

# Writing applications for grants

Your organization may be applying for a grant for the first time, or it may already be experienced at tapping available financial resources. The following information outlines the key elements of grant writing and may be useful to beginners and professionals alike.

1. Title pages —  
Project Title  
Agency and/or Person Applying for the Grant  
Abstract of the Proposal



Statement of Assurances  
Table of Contents  
Letter of Transmittal

2. Mission Statement — General functions of services which the applying agency performs and how these functions relate to the subject matter in the grant proposal.

3. Need or Problem Statement — Past, current and potential facts which affect the well-being of the population in the grant proposal. Also, a description of the criteria used to select the problem addressed by the proposal.

4. Assumptions — Assumptions, constraints and givens which may affect the proposed program negatively or positively.

5. Goal — A statement that defines what will have occurred when the need is met in terms of state or condition of people. Statement must be measurable. It need not be realistic in terms of available resources or the existing state of the art. Time is not specified.

6. Objective — A statement which addresses an action which can be executed to a specified degree in a specified period of time. Objectives should relate to each stated goal.

7. Statement of Plans of Action — Each objective will consist of:
  - a) What is to be done — where, when, how often and by whom.
  - b) For whom it will be done.

8. Schedule — Projected date of completion and dates for sequential steps along the way.

9. Evaluation — Outline how you plan to evaluate your project and how you will indicate to your funding source that your project was successful.

10. Budgeting — **Never** tailor a proposal to a budget — always budget a proposal.
  - a) Major areas of budget account.
  - b) Sources to cost data.
  - c) Matching funds.

11. Appendices

## Common reasons for denying grant requests

1. Project objectives not matched to objectives of funding source.
2. Proposal is poorly written and hard to understand.
3. Proposal did not follow guidelines or format stipulated by the agency or foundation.
4. Proposal lacked specificity, clarity, completeness or coherence.
5. Missing or inadequate data on project personnel.
6. No apparent relationship or coordination with other individuals and/or organizations working in the same problem area.

7. No evidence that project initiators have necessary experience and resources to carry the project through.

8. Significance of project too narrow or localized.

9. Project objectives too ambitious.

10. Insufficient evidence that the project can continue beyond the grant period.

11. Inadequate evaluation procedures.

12. Proposed budget not within range of funding available through this source.

13. Prospective client groups have not been involved in planning and determining project goals.

14. Discrepancies between objectives and procedures.

15. Inappropriate timelines.

16. Project fails to create new tools, techniques or knowledge.

17. Project does not maximize scarce resources of time and personnel (the cost is too high for the benefit.)

18. Proposal takes a naive or too simple view of a complex problem.

19. Proposal shows little or no evidence of administrative control and coordination.

20. Poor plan for dissemination of project results.

21. Estimated costs unreasonable.

22. Basic hypothesis is unsound.

23. Inadequate documentation.

24. Part of proposal missing (eg. summary, budget justification, endorsement letters etc.)

