

Writing Effective Grant Proposals

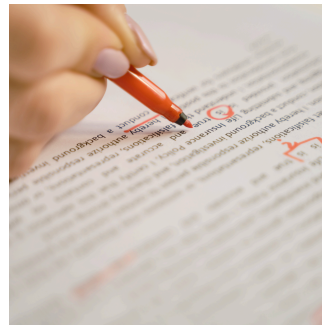


Oregon Criminal Justice Commission

At a Glance

This training consists of four modules:

Module 1:	Module 2:	Module 3:	Module 4:
Introduction to Grant Writing	Developing a Strong Proposal	Tips for Writing	Proposal Submission



Introduction

There is a diverse range of applicants for Oregon Criminal Justice Commission grants. Perhaps you have written proposals in the past, or perhaps this is your first time. Either way, if you are thinking about applying for an Oregon Criminal Justice Commission grant, this training is for you.

How to Use this Training

It is recommended to complete this training before you start answering the questions in the grant program solicitation. It is highly recommended that, as soon as the solicitation is open, you set aside ample time to complete this training with anyone with whom you will be collaborating.



The complete training is approximately 1 hour and 30 minutes. However, it is expected that you will periodically pause the training to work on your program or intervention design. There will be suggested times throughout this training for you to complete this task.

For planning purposes, this training is divided into four modules, with Module 2 being the longest and Module 4 being the shortest.

Plan to allow the most time for Module 2. This module will help you design your program or intervention. You will be glad you took the time to do this when you begin answering the application questions.

Training Objective

The objective of this training is to equip participants with the knowledge and skills to write compelling grant proposals that effectively communicate project value and increase funding success.

The Oregon Criminal Justice Commission

Let's begin with an overview of the funding agency, the Oregon Criminal Justice Commission (CJC). This is important to know when we cover the importance of understanding the funder's priorities when applying for a grant.

The mission of the Oregon Criminal Justice Commission (CJC) is to improve the legitimacy, efficiency, and effectiveness of state and local criminal justice systems. To help accomplish this mission, CJC disburses state and federal funds through the administration of multiple public safety grant programs intended for eligible local or state agencies, tribal governments, and community-based organizations.



Module 1: Introduction to Grant Writing



In this first module, we will cover:



What is a Grant Proposal



Understanding the Grant Solicitation



Aligning Projects with Funding Priorities





Grant Proposal

A grant proposal is a formal document that an individual or organization submits to a funding agency (like a government body, foundation, or corporation) to request financial support for a specific project.

The grant proposal outlines:

- What your program or intervention aims to achieve?
- How your program or intervention will be carried out.
- Why your program or intervention is important.
- A detailed budget explaining how the requested funds will be used.

Essentially, a grant proposal is a persuasive document that aims to convince the funder that your project is worthwhile and that you are capable of completing it.

A grant solicitation is an announcement from a funding agency that invites organizations or individuals to submit grant proposals for a specific purpose.

The grant solicitation provides details about eligibility requirements, funding priorities, the availability and duration of funding, as well as the application process and timelines.



Grant Solicitation

It is important to thoroughly read the solicitation before you begin writing your proposal. Carefully review the:

- Eligibility requirements
 - Grant purpose
 - Availability of funding
 - Duration of funding
 - Timeline
 - Application requirements
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Aligning Projects with Funding Priorities

CJC grant solicitations include a *Goals and Priorities* section. The priorities are in addition to eligibility requirements. Ensuring that your program or intervention aligns with these priorities is crucial.

When it comes to aligning your proposal with the grant priorities, consider:

Relevance: CJC grant programs have specific missions and goals, which are typically outlined in statute. Programs and interventions must align with these priorities to receive funding support.

Impact: When a project aligns with the CJC program priorities, it demonstrates that the project will contribute to the state's goals and have a greater impact.

- **Expand reach** - CJC grants serve as a force multiplier for the state by strategically amplifying the impact of resources. The state can extend its influence to a wider range of geographic areas or communities than it could directly manage. By providing funds to local organizations, they support projects tailored to specific community needs, thereby increasing the overall effectiveness of their investment.
- **Leverage local expertise and resources** - Grants enable the state to tap into the specialized knowledge and capabilities of local organizations that are best positioned to address specific issues. Local agencies often possess a deeper understanding of the problem and have established relationships with the target population, resulting in more effective program implementation.
- **Stimulate innovation and collaboration** - Grants can encourage organizations to develop innovative approaches and solutions to address complex problems. They also foster collaboration among various agencies and organizations, promoting a coordinated and comprehensive response to address complex issues.
- **Drive systemic change** - By strategically funding projects that address the root causes of problems, CJC grants can contribute to long-term, systemic change. This approach can lead to more sustainable solutions and a greater return on the state's investment.
- **Increase accountability and measurable results** - When the CJC requires grantees to track and report on specific outcomes, it ensures that funds are used effectively and that programs are achieving their intended goals. This focus on accountability enhances the credibility of the funder and demonstrates the impact of their investments.

Competition: While not always, CJC grant funding is often competitive. Closely aligning your project with the state's priorities makes your proposal more attractive compared to others.

Stewardship: The state wants to ensure that its resources are used effectively. Aligning with their priorities demonstrates that the funding will be utilized in a manner deemed valuable.

Module 2: Developing a Strong Proposal Through Effective Program Design



The narrative of a grant proposal is crucial; it tells the story of your program or intervention and convinces reviewers that your work is worthy of their support.

The backbone of a successful grant proposal is the program design. If you take the time up front to ensure you have designed a quality program or intervention, writing the proposal will be much easier, and you are more likely to receive funding.

A well-designed program:

- Directly and effectively addresses the identified problem, increasing the likelihood of achieving the stated goals and objectives.
- Provides a roadmap for implementation, outlining specific activities, timelines, and responsible parties. This ensures that the program is carried out in a coordinated and organized manner.
- Includes measurable outcome measures, which are essential for evaluating the program's effectiveness and demonstrating its impact to funders and partners.
- Increases the likelihood of funding. The grant review committee prioritizes proposals with well-defined program designs, as they demonstrate the applicant's understanding of the problem, their ability to develop a logical and effective solution, and their commitment to achieving results.
- Considers the long-term sustainability of the program, including how it will be funded and maintained after the grant period ends.

To help you build a well-designed program or intervention, in this module, we will cover:

1. Drafting a clear and concise Statement of the Problem.
 2. Backing up your problem statement with supporting evidence.
 3. Developing your project action plan, including setting meaningful goals and objectives, identifying your program activities, and establishing timelines and methodologies.
 4. Backing up your plan with supporting evidence of why the program or intervention you have selected is effective.
 5. Identifying how you will measure the results of your program or intervention.
 6. Developing a sustainability plan, if applicable to your program.
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Step 1: Craft a Clear and Concise Statement of the Problem

A statement of the problem explains why your program or intervention is needed. It describes the problem clearly for your audience, including what the issue is, who is affected, and how they are affected.

Specificity matters in the statement of the problem. Specificity builds credibility and shows relevance. Using local data or community-specific examples proves the problem exists where you're working, not just nationally.

You want to avoid vague statements like “there is a lack of resources.” To get more specific, ask yourself:

- Who exactly is affected? Is there a particular community or population?
- How big is the problem? What is the scope or severity of the problem?
- Are there patterns?
- Where does it occur? Is there a particular location, neighborhood, or region?
- When does it happen? Is it more prevalent at night, on weekends, during certain seasons?
- What factors are influencing it?
- What is the effectiveness, or lack thereof, of any ongoing or available interventions or previous programs?
- What are the consequences if nothing changes?

State the problem in one sentence using the following formula:



(Victims) are (harmed) by the (behaviors) of (who) at (places) at (times).

Step 2: Back up the Statement of the Problem with Supporting Evidence

The CJC receives many grant proposals, and it can't fund them all. The proposals that stand out are those that demonstrate a real problem, not just a guess or opinion, and the problem affects real people, supported by facts.

Evidence based on measurable data, research, or facts from studies, reports, or official records adds credibility and objectivity to your proposal. It is proof that the problem you're describing is real and that your project is needed.

Examples of credible evidence could include:

- Crime rate statistics
- Arrest data
- Recidivism data
- Case numbers
- Service data
- Geographic hotspot data
- Victimization data
- Community Surveys
- Law enforcement intelligence
- Forensic evidence

Step 3: Develop a Project Action Plan

A detailed action plan is a crucial component of a successful grant proposal. It demonstrates to the funder that the applicant has a clear vision, a well-thought-out strategy, and the capacity to implement the proposed project effectively.

A common mistake is that applicants skip the first two steps and start here at step three. They jump to their solution without first defining the problem and examining the factors that contribute to it. This approach leads to ineffective programs and interventions.

An action plan:

- Provides a clear and focused roadmap for the project's execution. It outlines the specific activities, timelines, and responsible parties, ensuring that all partners are aligned and working towards the same goals.
- Demonstrates that the applicant has carefully considered the resources, challenges, and potential obstacles involved in the project. This enhances the credibility of the proposal and assures the funder that the project is feasible and likely to succeed.
- Creates a framework for monitoring progress and evaluating outcomes. This ensures accountability and enables the funder to track the project's progress and success.
- Helps the applicant to identify the resources needed to implement the project, including personnel, funding, equipment, and materials. This enables efficient resource allocation and helps prevent cost overruns or delays.
- For projects involving multiple partners, an action plan is crucial for defining roles and responsibilities, establishing clear communication protocols, and ensuring effective collaboration and coordination.



The action plan explains:

- What you plan to do, how you will do it, and who will be involved
- Goals and objectives
- Program activities
- Timelines and methodologies
- Why the chosen methods are appropriate and effective

The action plan is where you clearly describe the activities and strategies you will implement to achieve the project's goals and objectives. To get started, you will explain the specific methods, approaches, and techniques you will use to carry out the activities. You also identify the key personnel and partners responsible for implementing the project and describe their roles and responsibilities.

Goals and Objectives

Goals

Goals are broad statements that describe the overall intended impact of the program or intervention.

They define what the program intends to achieve in the long term.

Goals are generally less specific and not always measurable in a precise way.

Objectives

Objectives are the steps that will help you achieve your program goals.

Objectives outline the precise steps you will take to achieve the goal.

They are SMART statements, meaning they are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound.

Objectives are more focused than our overall goals, and they include details on how success will be measured.

Objectives often quantify the expected change and set a timeline for achieving it.

To set your program goal, consider the long-term impact; what do you want to achieve? What is the main thing you want to accomplish by the end of the program or intervention? This is your overall goal.

Do you want to:

- Eliminate the problem?
- Reduce the problem?
- Reduce the harm?
- Move the problem to a suitable location?
- Improve the ability to handle the problem when it occurs?
- Or something else entirely?

Program Activities

Program activities are the specific actions you will take to achieve the objectives and overall purpose of your proposed program.



Guidelines for program activities:

- The activities should directly address the problem identified in the statement of the problem.
- Each activity should contribute to one or more of the program's objectives.
- Activities should be specific and detailed. Watch out for vague descriptions.
- The activities should be appropriate for and beneficial to the individuals or communities the program aims to serve.
- The activities should be based on research or best practices in the field.
- Grant activities should promote collaboration when possible.
- The activities should be achievable within the grant period and with the available resources.
- The activities should account for all aspects of the program, including implementation, coordination, and evaluation.

Timeline & Methodologies



To provide a clear path for implementing your program, create an outline that identifies timelines and the methodologies you will use for each activity.

Writing out this part of the plan helps answer the question of what the program funds will be used to do. It also ensures that the activities are well-planned, implemented effectively, and aligned with the grant program's priorities. This step also helps to identify the resources needed to carry out the program.

Evidence of Effectiveness

The next part of the plan is to explain why your chosen methods are appropriate and effective.

Using evidence-based practices or research to inform the design of your program or intervention is crucial because it enhances the likelihood that the program will be effective, efficient, and have a positive impact.



An evidence-based solution is a program or practice that has been proven effective through rigorous research and evaluation. This means that there is data to show that the solution achieves its intended outcomes.

We use evidence-based solutions in program design due to their increased effectiveness, to adhere to funder preferences or requirements, and to demonstrate accountability.

Where to find best practices, standards of care, or evidence-based practices:

- Databases
 - crimesolutions.gov
 - Oregon Knowledge Bank
- Academic institutions
 - University of Chicago Crime Lab
 - Michigan State University Police Staffing Observatory
- Researcher/practitioner professional groups
 - American Society of Evidence-Based Policing (ASEBP)
 - National Institute of Justice Law Enforcement Advancing Data and Science (LEADS)
 - International Association of Chiefs of Police Research Advisory Committee (RAC) or Police Research Advancement Section (PRAS)
- Practitioner support programs
 - Oregon Center for Policing Excellence (not just policing)
 - National Policing Institute
- Scientific literature (journal articles, studies)
 - State library
 - Google Scholar

Not all information you find is evidence-based or a best practice. As you evaluate the various solutions or programs you come across:

- Consider the quality and rigor of the research supporting the solution. Look for programs with multiple high-quality studies, such as randomized controlled trials.
- Determine whether you can implement the solution with fidelity, meaning that you can deliver the program as it was designed and evaluated.
- Consider whether the solution can be adapted to fit the specific needs of your target population and community.
- And, evaluate the costs of implementing the solution in relation to its potential benefits.

If there is no evidence-based solution or best practice for your problem, there are still some strategies to increase the likelihood of effectiveness:

- **Comprehensive Approach** - Combine multiple methodologies to create a comprehensive approach. This approach integrates data collection, on-site assessment, implementation, community engagement, and ongoing monitoring and evaluation. This multi-faceted strategy addresses the complex nature of your problem, ensuring a thorough and effective response.
- **Data-Driven Decision Making** - Emphasize the collection and analysis of data to inform decision-making. This ensures that resources are targeted effectively and that the interventions are based on a clear understanding of the problem.
- **Collaboration and Coordination** - Collaborate and coordinate with various partners, including law enforcement agencies, community corrections, non-profit organizations, local community organizations, and other experts. This interagency collaboration is crucial for maximizing resources, sharing expertise, and ensuring a coordinated response.
- **Community Engagement** - Involve the community in the solution. By engaging local community members, this approach aims to build trust, foster a sense of ownership, and ensure that intervention efforts are sustainable and responsive to community needs.
- **Phased Implementation** - Follow a phased approach with clear timelines and objectives for each stage. This enables a systematic and organized implementation, ensuring the project stays on track and that progress is regularly monitored and evaluated.
- **Focus on Accountability and Measurable Results** - Place a strong emphasis on monitoring and evaluation, with a system in place to track and document all activities and outcomes. This focus on accountability ensures that the project is implemented effectively, that resources are used efficiently, and that the project achieves its intended goals.

Document Your Selection

In your grant proposal, clearly describe the evidence-based solution you have chosen and the evidence that supports its effectiveness. Explain why you selected this particular solution and how it aligns with the needs of your target population and community. If you are adapting the solution, explain how you will maintain fidelity to the core components of the program.

Step 4: Make a Plan to Measure the Results

Outcome measures are used to evaluate the program's success in addressing the problem. They are the metrics that indicate whether the program's activities have resulted in the desired changes.

In your proposal, you will need to describe how you will evaluate your program. This includes explaining how you will measure the success of your project, identifying the data you will collect, the methods you will use to analyze it, and how you will utilize the results, as well as explaining how you will assess the impact of your project.

It's crucial to identify relevant measures for your program.

- Relevant measures provide a means to determine whether a program or intervention is achieving its objectives. Without them, it's impossible to know whether the effort is making a difference.
- Relevant measures can help guide the implementation of a program by focusing attention on the activities and strategies most likely to lead to the desired outcomes.
- Funders and partners want to know that their investments are having a positive impact. Relevant measures provide evidence of program effectiveness and ensure accountability.
- By tracking relevant measures, programs can pinpoint areas where they are succeeding and identify areas where they need improvement. This enables ongoing adjustments and improvements to the program design and implementation.
- When a program is shown to be effective through the use of relevant measures, it is more likely to be replicated in other settings or scaled up to serve a larger population.

Step 5: Create a Realistic Sustainability Plan

If your project is intended to continue beyond the grant period, describe how it will be sustained.

Sustainability planning describes how a project will be maintained after the grant period ends. This may include future funding plans, revenue generation, or transitioning the project to other funding sources. For example, one of your activities could be sustainability planning. The methodologies might include identifying potential funding sources, building local capacity to continue program activities, and institutionalizing the multi-agency task force and its collaborative approach.

Step 6: Connect the Budget

The project budget is more than just numbers; it's a storytelling tool that shows funders exactly how your organization will use their money to bring your proposed project to life.

It is important to take the time to build an accurate budget. Underestimate and you won't have sufficient resources to implement your program. Overestimate, and you will need to return funds to the CJC.

The budget:

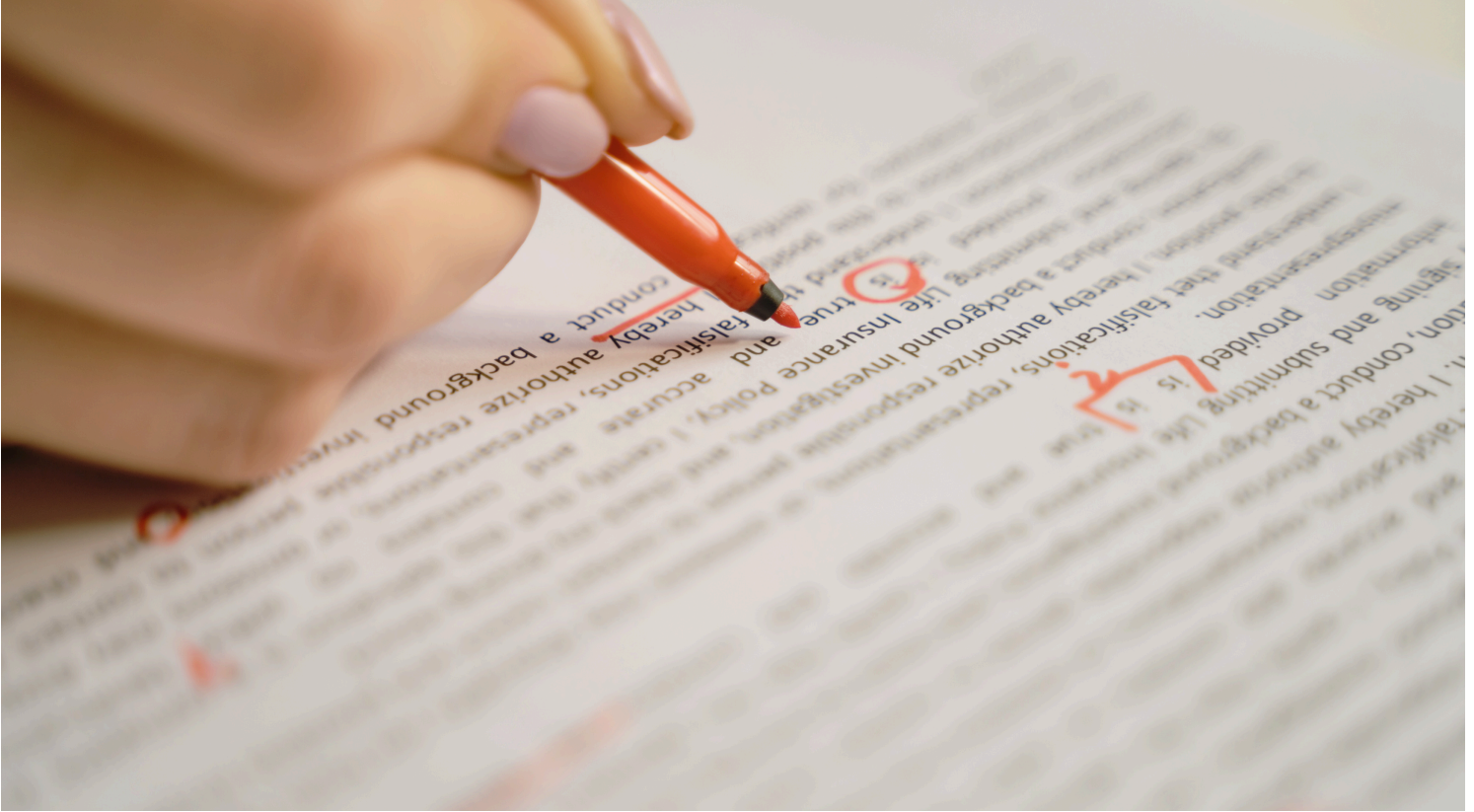
- **Demonstrates Feasibility** - A realistic and well-planned budget reassures funders that your project can be successfully carried out within the proposed scope and timeline.
- **Builds Trust** - A transparent and detailed budget demonstrates that your organization is responsible, organized, and capable of managing funds effectively.
- **Communicates Value** - It helps you ensure that what you're proposing is achievable given the available resources.
- **Ensures Alignment** - It reflects how your project aligns with the funder's priorities by quantifying the investment required to achieve meaningful results.

A common mistake among new grant writers is treating the narrative and budget as two separate documents. In reality, they must tell the same story. Every major activity described in the proposal should be reflected in the budget, and vice versa.

For each line item in your budget, ask yourself:
“What activity does this support?”

And for each major activity in your proposal, ask:
“Where is this accounted for in the budget?”

Module 3: Tips for Writing



In this module, we will cover:



Writing for the Target Audience



Question Strategy



Avoiding Common Mistakes

Target Audience

Writing an effective grant proposal means aligning every part of your application with the evaluation criteria used by reviewers. The reviewers are your target audience. The reviewers may have little to no knowledge about the topic you are proposing. Answer the application questions with this in mind.

Tips for writing for the target audience (the reviewers):

- Always craft your proposal with the funder's perspective in mind. Avoid using language that says “our agency needs this, or we want this.”
- Use language that demonstrates you understand the intent of the grant program and that you have carefully designed a program to help achieve this goal.
- Do not make reviewers search for or interpret the answer.

Application Scoring

The reviewers are assessing your proposal based on some criteria, which may or may not have been provided to you in the solicitation. Keeping this in mind, it is essential not to assume that they are familiar with your program. Ensure that you provide all the critical information in your proposal.

Some solicitations will include a scoring rubric. If this is the case for the grant program you are writing to, be sure to review the rubric carefully and answer the questions with this in mind.

Here are some strategies for writing a grant proposal for a solicitation that includes a rubric.

- Follow the scoring rubric. Each application question is directly tied to the rubric.
- Use the language of the grant. Repeat keywords like “trauma-informed,” “community-based,” “pre-adjudication,” and “healing-centered accountability.”
- Be explicit. Don’t imply your program does something; state it clearly and show how.
- Provide supporting documents. Attach letters of support, MOUs, and prior data where possible. These are critical for scoring maximum points under engagement/referral and eligibility.

Another strategy is to examine the top-scoring elements for each category and write to that score.

Some solicitations will not provide a scoring rubric. You can infer key scoring categories by reviewing the application questions and the detailed requirements outlined in the solicitation.

Question Strategy

The general strategy for answering the application questions is:

- Use a clear structure:
 - Use headings that match the questions to make your application easy to read.
 - Use short paragraphs or bullet points if appropriate.
- Follow the word limits. Stay clear and concise.
- Align every response with program goals.
- Tell a story about how your program will reduce harm and save lives.
- Support your claims with local data, existing infrastructure, or partnerships.
- Be specific and realistic: Set achievable goals and describe concrete steps.
- Be upfront: Don't answer yes that your program does something if it doesn't, or if you are not supporting the affirmation with your response. If it is not an eligibility or other requirement, say it is not something that is part of the program.

Answering Complex Questions with Word Limits


Step One is to identify what the question is really asking. Begin by breaking down the question into its fundamental components. Complex questions often include multiple prompts or sub-questions.

Step Two is to identify priorities from the scoring rubric or solicitation. Prioritize what matters most. If you're tight on words, focus on requirements that are scored highest or marked as essential in the rubric. You can skip less critical background or combine lower-priority points.

Step Three involves brainstorming the key points. Use brief bullet points or create a table to identify what you want to include for each element. This helps you to keep your ideas organized.

Step Four is to draft your response. It cannot be emphasized enough the importance of being clear and concise. The structure of your answer plays a crucial role in this. Organize your answer into labeled parts or a logical flow to help the reviewer follow along. Use bold headers, short paragraphs, phrases in all caps, and bullet points.

Here is another way you might clearly and succinctly structure an answer using this quick formula:

	<p>[Lead with the requirement]: [Brief explanation]</p> <p>[Subpoint 1]: [2-3 word label] – [Compact detail]</p> <p>[Subpoint 2]: [2-3 word label] – [Compact detail]</p> <p>(... continue)</p>
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When a grant proposal question asks about something your program doesn't do, it's a common challenge. The key is to address it directly, but pivot to your strengths and explain why your approach remains effective.

Here's how a writer should address such a question:

- **Acknowledge and Briefly Explain (Without Apology):** Don't ignore the question. Briefly state that your program does not engage in that specific activity, and concisely explain why it's not part of your approach, without making excuses.
- **Pivot to Your Alternative or Related Strengths:** Immediately follow up by explaining what your program offers that addresses the underlying need or achieves a similar positive outcome, even if it does so through a different method. Highlight your chosen approach.
- **Emphasize Effectiveness and Alignment:** Briefly explain why your chosen method is effective for your program or target population, and how it still aligns with the funder's overall goals.
- **Keep your explanation concise.** You don't want to dwell on what you don't do, but instead strategically highlight what you do offer as a strong alternative.

In essence, the strategy is:



"No, we don't do X. Here's why (briefly). But we do do Y, which achieves a similar or even better result for our context, and here's how."

Refine Your Responses

While the quick formula will help keep your answers on the right track, they will need to be refined. As you refine, keep this in mind. Good grant writing is economical; you say more with fewer words.

Don't try to write within the word limit on your first draft. Write out everything you want to say, then go back and cut. Start broad and then refine.

We have covered strategies such as prioritizing information into primary and secondary categories, as well as using bullet points and lists. But how do you begin to cut from your answers? Here are some strategies to help.

Using Strong Verbs

This is a powerful technique for making your grant writing more concise and impactful. Strong Verbs are verbs that convey action and meaning clearly and directly, without needing extra words or adverbs. They paint a vivid picture and reduce wordiness.

Use Active Voice

In active voice, the subject of the sentence performs the action. This makes sentences more direct, clear, and often shorter. In passive voice, the subject receives the action, which can make sentences longer and less direct.

Strong verbs and active voice naturally reduce word count, which is crucial when facing strict word limits in grant applications. They make your sentences more straightforward for reviewers to understand, preventing ambiguity. They convey confidence and directness, making your proposal more persuasive and demonstrating your organization's capability to take action. Lastly, they contribute to a more professional and authoritative tone in your writing.

Removing jargon is a crucial step in condensing your grant proposal and making it more effective.



Jargon refers to specialized words or phrases that are specific to a particular field, profession, or group.

While it can be helpful for communication among experts within that field, jargon often creates barriers to understanding for those outside of it. Removing jargon helps with reviewer understanding, clarity, and conciseness.



Fluff refers to unnecessary words, phrases, or sentences that don't add new information or strengthen your argument.

Fluff is often used to make a response seem longer or more impressive, but it dilutes your message and makes it harder to read. Fluff consumes precious word count without adding substance, forcing you to cut essential details later.

In essence, every word in your grant proposal should earn its place. By systematically identifying and removing jargon and fluff, you create a more powerful, understandable, and ultimately successful application.



Quantifying means using numbers, percentages, frequencies, durations, and other specific measurements instead of general or subjective terms.

Quantifying when possible is one of the most effective ways to make your grant proposal stronger, clearer, and more concise, especially when you're up against strict word limits. It's about replacing vague language with concrete numbers and specific details.

By consistently seeking opportunities to replace generalities with specific numbers, you will significantly strengthen your grant proposal and make it more appealing to funders.



Combining sentences means presenting ideas more cohesively and efficiently, rather than in short, choppy bursts.

Combining sentences is an excellent strategy for condensing your writing, improving its flow, and making it more sophisticated. By merging related ideas, you often eliminate redundant words and phrases that appear when ideas are separated into multiple sentences. This directly helps you meet word limits.

Look for sentences that express related ideas, and then use various grammatical tools to link them.

- Use conjunctions (and, but, or, so, for, nor, yet).
- Use subordinating conjunctions (because, although, while, since, when, if, unless, etc.).
- Use relative pronouns (who, which, that, whose, whom)

Proofreading

After writing, take a break before proofreading. Step away from your writing for a few hours (or overnight, if possible). You'll catch more mistakes with fresh eyes.

Proofread for structure and content first. Ask yourself:

- Did I answer every part of the question?
- Do the ideas flow logically from one sentence to the next?
- Did I repeat the grant's priorities or goals in my wording?
- Does this make sense to someone unfamiliar with our program?

After structure and content, tighten up language. Look for unnecessary filler words and long-winded phrases that can be simplified for a more concise and compelling writing style. Try to keep sentences under 25 words where possible.

Next, proofread for grammar, spelling, and style. Use a spell checker and read it aloud. Typos hide in plain sight, especially after you have been writing and rewriting.

Watch for:

- Subject-verb agreement
- Misused words such as their/there/they're
- Consistent tense and tone. Avoid shifting from past to present.
- Copy and paste errors. While copy and paste is a useful tool, a common mistake is leaving old content in place or not updating dates when copying content from a previous version or from a different use document into the grant proposal.

Lastly, be consistent with names, acronyms, and formatting.

The final step is having someone else review your writing. Ask a colleague, partner, or someone unfamiliar with the project to read it.

Provide them with this checklist:

1. Does it answer every question?
2. Is anything confusing or vague?
3. Are there any grammar or clarity issues?

Encourage them to mark unclear spots with comments or highlighters.

Common Mistakes

Not following instructions - This includes failing to adhere to the funder's guidelines, such as formatting, word limits, and required documents.

Failing to align the project with the funder's mission and priorities -

Focusing on the organization's needs instead of the project's impact - This includes emphasizing how the grant will benefit the organization, rather than the target population.

Rushing to get the proposal completed - Be careful not to submit proposals with typos, grammatical errors, and inconsistencies. Watch out for careless editing. Pay attention to deadlines and give yourself more time than you think you need.

Not writing in a clear, concise, and easily understandable manner - This impacts the ability of reviewers to read and score your proposal. Watch out for jargon or vague language.

Submitting an incomplete or not aligned budget - Submit a budget that is realistic, complete, and well justified. Clearly state the amount of funding you are requesting.

Module 4: Proposal Submission



When a grant proposal is submitted to a government agency, whether federal or state, it generally becomes a **public record** under specific circumstances. This is primarily governed by transparency laws designed to ensure public access to government information.

Modules 2 and 3 have helped ensure that you have prepared a professional and quality proposal. This final module will help ensure you submit all of the required information.

In this module, we will cover:



Final Checklist



*Formatting and
Packaging the
Proposal*



*Submitting the
Proposal*



*What to Know if the
Proposal gets
Approved*





Final Checklist

Do one last check to ensure:

- All word limits have been followed,
- All of the required questions answered,
- The spelling and grammar look good,
- The budget aligns with the narrative,
- Letters of support, MOUs, and attachments are included
- And materials have been saved in the correct format for submission to the portal.

An application for CJC grant programs includes the submission of written narratives, proposed budgets, and other supplemental materials outlined in the specific grant solicitation.

Ensure that all uploads are clearly labeled and formatted as requested, typically in PDF or Excel format.



Formatting and Packaging the Proposal



Submitting the Proposal

Submit your proposal and required attachments through the online portal:

<https://cjc-grants.smapply.io>.

Read the **Oregon Criminal Justice Commission Grant Administration Guide** to understand what to expect if your proposal is approved.

This will include information about the Grant Award Agreement, which provides guidelines and restrictions on expending funds.

The handbook will also explain the reporting requirements and what to expect regarding program monitoring, including desk monitoring, on-site visits, and in-person engagement.

Lastly, the Grant Management Handbook will provide you with all the necessary information regarding closeout and compliance.



What to Know if the Proposal Gets Approved

Contact Us

For technical assistance, contact CJC staff at cjc.grants@cjc.oregon.gov.

Oregon Criminal Justice Commission

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