



Ten Grant Writing Tips

1. Understand the needs of the grantors.

Behind every grants program is a philosophy, an intent, or a law. These principles not only guide the distribution of funds, they provide a clear view of how to approach the application and where to concentrate your persuasive efforts. Speak the same language used by the grantor.

2. Develop your proposal to fit the application.

You have a great idea, you've identified a need, and you've got the tools to make it work. And you have found a grantor who shares your goals.

-- Make sure the major budget items in your project are clearly eligible for funding.

-- Perhaps only part of your project is relevant to the funding opportunity; develop other ideas to fund the rest of the project and show the grantor how resourceful you are.

3. Understand what eligibility requirements and regulations you must comply with.

4. Get help and a second opinion.

-- Enlist a good proofreader/editor to read your writing and clean it up. A friend who knows nothing about your organization is good, will your idea peak their interest?

-- If budgets confuse you, get someone competent with the skills needed, to write or review it.

5. Bring your own resources to the table.

Identify funds, partners, associated projects, volunteers, materials; anything that will help convey a sense of how far you will stretch the dollars you seek.

-- Show that you have resources from a variety of places; the broader the support the better.

6. Show the public support for your project.

Every project can benefit from grass-roots support and involvement.

-- If you have a good project, everybody should be behind it; document with letters of support.

7. Help the reviewers really see your project.

Use a storytelling approach (with supporting statistics) in such a compelling way that the reader can't put down your application. Your project should come alive in the minds of the reviewer. Help them visualize what you hope to accomplish. Use photos but not too many.

8. Obey the Three Cs - Concise, Clear and Complete

Address each point of the application as a challenge to communicate.

-- Use bullets, or bold-face type, or a list of key elements to convey the high points of your project, and don't bury them in paragraphs of verbiage.

9. Be concise.

-- Spend enough time to write a sparkling description of your project that states in the fewest possible words what it's about and why it's so great.

-- Use pictures, diagrams, plans, or maps instead of long, confusing descriptions.

-- keep the background brief and focus on the work to be done.

10. Be complete.

Make sure you have everything the grantor requires.