



Grant Writing Tips

The most important part of grant writing is to fully understand your project or program before you start. You can't write a clear proposal if you are not sure what you are asking for and why. Give yourself plenty of time to write your proposal. Successful grants cannot be written in a day (or even a week).

- **Make sure you can answer: Who, What, Where, When, Why, and How?**
- Write a thorough, but clear and focused narrative. Remember there are people like you reading every single application. You don't want to lose the attention of the panelist by rambling.
- Do not assume that panelists are familiar with you, your organization, your project, or your field. Would your mother, grandfather, spouse, etc. who is not in your field understand your request?
- This is a formal, professional document – do not make jokes or use sarcasm or slang.
- Bullet points and titles mixed with paragraphs makes your narrative easier to read. Format your narrative in an exciting way (underline, headers, bullet points, etc.) that appropriately utilizes white space, but don't overdo it. That can also be difficult to read.
- Write out acronyms, at least the first time you use them. Do not assume the panelists will know what they stand for.
- Demonstrate your ability and capacity to complete the project. DO NOT give one sentence responses unless the questions asks for only one sentence. Detail shows forethought and planning that speaks to your ability to successfully complete the project.
- If you mention a partner or collaborating organization in your narrative, be sure to discuss this project and proposal with them first. A letter of commitment from the partner or collaborating organization goes a long way in building credibility and demonstrating capacity.
- Have clearly defined goals and outcomes and realistic metrics for measuring success.
- Make sure any supplemental materials (work samples, bios/CV's/resumes, etc.) are relevant to your request and that they are the best representation of your work.
- Budgets are vital to your proposal. Always double check your math. Budget lines should include:
 - What personnel or consultants will be required
 - What are the direct and indirect expenses (supplies, rental space, insurance, postage/marketing, etc.)
 - What are your other income sources – list earned and contributed income sources
 - In-kind counts! But only for professional services you would normally have to pay for.
- Gather your attachments and supplemental materials well in advance; it is not possible to pull everything together in the hours before the deadline.
- Demonstrate your passion. This is why you do what you do!
- PROOFREAD! And then ask someone else to proofread your work.
- Be open and communicate. If you're not sure about something, ask!