

Grant Essentials Worksheet

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Key Points:

- Remember that a grant application is a letter. Don't forget that you're writing to a person.
- Create an image that portrays your organization/cause. Imagine that you're filling a blank room with your mission, goals, and ambitions.
- Ensure that all of your requests can be readily quantified. (Ex. We gave fifteen programs to twelve students over five weeks.) – Details and specificity is key.
- Failure is a part of the process. Organizations and individuals can apply and be refused 7-8 times before receiving funding. Keep pushing, keep evolving, and keep refining your goals and approach.

Before you write your first paragraph:

- Ask yourself: Does your mission align with the funding entity? (Example: If a funder gives money to artists based in Minnesota and you're based in Indiana. Do not apply!)
- Consider what sets your goals, missions, and ambitions apart from other entities.
- Do the research! Explore pages on the funding entities web pages. Who are the grant makers? What do they like?
 - These key details will help you set yourself apart.

Opening paragraph:

- Value
 - What is your key directive?
 - Here you present a directive that people can agree with...
- Barrier
 - Here is where you remove the barrier between your mission and the funder.
 - Who are you?!
- Ask
 - Declare why you need \$\$\$.
 - Example: It is essential that we support **this value** during **this time period** and so we are asking for **this sum of money**.
- Vision
 - It is essential that we affirm **this value** and so we are going to do **this action**.

Grant letter:

- Needs
 - What is the problem that you're facing? Specifically, present the landscape of your issue. Contrary to popular belief, this is not what you need... this is **why you need** what you need.
- Objectives
 - What is your quantifiable/actionable goal?
- Activities
 - Provide metrics and key details about your objective.
- Evaluation
 - This should be a rigorous interrogation of your objectives. This section should include research, statistics, and information that point to why what you're doing is successful and/or relevant.

- Capacity
 - What is your ability to execute your objective? What has been accomplished and who did it?
- *Best Practices*
 - *Say what you do, say why you do what you do, and say why you do what you do the way that you do it.*

Qualities of a Successful Applicant:

- Purpose and mission is clear!
- Community
 - What does your community need? How does your mission support that need?
- Evaluation
 - Not just numbers! This is a qualitative and well-researched response to progress and outcomes.
- Nimble
 - You must communicate your ability to be flexible, responsive and agile.
- Transparency
 - Call the funder if you have major changes within your budget! Take a proactive approach to adversity.
- Humanity, authenticity, and perspective!