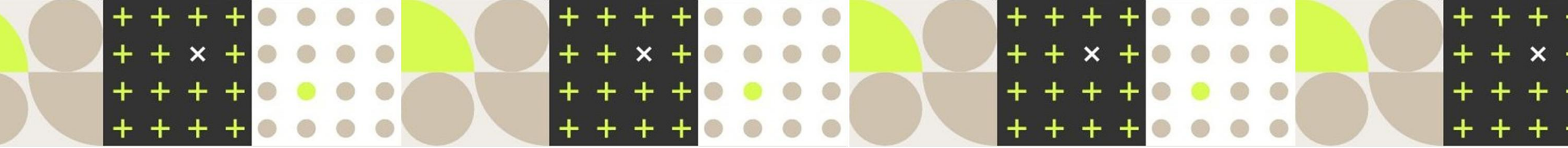
Who

Family / individual
Corporate
Community
Charities

Key Facts

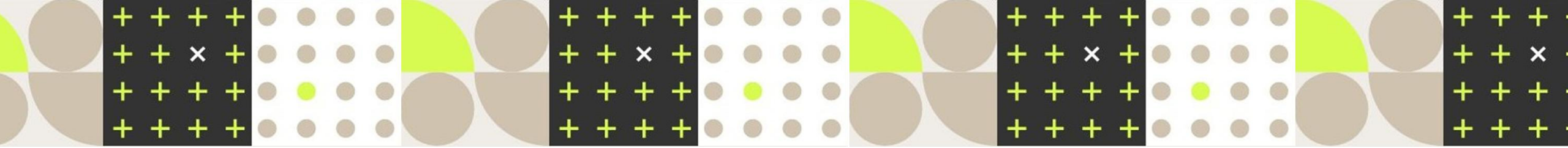
8800+ individual funds
>£2 billion per annum
Independence
Take greater risks
Often Short term / project based





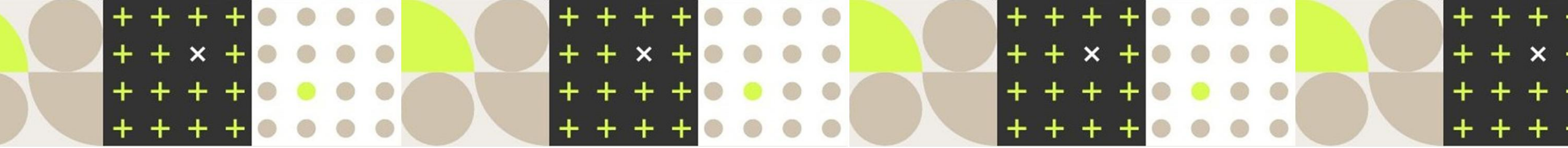
Why Bids Fail

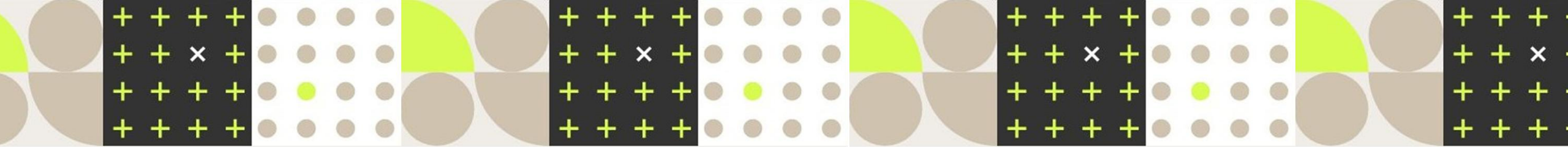




Why bids fail

- Eligibility (1 in 3)
- Evidence of need and demand
- Evidence of effectiveness
- Standing out
- Answering the question and following instructions
- Clarity and planning
- Unrealistic budgets / budget errors / value for money
- Jargon, buzzwords and style
- Governance and public image

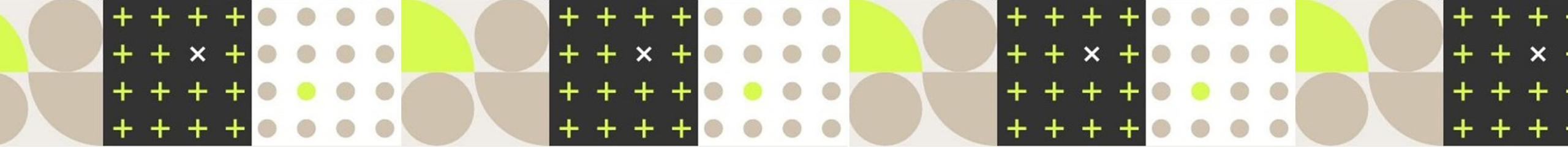




Eligibility

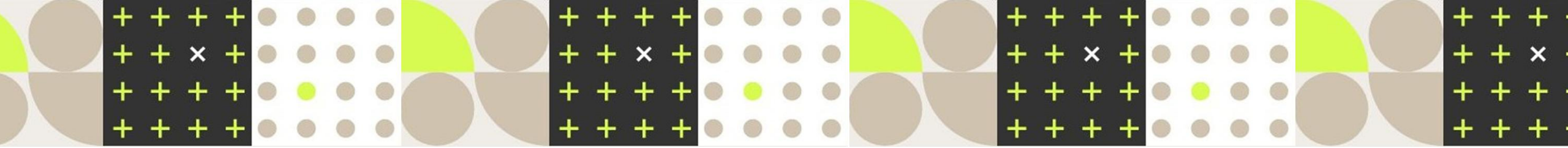
"We get applications to repair churches in East Anglia. We don't fund in East Anglia and we don't do building work on churches."

Stephen Pittam, Former Trust Secretary of the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust



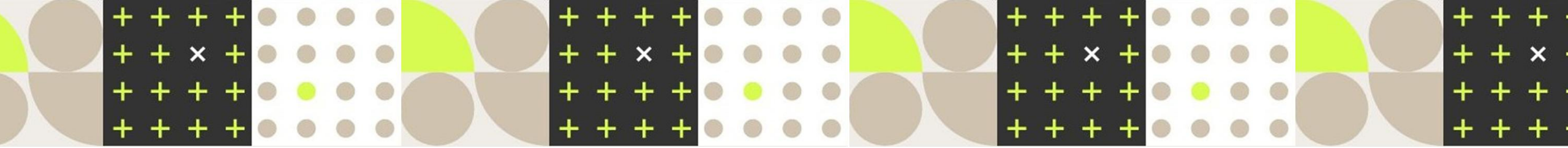
Eligibility

- Legal Structure
- Geography
- Demographics
- Topic and Theme (including exclusions)
- Turnover
- Track Record
- Unsolicited Bids
- Specific bid requirements



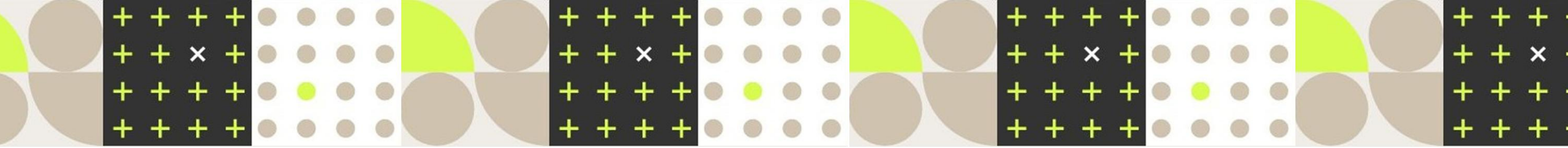
Evidence of Need

- Asking people with experience of the need
- Your own experience, or what you have seen
- Your research into the scale of the need
- Data, research and statistics



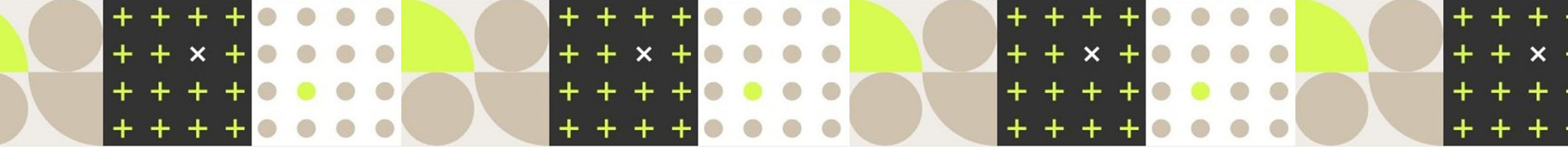
Evidence of Demand

- What people have told you
- Waiting lists
- Your previous Experience



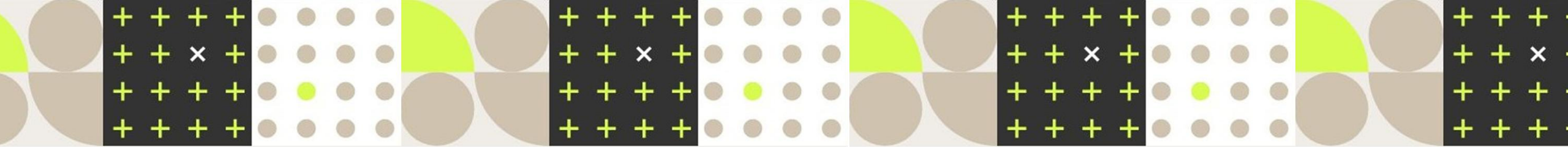
Evidence of effectiveness / impact

- Your model for creating change
- Explain how you will measure success
- What outputs and outcomes will you measure
- Provide outcomes evidence from previous work
- Use data and research to back up your claims



Standing Out

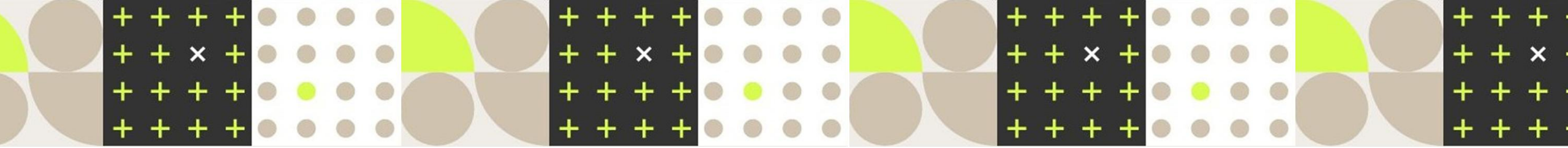




Standing out

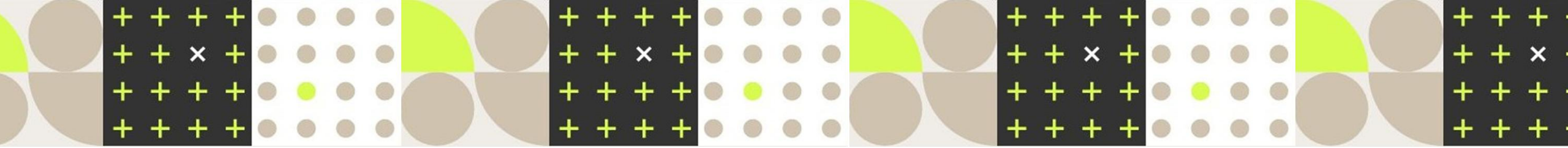
- Place: What is special about the place where you work?
- People: What is different about the people you work with?
- Approach: Is there something unique or innovative in the way you work?
- Knowledge: Do you have interesting and valuable experience and knowledge
- Impact: Do you achieve things others can't?

If you don't know what makes you unique and special, ask the people who use your services!



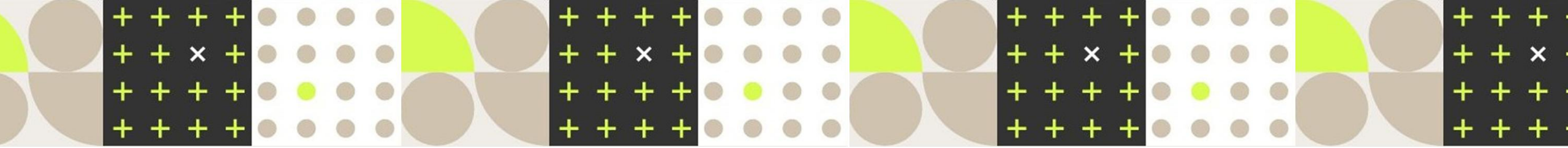
Answering the question and following the instructions





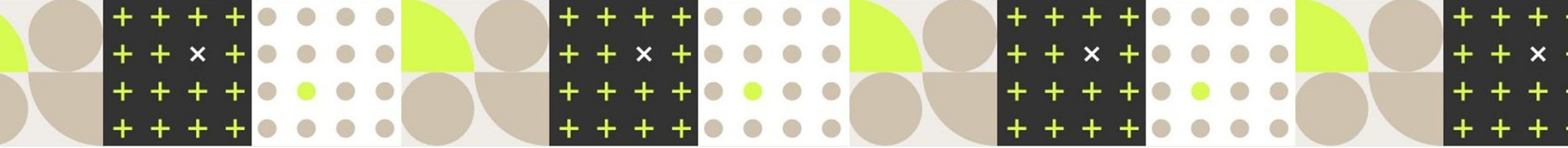
Answering the question

- Read the guidance documents carefully
- Read additional information (funding strategy, policies, FAQs)
- Before answering each question read the specific guidance for that question and plan your answer
- If questions seem repetitive, ask yourself what the funder really wants you to say in each section
- Don't just write what you want to say!
- If you are unsure ask



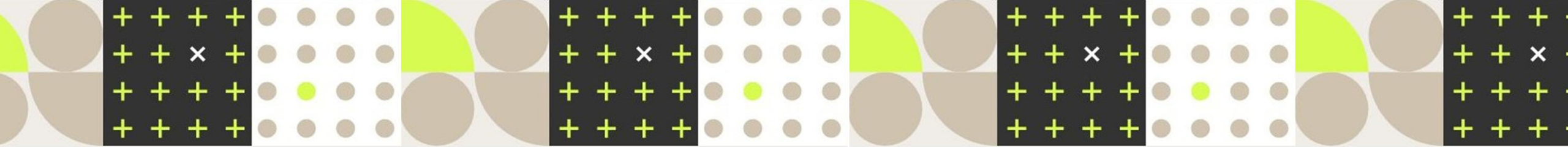
Clarity and Planning





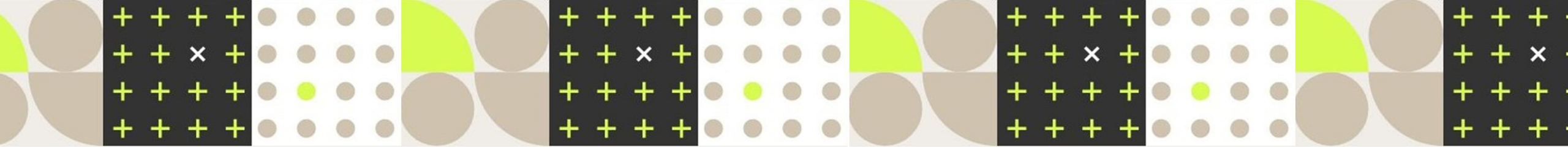
Clarity and Planning



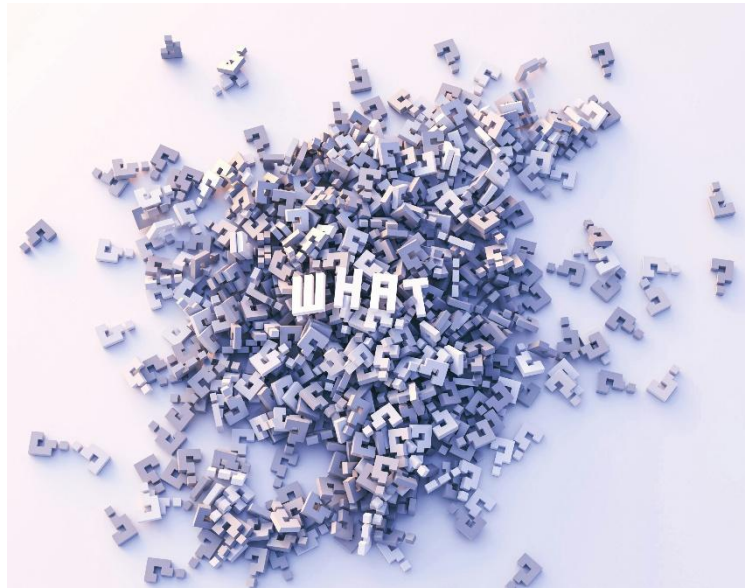


Unrealistic budgets / budget errors

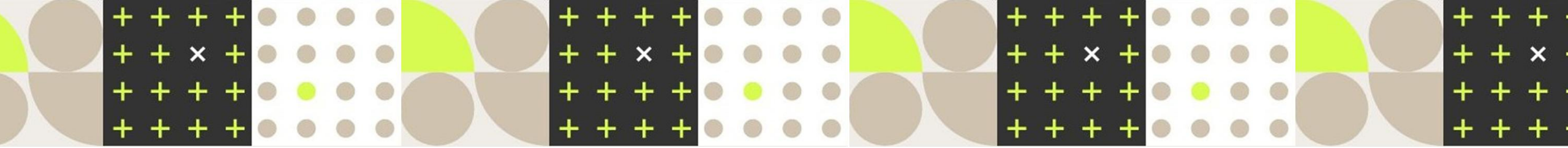
- Asking for too much.... Or too little!
- Simple arithmetic
- Too many cooks
- Unrealistic costs and salaries
- Failure to secure quotations
- Disproportionate requests and value for money
- Capital and Revenue
- Core costs / full cost recovery
- Rounding



Jargon, buzzwords....



"Don't feel that you've got to use a language you're not used to"
John Taylor, Former Regional lead - Big Lottery Fund



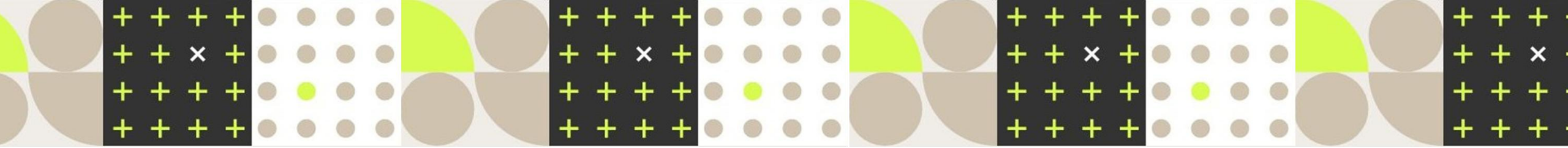
... and style



ChatGPT

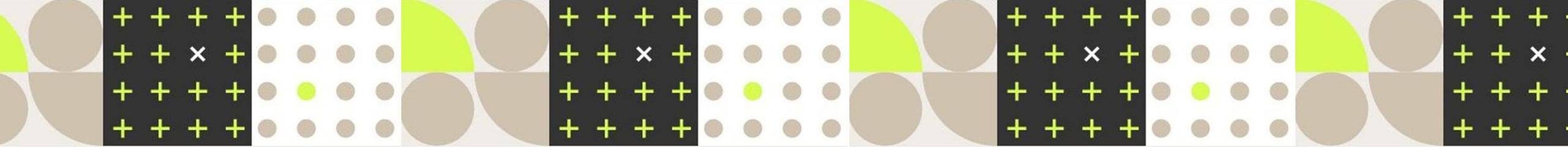
"Assessors ... often get confronted with something that has no paragraphs, really long sentences and very dense text. You look at it and think: 'Oh my God!'"

Andy Winder, Grants Team Manager, Henry Smith Charity



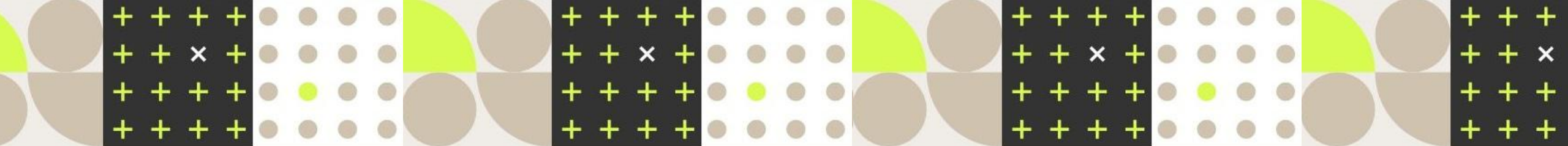
Oversubscription

- Check with the funder
- Check the funders records and / or accounts
- Search the web
- Network locally



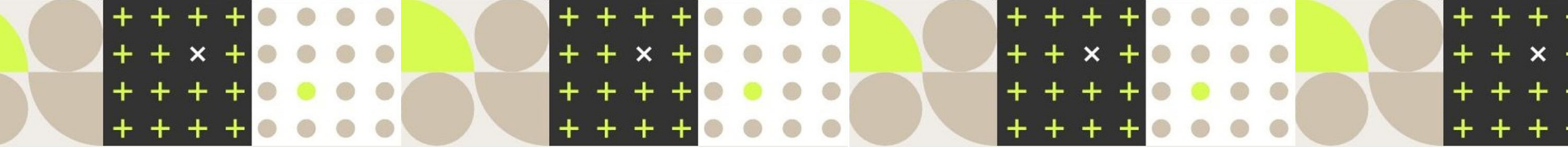
Governance and public image

- Web presence – website, social media
- News and media
- Charity Commission and Companies House records
- Board Members
- Tribunals
- Accounts
- Evaluation



Where to put time and energy – Top tips

- Keep your finger on the pulse – Understand the new strategies of funders
- Have a plan and put energy and resources behind that plan
- Develop your funding case – need, demand, effectiveness, impact
- Invest time and resource into relationships and collaboration
- Invest in developing youth leadership



Credits

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