



The appearance of your  
proposal matters!

## Tips for Writing a Successful Grant

1. **Set your Goal:** Before even looking for a grant program, define the need you are trying to solve or the service you are trying to meet.
2. **Understand the Granting Agency:** Thoroughly research and get to know the program for which you are applying.
  - a. Develop a clear understanding of the program's goals. Review websites, requests for proposals, legislation, guidelines and any other available documentation relating to the program.
  - b. Define and clarify the solution to your program concept and determine whether your solution fits the goals and program activities for which you are applying.
  - c. Establish a contact relationship with the grant coordinator.
  - d. Request copies of winning proposals from previous or similar competitions.
3. Read the directions contained in the request for proposals or grant application and **follow ALL of the DIRECTIONS.**
4. Use the **forms** provided by the granting program.
5. **Catch the reader's attention early and keep it.** Design the proposal to make the most important points early; then make it compelling by the addition of supporting arguments. Answer the questions: Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?
6. **Write the proposal with the grant reviewers in mind.** They have many proposals to read. Help them understand your project. Do not make them search for misplaced information. Do not leave unanswered questions in the mind of the reader.
7. **Keep your language factual, concise, and clear.** Make your sentences short and write in an active voice. Do not try to say several things in the same sentence. Keep your paragraphs short and present only one thought per paragraph. Separate the components of your grant proposal with clear headings. Avoid jargon, acronyms, abbreviations and vague references.
8. **Make it easy to read and to notice the emphasis on important points.** Be liberal with spacing, margin size, sub-headings and underlining. Use only the space recommended. Proofread and check spelling and grammar. Ask someone in your school not involved with the project to read the proposal. Do they understand your message?

9. **Appendix:** Do not let items such as job descriptions, references, extensive statistics, and letters of support interrupt the succinct flow of your arguments. Instead, place them in an appendix and reference them in your text with the appropriate page number.
10. **Clarity and readability is the key.** Creativity with the structure is not encouraged. Folders, binders, fancy tabs, etc. will be discarded.
11. **Budget:** Everything appearing on the budget page should be addressed in the proposal and in the budget narrative. Make sure your budget adds up and that it matches the amount you request on the first page of the proposal.
12. **Timeline:** Address both evaluation of the project and promotional concepts in the grant timeline.
13. **Supporting Data:** Use percentages rather than just numbers for justification. Use comparative data when available. Statistics can be compelling if used effectively with other information.
14. **Project Evaluation:** Use target benchmarks (measurable outcomes are best) in the objectives and how you will identify them in the evaluation. Stress the impact to the end user and the need that is being met.
15. **Discuss how the project will be continued.** Letters of support are very helpful. Co-applicants must include a letter of support and financial assistance if required in the project. Describe the impact to your school if the project were not to receive funding.
16. **Signatures & Due Date:** Make sure your proposal is properly signed by the necessary signatories and received by the grant program administrator by the due date and time indicated in the request for proposal process. Make sure you understand whether the deadline means the proposal must be postmarked or actually received on that date.



Always thank the funder  
for the opportunity to  
apply.