

Writing a Good Grant Proposal in 10 Easy Steps

For many people, applying for a grant is a mysterious process. You may have the feeling that those who are successful and receive grants are either lucky or have “inside connections.” But grant writing does not have to be mysterious. In most cases, grants are awarded based on a careful review process with criteria to which everyone has access.

****A note about the Junior Board grants in particular: The process is HIGHLY competitive and there are limited funds available each year. You may not have done anything incorrectly on your application; it may be that other projects were more urgent or more in keeping with the funding mission. *****

1. Understand what the Funding Organization will fund, for example, don't waste time writing a grant for a children's health services program to a Funder that only supports wildlife conservation.
2. If the Funder requests specific information or the answers to specific questions address them, don't ignore them – the Funder will notice.
3. The Narrative should briefly describe your organization and its ability to see a project through successfully, it should fully describe the project you wish to undertake, and it should be clear as to how the Funder's money will be used. Don't get bogged down in providing the entire history of your organization or community, these are things the Funder can research.
4. A word about Budgets -- Be clear about how much money you actually need for a project. Funders LOVE a well-crafted budget with supporting documents. Very few will hand out funds based on “a best guess.”
5. Another word about Budgets – Matching Funds do not have to be in cash; volunteer hours, gifts in kind (such as lumber or machinery) count as Matching Funds and **SHOULD** be included on the Budget form. Funders like to see an organization using their resources, whether it is in man hours or in partnerships with community resources such as the local machine rental shop.
6. Spell Check -- Spell Check -- Spell Check!
7. **Check your Math on the Budget Sheet.**
8. ***Draft, Review, Edit, and Repeat...if declined Try, Try Again***
9. Get your grant in to the Funder by the Posted Deadline. Late applications are rarely considered let alone funded.
10. When in doubt, contact the Grant Officer at the Funding Organization. They are there to help and to answer questions.