

Common Grant Proposal Components

The major sections of common grant proposals are underlined in the document below. Following each section heading are suggestions to complete the section.

Cover Summary

Information required in the Cover for grant applications or proposals is background information about the organization, demographics and organizational leadership. Examples of common components required for this section include:

- Include the date of application.

- Include legal name of organization, full address, and name of executive director.

- Include information about IRS 501(c) (3) nonprofit status. This is often provided in a simple YES/NO question. If the organization is not a 501(c) (3) nonprofit, you will be asked to identify your fiscal agent and attach the written agreement from the fiscal agent. (Funders using this form may have special requirements as to the use of a fiscal agent, or may not permit such use.)

- Include contact name and title of the person completing the proposal or application.

- Include phone, FAX, and e-mail address of person completing the application or proposal.

- State the amount of funding requested for proposed project. Indicate if funding will be used for operating expenses, project expenses, or for capital projects.

- State your organization's mission statement.

- Use **no more than four sentences** to summarize the proposal and its strategic link with this funder (include the name of the project or capital campaign, if applicable).

- List the proposal's target population, constituent, and geographic communities.

- List the Board of Directors of the organization.

- List total number of volunteers especially those working with your project.
- List total number of full and part-time staff working with the project.

- List the total annual organizational budget. Department or school site

budget may also be included.

- State project or capital budget amount, as applicable.
- State the granting period. Grants that are awarded annually should be stated accordingly. Multi-year awards can be stated in the following format: from MM/YY to MM/YY.
- List any previous support from this funder from the last five years. It is important to acknowledge past support from each funding agency.

Proposal Narrative

The following are common questions identified by funders that provide important background information about your project. Be sure to check the goals, objectives and amount requested match the criteria of the funder you are approaching. Information from a particular funder may not require you to encompass all the following information in the proposal narrative. You may change the order in which you answer these questions in order to match your program needs as well as funder requirements. **Narratives generally are no longer than 10 pages in length.**

Proposal Narrative can include:

- A brief summary of organization's history, goals, and key achievements.
- An overview of organization's structure and programs, including board, staff and volunteer involvement.
- A description your organization's constituents for a specific project. For example, total number and breakdown by age, gender, race/ethnicity, income levels, disabilities, geography, language spoken, or other criteria relevant to your organization or project.
- A description of the community or regional need(s) and/or challenges that this effort will address. What is the level and nature of involvement of the community-at-large?
- A description of the specific request that include goals and objectives. (If it's a project request, provide a profile of the project.)
- A profile of your organization and your request
If you are requesting operating support, please provide information about your organization's overall programs and activities.

If you are requesting project or capital support, please provide information for that specific project or capital request.

- A description of specific activities and timetable for meeting your stated objectives.
- A description of future plan for sustaining this effort and strategy for building your funding base.
- Identification of program staff and volunteers, by name and describe their qualifications.
- If applicable, identification of organizations that you collaborate with to address the issue(s) in this proposal.

Evaluation

All funders will require an evaluation of funded projects. Include the following when addressing the evaluation of the proposed project. If your project will require an external evaluator, include information about the evaluator, including curriculum vitae. The section of the proposal discussing evaluation can include:

- Define your criteria for success for the organization, project, or capital campaign. State how you will measure your success in the short-term and in the long-term. What tool(s) will be used to evaluate your program or organization? What is your strategy for implementing the evaluation process?

Attachments

Each funding agency will require specific documents and forms to support the proposed project. Follow the funder guidelines to ensure that the required information is provided. Important – Refer to each funder’s guidelines to see if additional attachments, such as diversity forms, IRS Form 990, or resumes are required. The attachments section can include:

- IRS letter confirming tax-exempt status – 501(c) (3) and 509(a).
- Current board list with relevant background, affiliations, town residence, and number of times a year it meets.
- Other financial information specifically requested by funding agency such as: Board approved organizational budget for the fiscal year(s); Most recent independent audit or account review (as required by law); Year-to-date financial statement for the current fiscal year; List of companies and foundations being approached to fund this proposal, with dollar amounts indicating which sources are committed, pending, or anticipated.

Proposal Budget/Budget Narrative

Each grant application or proposal requires a detailed explanation of how the funds will be spent. This section should be no more than 10 pages in length and will include the

following information. The budget narrative section is the explanation that accompanies the budget detail worksheet for the grant proposal. If you already have prepared organizational, project, or capital budgets, which include revenues and expenses, you may submit them in their original form.

The Budget Narrative section should include:

- Project budget time period. This may be stated in fiscal year, calendar year or school year, depending on funder requirements.
- Revenue Section: Provide a line item revenue statement for all applicable budget categories. Include funding from grants (Federal, State, local and private foundation funding) and contracts applicable to the project budget. Include other earned income from donations, sales of products, or from fee-based programming.
- Expense Section: Provide a line item expense budget, with narrative footnotes for those applicable items, which need further explanation.

Typical line items might include:

- Salaries (specify numbers of full time equivalents)
 - Payroll Taxes
 - Fringe Benefits
 - Consultants and Professional Fees
 - Insurance
 - Travel/Transportation
 - Equipment
 - Supplies
 - Printing and Copying
 - Telephone and Fax
 - Postage and Delivery
 - Rent
 - Utilities
 - Maintenance
 - Evaluation
 - Staff Development and Training
 - Child Care
 - Administrative Overhead
- In-Kind Support Section: Provide information about services of other organizations that will be provided to the project without direct charge to grant, building facilities used for project, materials or equipment that will be used for the project that will not be purchased by grant funds.

Tips

1. Research each funder's grant making philosophy, program interests, and criteria.
2. Be aware of each funder's application process, including timetable and preferred method of initial contact. Call or write each funder to obtain a copy of its funding

guidelines - Understanding that many foundations have small sizes, calling a foundation or corporate giving program to seek their advice if you do have a concern about a particular question may be useful.

3. Include a cover letter, introducing your organization and stating the dollar request. (Check with each funder to see if they have a separate cover sheet.)
4. Follow any specific instructions from the funder.

Source: *Associated Grant Makers (AGM) Common Proposal Form.* *Associated GrantMakers (AGM)* is a regional association of corporate and foundation grant makers. AGM's mission is to support the practice and expansion of effective philanthropic giving.

AGM DOES NOT MAKE GRANTS. PLEASE DO NOT SEND FUNDING REQUESTS TO AGM.

Feel free to share the Common Proposal Form with a nonprofitcolleague! Visit www.agmconnect.org to learn more about this organization.