

Grant Writing Tips

Funding Agency, Grant Guidelines and Eligibility

- Familiarize yourself with the funding agency's principles, funding priorities, and goals.
- How does the project align with those goals and specific funding priorities?
- What are the grant program guidelines and how does your project fit within the scope of those guidelines?
- What are the allowable costs and non-allowable costs for the grant program?
- Do your project activities meet the allowable cost guidelines of the program?
- What are the criteria for eligibility to apply for funding?
- Does your organization meet eligibility?

Organizational Capacity

- Determine your organizations capacity. Does your organization have the capacity to implement a project and manage a grant program?
- What are the qualifications of your organization to do both project and grant management?
- If your organization is new to grant management, consider partnering with organizations that can offer experience in grant management and who can be the fiscal agent for the project. This will help your organization build critical capacity and experience when seeking future grant funding.

Project Development

- Begin project development early so that there is plenty of time to develop a complete and thorough project.
- What is the purpose of the project? How does the project align with the funding priorities of the grant proposal?
- Identify what issue or problem the project will attempt to solve.
- Confirm demand for the project through feasibility study, regional visioning, strategic planning, market analysis, etc.
- Sustainability- how will the project/work continue once grant funding ends?

Project Description

- Spell out the need for the grant in a clear and concise format.
- Specifically outline your project activities and what outcomes will be accomplished by these activities.
- Develop a workplan with a timeline for project activities.
- Keep the focus on your project and how you will accomplish your project activities. Don't add unnecessary information or attachments.

Project Partners

- Identify the major stakeholders to your project? Could any be considered as co-investors or part of the core project team?
- Once project partners are identified, their specific roles and responsibilities in the project should be outlined and documented. Partnerships should be meaningful and beneficial to all participants.
- Include partner engagement letters from each partner with your grant application. This will demonstrate project commitment.

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Budget

- A detailed budget should align and support your project activities.
- Double check the budget to make sure the math is correct.
- If grant funding only partially supports the project, show, in detail, what type of funding will be utilized to support the remaining project costs.

Cost share

- Determine if cost share is required for the grant. If so, detail how and who will provide the cost share.
- A cost share commitment letter is favorable to accompany a project budget.

Support

- If applicable, show local and regional support for your project.
- Include local and/or regional support letters with your application.

Outcomes/Outputs and ROI

- What is desired outcome/impact from project activities?
- Clearly demonstrate those outcomes and outputs that will be accomplished.
- Funding agencies will be interested in ROI (return on investment) of funding.

Details

- Pay attention to details. Some grants specify page length, margins, typeface, etc.
- Be sure to follow specifications and instructions on grant application.

Don't Procrastinate

- Allow enough time to prepare and review your grant application.
- Make sure you follow the timeline.
- Meet all deadlines. Some grants require a Letter of Intent (LOI) or notice to funders before submitting an application.