

Grants: Increasing Your Odds of Getting Funded



IACC Conference 2014

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Step #1

Ensure your organization is ready to apply for a grant

- BE REALISTIC!!!
 - Is your organization capable of implementing and sustaining this project?
 - Is now the right time to proceed?
 - Will the grant pull the project away from the initial intent? (and is that good or bad?)



Step #2

Implement an effective Strategic Planning process

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

Proves "value" & support of project...



Step #3

Identify the best grant(s) to fund the project

- Ask experts in the type of project you're pursuing and your peers
- What specifically has each prospective grant funded previously? Why?
- Does your project have a story to tell similar to what the grant prefers to fund?



Tip #4

Learn what pre-work the funder requires

- Preliminary architectural/engineering plans
- Land acquisition/site control
- Environmental review
- Don't think you can cut these corners! It usually won't end well...



Tip #5

Review previous award announcement carefully

- What did they fund?
- How much was awarded per project?
- Did the entities that got funded look like yours? What about their projects?
- Will they 'bite' on your project's 'hook'? Can you stand out? Strategize!



Step #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...



Step #7 **Put together a complete grant writing team**

- Organizer – the schedule police
- Dreamer/visionary
- Wordsmith
- Finance guru
- Researcher and data/statistics collector
- Grammarian
- Outside reviewer
- Technical experts

- Synergy is key to great applications!



Step #8 **Ensure budget is complete and easy to understand**

- Create it early-on (don't wait!)
- Get real, true price quotes, as needed
- Funders like to be "last-in"
- Be realistic – have money to pay for expertise if you don't have it already; have checks and balances!

Budget should mirror narrative



Step #9 **Understand grant review & evaluation process**

- Who's reading your grant application?
 - Technical or finance people?
 - Advocacy or special interest folks?
 - Whoever has a pulse...
- Each funder has own rules
- Understand before you write

- Answer the grant questions with the reviewer in mind



Step #10 **Have PLENTY (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.



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