GRANT WRITING TIPS SHEET

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TIPS FOR GRANT WRITING SUCCESS

You want your application for funding to be successful. So do we. Which is why we have put together this handy tips and tricks sheet.

Use it as a guide when putting together submissions for grants.

And remember, we are available to talk to you in person, so feel free to contact us if you have any queries – we are happy to help.

Before you get started on completing a PDC grant application form, we encourage you to check that the funding program is the right one for your project.

If it's not, we may be able to point you in the direction of programs that are a better match.

When you are ready to start

TIPS

Applying for funding is competitive with limited funds available and often many groups seeking a share of this money. Therefore, the more you can make your application shine, the better your chance of standing out and achieving success.

And remember: if you are not sure about something, we encourage you to contact us.

Before you get started

A lot of time and work goes into putting together an application for funding. Not only are there important questions to answer, but there are supporting documents to chase up.

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GRANT FUNDING SUCCESS
TIP SHEET

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While there is no magic formula for writing grant applications, we hope the following tips put you on track to writing an effective grant proposal.

Become incorporated

Generally, funding bodies don't offer grants to unincorporated groups or private citizens.

Read the guidelines

Read through these carefully so you know what's required. Make sure you address the key criteria, just as you would when preparing for a job application.

Allow sufficient time

Start early to give yourself enough time to create a compelling application. This is especially important if you are required to provide support material. Always send in the application by the closing date and in the manner specified.

Letters of support

Letters of support must be current and support the project for which you are applying for funding. Request letters sooner rather than later as this will improve your chances of completing the proposal on time. Make sure to attach them to your application.

Highlight the benefits

Frame your application in a way that says 'we need to deliver this program in order to achieve this outcome for the community, and we need money to do that.'

Know the funder's priorities

If possible, link your project to key strategic or operational planning documents from the funder's organization.

Be succinct

Use dot points or a table if necessary to convey information clearly and succinctly.

Never assume

Make sure it is clear to someone who knows little about your organisation or project.

Answer all the questions

Make sure you answer all the questions, or your application may be considered non-compliant

Keep within the limits

Only use the supplied forms and budget tables and always respect the word limit imposed.

Balance the budget

Ensure it all adds up, income and expenditure figures match, and the total project amount and total amount requested is consistent throughout your application. Include budget notes (where necessary) to explain unusual items of expenditure. These can be included as footnotes at the end of the budget.

Be reasonable

Your request for funding should match the scale of the project. Demonstrate other contributions including your own organisations contribution.

Consider funding sources

Don't rely on just one funding source. Make the effort to secure funding from a range of different sources.

Check attachments

Make sure all required documents are attached to the application. These include annual reports, a certificate of Incorporation, ABN, insurance, financial statements, quotes and so on.

Proof Read

Get rid of errors, typos and bad grammar so they don't let down your hard work. Also make sure you have not missed out any pages or attachments and have answered all the questions.

Sign it off correctly

The CEO or chairperson of the organisation is required to sign a funding application. If using the delegated authority be sure to include an explanation advising of such.

GRANT WRITING PITFALLS
TOP TEN

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Don't sabotage your own grant application by falling into these pitfalls. Learn the common reasons why applications fail so that you can avoid making the same mistakes.

1 Eligibility is not met

If your organisation does not meet the required legal status or your requested items for funding are not listed as eligible items then do not apply.

2 Guidelines are not thoroughly read

The guidelines are a valuable source of information on exactly what the grant aims are. Make sure your project matches with these aims and that you address the criteria in your application.

3 Unanswered questions

Each question on an application form is there for a reason. Make sure you address each and every one, and if a question really does not apply state N/A. Leaving it blank will look as though the question has been overlooked.

4 Not leaving enough time

Your application will not be accepted if received after the closing date. Make sure you allow enough time to create a complete and compelling application and submit it through the specified channels.

5 Budget is incorrect

The income and expenditure should add up to the same figure, and make sure the figures are consistent throughout the application. Also check whether the budget is GST exclusive. If confused by the budget, phone the funding body and ask for clarification.

6 Not using 'Plain English'

Most funding organisations receive more applications than they have money to give. It's important to attract their attention in the first paragraph, keep technical terms and jargon to a minimum. Using plain English enhances a reader's comprehension of your project.

7 Required co-funding or leveraged funding is not met

With some funding bodies it is a requirement to contribute funds either from your own organisation or through leveraged funds from other sources. Generally, you will be more competitive if you can show that leveraged funds have been approved for your project from your own organisation and others. Make sure this is reflected in the budget and confirmed if possible.

8 The incorrect person signs the application

A CEO, Chairperson or authorised person must sign applications and acquittals. If it is not signed by the correct person you may be non- compliant. If your organisation has a different governance structure and signing of the application will be done from an authorised person within your organisation, provide the necessary attachments to show this, for example a governance flow chart or letter stating delegated authority to sign on a CEO or Chairperson's behalf.

9 Lack of proofreading

Always read and re-read your application before you submit. This will ensure all pages are submitted and spelling, grammar and formatting errors are addressed.

10 Attachments have not been provided

A checklist will be included that states required attachments to a grant such as proof of incorporation, public liability insurance, previous annual report and letter of support. Run through this checklist to make sure you have met all of the requirements.