

CHARITY MATTERS



Grant Writing refers to the practice of completing an application process for funding provided by an institution such as a government department, corporation, foundation or trust or other such grant-awarding organisation. Such application processes are referred to as either grant proposals or grant submissions.

Successful grant writing requires a clear understanding of the process being engaged in. Essentially you are trying to catch the eye of the grant reviewer hoping that they will become emotionally engaged through your structured approach and the passion for what you do which should be evident in your proposal.

So how do you construct an eye-catching and meaningful grant application? While the principles and fundamentals of all grant applications are broadly the same, the level of detail required can be significant and very specific. It is critically important to be able to tune your language appropriately and to be able to succinctly differentiate your application, and more important your organisation, from all others. Getting to grips with the creation process of a grant proposal is a big part of the success in grant writing and attending a grant writing workshop should be a priority for grant-seeking organisations. I have attended a number of grant writing workshops at home and abroad and found them to be of enormous value.

Grant submissions are usually consistent in format and comprise of a short opening introduction; the purpose of the proposal; the target audience; the financial components; the anticipated project outputs and outcomes and monitoring & evaluation. Many grants fail to grasp the difference between project outputs and project outcomes which can significantly hamper your success. Time should be spent learning and understand the differences as both are key elements of any project.

When your grant is complete, print it off and read it thoroughly and involve a co-worker in the process. Pay careful attention to the financials, as often the stated project cost does not equal the sum of the individual project components and this can work against you. (Most major online grant applications have an option to save your application as a draft which you can print and review. If not, take screen shots as you move through the process and then print and review).

When writing a grant application, you need to ensure that you have available your most recent set of (audited) accounts; tax clearance certificate, memorandum & articles of association or constitution. Sometimes a letter from your organisation stating that the organisation will cover a % of the project cost from own funds is required. It is too late looking for such information when you have an hour to go to the grant deadline!

Grant Writing is an extremely competitive business. Some 700+ organisations recently applied to the American Ireland Fund for support from their Small Grant Round. How do you stand out in such a crowded space? It takes hard work and much preparation!

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