

Grant Writing Do's and Don'ts

The Do's:

1. Read the Request for Proposal. Read it again and highlight or make notes of key points.
2. Follow the required proposal format exactly. Usually points are given for each section requested and you should pay close attention to the distribution values. If you omit a section, you lose points and probably lose the opportunity to receive funding.
3. Plan carefully to meet deadlines. Grant deadlines are hard and fast — and if you miss it, usually it is a full year before you can submit again.
4. Present a compelling need for the project that is validated with current, relevant data (use statistical facts, expert testimony, current research studies, etc. to substantiate need).
5. Provide solid evidence that your strategies/solutions will address the identified need. Persuade the funding source that your project methods and activities are feasible and will result in the outcomes you anticipate.
6. Present a reasonable timeline for the program with milestones and dates from start to finish including a well-designed evaluation plan.
7. Establish the capability of the college/division/program⁶⁸ Ensure that your project goals and objectives match source. They should be clearly stated, concise, and measurable.
9. Collaborate and/or coordinate activities with other agencies in the same or related field. Funders like to see evidence of others working on the same problem.
10. Think carefully through your budget. Once you are funded, you said you would with the funds requested and meet the budget in the proposal.
11. Describe how your project can be replicated and sustained that will have a long-term impact on the university and the program will “live” beyond the funding.
12. Work closely with your Office of Sponsored Programs. They

The Don'ts:

1. Avoid writing in jargon. Write for a well-educated person who may not be an expert in your field.
2. Do not include objectives that are too ambitious in scope and that do not match the objectives of the funding source.
3. Never pad your budget. Agencies will reject proposals with unrealistic budgets. Funders want to see a reasonable and well-explained budget request.
4. Be sure you are not requesting unallowable items. Read budget restrictions carefully!
5. Make your proposal reader friendly. Do not prepare a proposal with fifty pages of single-spaced text in courier font with no subheadings, bullets, or graphic elements that make a proposal look attractive. Use formatting tools to help break the monotony for the reader scoring your proposal.

6. Do not use (b) (4) or (b) (5) C on a proposal. (b) (4) is for information that is so sensitive that its disclosure could result in the identification of confidential sources or methods, and (b) (5) C is for information that is so sensitive that its disclosure could result in the identification of confidential sources or methods.