

Creating Your Grant Proposal



General Grant Proposal Structure

Basic Structure: Overview

- Cover letter and executive summary
- Your history, mission, purpose, values
- Your capacity and expertise
- Target group
- Needs analysis
- Project proposal and plan
- Goals and outcomes
- Evaluation plan
- Budget
- Impact
- Other

Cover Letter & Executive Summary

Write a brief cover letter which is signed by the CEO or the Board of Your organization

Include a clear concise executive summary of the proposal explaining why you are asking for the grant.

Make this a compelling summary that highlights the key elements of your grant proposal, capturing the attention of your ideal grant funder.

History, Mission, Purpose, Values

Share mission and vision of your organization.

List and define your values.

Explain history of your organization. Speak about how and why it was founded and what is its core purpose.

Make sure that the relevance to the grant funders's purpose, their mission and vision and their values is obvious and clear.

This is when you show that your organization is a good fit for them and a credible partner.

Your Capacity & Expertise

Write an introduction of your organization. Highlight your organizations capacity, including its resources, partnerships and past accomplishments.

Introduce your expertise, programs, history of grants that you won and carried out.

Introduce your team and how they will benefit the grant funder with their experience, including what will be their role in this particular project.

Introduce why you are asking for the grant and establish and introduce the problem very briefly.

The goal of this part of the proposal is to convey your ability to execute the proposed project. Speak with confidence, but be humble.

Target Group

Describe who will be the beneficiaries of your project. Introduce them in depth to the grant funder. Ideally the target audience you want to serve is also a target audience of the grant funder.

Explain how you know the target audience. Have you worked with them and have you served them before? Do you know them well enough to help them? Does your expertise answer to their needs?

Describe how will you choose participants in the project, according to what criteria.

Needs Analysis

Clearly articulate the specific problems your project aims to address, emphasizing their significance, the reason why these problems exist and what will be the consequences if the problem is not resolved.

Explain the gap that your project intends to fill.

Prove that you analyzed the problem. Attach surveys, needs analysis if you have it. Conduct focus groups and attach transcripts from it. Include numbers, statistics, research, links to articles and etc. Be very specific and concrete.

Show you are an expert in this area.

Project Proposal / Plan

Outline a detailed plan for your program or project.

List all activities you will carry out in the project - goal of which is to resolve the problem of the target audience which you outlined in the needs analysis.

Create a timeline and mark milestones in it. Ideal is excel.

Speak about resources required for successful implementation and how will they be used through the whole project and its activities.

Goals and Results

Define the overarching goals.

Define how you will measure you achieved your goals: eg.what results you expect and and what are your anticipated outcomes aligned with the grant's objective.

Demonstrate the impact your project will have in numbers.

One absolute rule: Goals must always be SMART:

Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound

Evaluation Plan

Describe your data collection strategy.

Describe your evaluation plan.

Outline how you will evaluate the effectiveness and impact of your project.

What criteria will you use?

How will you measure it?

Examples: feedback from clients, surveys, team reflective cycles..

How will you use this evaluation for the future?

Budget

Present a detailed budget that accurately reflects the financial resources required to support your project.

Each budget needs to show expense and also income.

Show how you will cover the rest of the expense (multi source financing).

Explain each item on the budget. Provide transparency.

Demonstrate fiscal responsibility.

Define ROI - return on investment - what will the grant funder get in terms of impact in return to the amount given in grant.

Impact

Articulate how your project's outcomes will have a lasting impact.

Include the potential benefits for the target audience.

Include potential benefits for the broader community.

Speak about how you will ensure sustainability of your impact beyond the grant period. This is very important.

Other

- You can include “letters of support” from future beneficiaries of the funding where they state what is their need and how the grant will help them
- Include testimonials from your target audience if you have it
- You can attach your Annual Report as one of the attachments
- Explain what management and reporting tools you will use
- Explain what digital tools you will use and what tools of communication in your team and with the target audience
- Define risks you may face preventing you from successful implementation and identify solutions for each of the risks