

Nine Secrets of Successful Grant Proposals

1. Research before beginning! Do not submit a proposal to any foundation or funding agent without first verifying that your project fits within the funder's guidelines.
2. Read the grant guidelines! Many foundations have detailed guidelines available to grant-writers. These guidelines are made available so that proposals submitted to them will meet their funding initiatives. Applications that carefully follow the published guidelines allow them to easily determine if your project is one that matches their interests.
3. Be concise! Put yourself in the place of the foundation's proposal reader. They receive and must review hundreds of proposals. The more easily and quickly they can determine if your project meets their objectives, the happier they are going to be.
4. Clarity is important! Keep in mind that acronyms and terms specific to your profession may mean nothing—or may mean something different—to the foundation. Write your proposal as if you are communicating with someone who is not an educator and knows nothing about the field.
5. Proofreading is imperative! Have someone who was not involved in the writing process proofread your proposal before it is submitted. Typos, poor grammar, and other errors that are easy for a separate set of eyes to recognize are easy to overlook in your own work. Submitting a proposal with such errors, however, gives the impression that you either don't know better or are willing to submit shoddy work.
6. Collaboration is vital! Foundations often prefer to fund projects that have the greatest impact for the community and that are non-duplicative in nature.
7. Realistic budgets are a must! Research your budget needs carefully before submitting your proposal. Do not ask for more—or less—than you feasibly need to ensure your project's success.
8. Don't forget the evaluation component! Your proposal should include methods for evaluating the effectiveness of your project. Evaluation is a necessary component of all projects—without it you will not know if your project is progressing as it should.
9. Address project sustainability! Foundations and governmental agencies want to know that, if your project is successful, it will be continued even after their financial support has ended.

Source: http://www.schoolgrants.org/grant_tips2.htm