



tipsheet

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Grant-Writing Best Practices

Grant writing is a persuasive tool used to secure funding for a particular project, organization, or department. As with any type of business writing, you need to be clear and succinct when writing effective grants. Your grant-writing skills can be enhanced, however, through a number of best practices. Consider implementing the five techniques outlined below in order to be as persuasive as possible in your next grant-writing project.

1. Make your request up front.

Oftentimes when we are asking for money, we tend to bury the request at the end of the grant proposal. You should include your specific request in the initial paragraph of your proposal (i.e. *Kenan-Flagler Business School respectfully requests that the Gates Foundation consider making a one-time gift of \$50,000 to enhance the three computer labs within the school*). Organizations that grant money want to have this important information at the very beginning of the proposal.

2. Include a detailed budget.

Because you are writing a grant to ask for money, the clarity and detail included in your budget can be critical to your proposal. Make sure you spend the necessary time putting together a budget that is both realistic and easy to follow. Potential donors want to feel like their money is going to be spent responsibly in the way that is indicated within the proposal. Help donors to feel as confident as possible about their investment.

3. Make sure to answer *all* questions requested by the funding organization.

Grant-making organizations tend to ask for specific, detailed information from all grantees. Make sure that you carefully read any information given to you by the grant-making organization and craft a proposal that clearly answers any questions/concerns. Grant-making organizations tend to get many proposals for any one grant that they give, so make sure that yours stands out by meeting all of their requirements in a highly organized fashion.

4. Don't forget the basics.

Maintain effective word choice, correct grammar, strong sentence structure, and clarity of thought, as in any business writing. Be sure to proofread, and, ideally, have your proposal reviewed by a small team of key stakeholders prior to submission.

5. Develop relationships with the funding organization and don't be afraid to follow-up.

Relationship-building is an important component of effective grant writing. Make sure to introduce yourself to your direct contact at any funding organization, and make yourself available to answer any and all additional questions. Whether you have had the opportunity to develop a relationship with someone at the organization or not, make sure to follow up when appropriate. There are no substitutes for perseverance and enthusiasm!

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