

Successful Grant Writing Tips



*Infrastructure Assistance Coordinating
Council Conference 2013*

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Tip #1

Ensure your organization is ready to apply for a grant

- Is your organization capable of implementing and sustaining this project?
- Is now the right time to proceed?

Non-competitive grants & perils of giving \$ back



Tip #2

Implement an effective Strategic Planning process

- Actively involve your citizens
- "Different from" Comprehensive Planning process
- Create a ranked list of projects

- Proves "value" & support of project...



Tip #3

Identify the best grant(s) to fund the project

- Where do you locate grants?
- Look at what grants they funded last year
- Don't chase grants as they appear in your email inbox!

Square pegs & round holes...



Tip #4

Learn what pre-work the funder requires

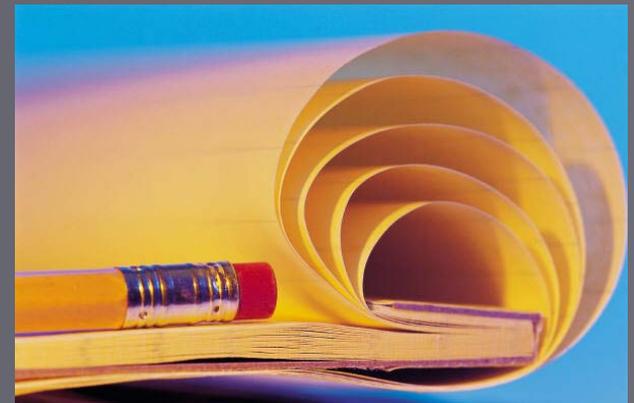
- Preliminary architectural/engineering plans
- Land acquisition/site control
- Environmental review



Pre-work: Do you need to conduct an Income Survey?

- Asks residents to review their income level/amount
- Door to door or written survey?
- You need two months!

-Ok/Do. County example



Tip #5

Review (last year's) grant announcement carefully

- What did they fund?
- How much money did they give for a specific project?
- Did those entities that got funded, look like yours?

- Grant advertised vs. writing time...



Tip #6

Make sure the funders timeline works for you

- Applications available (Nov 10)
- Submission deadline (March 12)
- Funding available (June 10)
- Projects may begin (Oct 1)

“need money now” example...



Tip #7

Put together a grant writing team

- Dreamer/visionary
- Wordsmith
- Financial guru
- Researcher and data/statistics collector
- Grammarian
- Outside reviewer
- Organizer

- Synergy is key to great applications!



Tip #8

Prepare your strategy before you start to write

- The Hook -- what makes your project unique?

- Other Examples?



Tip #9

Ensure budget is complete and easy to understand

- Create it early-on (don't wait!)
- Get price quotes, as needed

- Budget should mirror narrative



Tip #10

Make sure all of your funding is in place

- Funders want to ensure that project will happen
- Funders like to be "last-in"

-Recent example...



Tip #11

Prove staff and consultants are qualified

- Who will lead the project and what are their credentials?
- Who is responsible for the success of the grant?
- Who will write/administer the grant?

-Tailor those resume's!



Tip #12

Understand grant review process

- Who will be reading your grant application?
 - Engineers and budget people?
 - ADA/Civil Rights folks?
 - Citizen volunteers?

- Answer the grant questions with the reviewer in mind



Tip #13

Make it easy for the reviewer

- Match headings in the proposal to headings in the guidelines
- Break up the text with bullets & photos
- Put yourself in their shoes reading 50 proposals...
- **Midnight review!**



Tip #14

Inform yourself about the grant evaluation process

- Each funder has own rules
- Generally found in grant guidance
- Understand before you write

- Woods/CDBG example...



Tip #15

Attach letters from people in your community

- Financial commitment
- Partnerships
- Supporters

Who writes & how many?



Tip #16

Think twice before including extra attachments

- "Fatal flaws"
- Cover letters?
- Binding?

-Include ONLY what is requested!



Tip #17

Leave yourself A LOT of time to prepare application

- Allow at least twice the time you think it will take to write the proposal.
- Allow three times as long as you think it will take to obtain letters of support.
- Allow plenty of extra time to work on budget.

- [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) example



Tip #18

Good grant administration is key to getting (re-) funded

- Ensure funder you've thought it through
- Promise to hire some help if needed
- Explain staff/consultant credentials and checks and balances



Tip #19

What to do if your grant is not funded

- Request reviewer comments
- Have a successful grant writer review application
- Address limitations and resubmit



Tip #20

Tips & advice for specific grant programs

- Others' advice/experience?

- DP Example



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(workshops next slide...)

Questions... Look for me in orange blazer during the conference!

Upcoming Workshops

- "Introductory Grant Writing"
- "Advanced Grant Writing"
- "Engaging citizens in Strategic Planning for bonds, levy's and grant support"

- Day-long workshops held in Leavenworth!

