

TIPS FOR PREPARING GRANT PROPOSALS

- Read the directions and guidelines carefully before starting on the application. Determine if your proposal meets the goals of the granting organization and that your organization or proposal is eligible for funds.
- Follow the directions for filling out the application. If it says “use the space provided or to use 12 pt Times New Roman font,” that is what they mean. Many organizations will immediately disqualify your application for not following the posted procedures.
- Less is more. While you do want to provide complete information, remember that your audience is typically reading a large number of proposals. They can lose interest and miss an important point if you go into too much detail.
- Don’t include unsupported assertions and assumptions; back up your statements with accurate, verifiable data.
- Avoid circular reasoning in stating your problem or need; in other words, presenting the absence of your solution as the actual problem. For instance, you don’t want to say, “We have no community swimming pool; therefore we need to build one.” A better statement would cite that after surveying your community and looking at a number of options for an effective recreation program for our community, we have decided that a community pool could offer recreation, exercise and therapy programs to the widest cross section of residents. You might cite how a pool in a neighboring community has met with success and all the potential ways it would benefit the community.
- If you use acronyms or industry specific terms, always define them in the first instance of use in your proposal.
- Provide a realistic project budget.
- If you have received funding from other sources towards this project already, make sure you include that information. You want to highlight your partners and demonstrate that others have invested in your proposal.
- What are your anticipated outcomes? Who will benefit and how?
- Does your proposal address sustainability? In other words, if you get the pool built, how will the programming be implemented and the facility maintained?
- Have you included how you plan to evaluate/measure the success of your project?
- Don’t rely on spell check to edit your final draft. Treat proofreading your application/proposal as if you were proofreading a term paper for which you wanted to receive an “A.”

- If you aren't clear on a requirement or have a question, it is always best to contact the program administrator for clarification.
- Begin gathering any supporting documentation, bylaws, letters of tax-exempt status, letters of support etc. early in the process so you aren't in a rush as you approach the submission deadline
- If you are fortunate enough to be awarded a grant, closely follow the program's documentation and reporting requirements. Follow all deadlines. You want to maintain a good relationship with the funding organization.