



Grant Writing for Nonprofit Organizations

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Over the last decade, I have been on both ends of the granting process, as both someone who managed grant applications and someone who has applied for funding. I have discovered that there are many factors that contribute to a well-written (and hopefully successful) grant application. Whether you are applying for a government grant, a community grant, or funding from any other granting body, there are a few considerations that will help strengthen your application.

Impact

It is essential that you are able to quantify the success of your project with clear deliverables. This will allow the granting body to see how you will spend the funds. These deliverables include target audience, number of people affected or supported by the project or program, engagement within the community, etc.

Tell a compelling story

Use examples of how receiving this grant will support your program, project, or organization as a whole. This will drive home the impact statements you have made. Make sure these examples are concise and drive home why you need funding and what you will use it for. Don't get lost in verbiage.

Budget

Have a clear, concise budget that includes both expenses and revenue sources. Make sure to be as specific as possible, including any anticipated and confirmed expenses as well as anticipated and confirmed revenue sources. Most granting bodies will require an updated budget before awarding any funding.

Are you a fit?

It's very important to do your research to ensure that the funder is a good fit for your organization. I always recommend contacting the funder prior to submitting an application;





this allows you to ask questions and ensure that your organization or project is eligible and befitting for the particular grant you're applying for.

They want to help

Always remember that the funder you are applying to has money that they want to give away! Many granting bodies, particularly community organizations, will offer to look over your application and provide feedback prior to submission. Don't be intimidated as they want to help you, and if they can, fund your project!

Second glance

In the same vein as my last point, ask a second set of eyes to review your application prior to submission. This person may catch grammatical or spelling errors, but most importantly, will be able to give you feedback on the readability of your application.

In these unprecedented times, where funding is harder to come by, remember that the important work that your organization is undertaking is of value and that there are funders out there who would love to support your cause!

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Lauren is the Community Engagement & Development Coordinator at AEF. She has a BA in Political Science and English from the University of Alberta and over a decade of experience working in fundraising and development in nonprofit settings. She is a mother of two, loves the outdoors, and will never say no to a cup of coffee!

