

HERITAGE BULLETIN

Tips, Ideas & More to Help Preserve Oregon's Heritage

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GRANT WRITING TIPS

JULY 2015

Writing a successful grant proposal involves more than coming up with a great idea. Successful grant proposals demonstrate well thought-out project planning and observance of grant application guidelines. This Bulletin provides 25 tips to keep your proposal focused and on track.

Before Applying



1. Before seeking a grant program, know your project and why it is necessary.
2. Define your project's desired outcome and the need the project will serve for the community and/or the organization.
3. Consider your project and select an appropriate and relevant grant program.
4. If possible, contact officers with the grant program you are considering and ask if they will review your application prior to submittal. If they will, then take advantage of that!
5. Review successful grant proposals that provided funding to a similar project. Note how the applicants structured their document.
6. Listen to or, even better, participate on a grant review committee.

Prepare an Outline

7. Review the instructions and gather the components necessary for the grant proposal. These might include organizational tax ID numbers, board member names and contact information, collaborative partner(s) background and contact information, key staff / volunteer qualifications, a project budget and illustrations (before photographs, construction plans, etc.).
8. Prepare section headings in the order outlined in the guidelines.
9. Under each section heading write the questions asked in the instructions to keep you on track.



Write the Proposal

10. Refer to and follow the instructions as you write.
11. Answer the questions asked. Do not copy and paste from another application; respond to the purpose of the grant program for which you are applying.
12. Write the proposal as if you are speaking to someone for the first time. Use clear language. Be concise and specific. If you use jargon, define it.
13. When asked, tell the funders about your organization, including milestones and past achievements. Keep it simple and to the point. Think of this section as an introduction that will set the tone for your entire proposal.
14. Prepare a needs statement that provides those reviewing the grant with an understanding about why your organization is the best to complete the project.
15. Define your project's goals and objectives.
16. Reference professional standards and discuss the use of best practices for your project.
17. Establish measurable outcomes. Tell the funders how your organization measures audience satisfaction. Define how your organization will measure benchmarks for meeting its objectives. Describe how your organization will measure progress during the life of the grant and beyond.
18. Provide specific project details, including who will conduct the work, what they will do to achieve the project's goals, and where the activities will take place. Create a timeline that demonstrates specific milestones from implementation of the project to its completion.
19. Include a discussion about project partners and collaborative efforts between your organization and others in your community.



Review the Proposal

20. Do not include unnecessary information or attachments.
21. Make sure your budget adds up and matches the narrative.
22. Have two people review the project, one that knows it and one that doesn't.
23. Proofread, *proofread*, **proofread!**

Ask for Feedback

24. No matter the results ask for feedback to learn for the future.
25. If you are turned down, be polite when asking why. Submitting a grant proposal is a competitive process. Just because a project is turned down, it doesn't mean it is not valuable.

See also [Heritage Bulletin 10: Grant Administration at a Glance](#). For additional tips or specific questions related to grants from the Oregon Heritage, a division of the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, visit www.OregonHeritage.org or contact:

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