

Grant Writing Tips

First Steps

Vision statement – What is the big picture? What is it your organization wants to do?

Mission statement – How do you want to do it?

Get to Know Your Funding Sources

1. Know the field – understand who is funding what
2. Know the process – who does what, when and how do they do it?
3. Know yourself/organization – understand your own program strengths and weaknesses
4. Know your competitors and allies – who gives \$ to them and why?
5. Know the individual funder – what is their vision and what are their objectives for reaching that vision?

Research, Research, Research!

1. You will spend 80% of your time researching grants and 20% of your time writing!
2. Google
3. Guidestar.org – shows you tax forms for non-profit organization who give out grants; usually gives their vision, mission statement
4. What are your funders interested in? Find out and tailor your grant narrative to match their vision and their objectives

Writing the Grant Proposal

1. Always read the entire application directions first.
2. Understand the eligibility requirements and whether or not you meet them.
 - a. Some funders only award grants to certain organizations, non-profits, or government entities. If you don't fall within their eligibility list – don't chase that grant and waste your time or theirs! Find another funder!
3. Always provide every piece of additional documentation requested
4. Never send off a grant application without a cover letter, even if one is not required.
5. Always have someone else proof your application and grant narrative for errors
6. Tailor your grant narrative so that your goals and objectives are congruent with the funder's goals and objectives.
 - a. Include a short introduction paragraph
 - b. Include a "needs statement" and summarize why you need this grant and how it will help you be successful in helping you meet your goals in objectives for your organization – Tell your story
 - c. Establish your program objectives
7. Once you have completed the application, go back and read the instructions again to ensure that you haven't missed something.
 - a. Funders do not like sloppy work!
 - b. If the application requires that you include two copies of your application and instructs you NOT to staple it or bind it in any way, DON'T DO IT!

Understanding Application Forms and Formatting

- a. Some applications will require that you fill them out online
- b. Other applications will require a specific format for your introduction, grant narrative and conclusion
- c. Some applications will require that you answer specific questions – make sure you have answered them all!
- d. If you don't understand something, always call the contact listed. Funders have to give money away or else they will get taxed. They want to help you!