

# Grant Writing Tips



## Getting Started

The grant writing process can be challenging—even for experienced writers. The competition can be fierce. You have only one chance to make a good impression to capture the reviewers' attention. To ensure that your proposal is both effective and competitive consider the following:

- 1 Start early** and allow plenty of time for writing, reviewing, and editing.
- 2 Remember** that a deadline is a deadline. Send or deliver your grant proposal *prior* to the deadline.
- 3 Follow the directions!** Carefully read the instructions to ensure that all required information, forms, and signatures have been included.
- 4 Write concisely** in the active voice; write to communicate, not to impress.
- 5 Format** your proposal according to the required font size, margin sizes, line spacing, and page limits.
- 6 Limit** your responses to only the allowable word counts. Any information presented beyond the word count limit will not be reviewed.
- 7 Be persistent!** If your proposal is not funded, request copies of the reviewers' comments to make improvements before the next submission.

## Grant Application Components

Generally, most grant applications will require the following components:

<b>Executive Summary</b>	<p>The executive summary provides a brief overview of the project. Often, it is written <i>after</i> the grant proposal has been completed. The summary gives a taste of the proposal to come and is your chance to make a good first impression. Use the following questions as a guide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ <b>Audience:</b> Who will be directly impacted by the project?</li><li>✓ <b>Need/Problem:</b> What need will the project address?</li><li>✓ <b>Educational Goals:</b> What does the project strive to accomplish?</li><li>✓ <b>Performance Targets:</b> Who will be able to do what, by when?</li><li>✓ <b>Activities:</b> How will the project be carried out?</li></ul>
<b>Needs Assessment</b>	<p>The needs assessment should convince the reviewer that what you propose to do is important.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ How will the needs for the project be identified?</li><li>✓ What supporting research and data substantiate the identified needs?</li></ul>
<b>Goals &amp; Objectives</b>	<p>The goals and objectives should explain what you plan to do about the problem.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Are the goals aligned with the project's needs?</li><li>✓ What do you hope to accomplish?</li><li>✓ What results do you expect to achieve?</li></ul>

<b>Methods, Strategies or Program Design</b>	<p>When describing the program’s design, be detailed and walk through exactly how you will achieve the goals and objectives. Include a timeline and specifics of who will do what and when. Activities should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Relate directly to the program goals and objectives as well as to the project description and requirements;</li> <li>✓ Address the identified needs of the targeted population;</li> <li>✓ Be clearly stated and sufficient to carry out the proposed program; and</li> <li>✓ Be designed to provide measurable outcomes.</li> </ul>
<b>Assessment &amp; Evaluation</b>	<p>This section describes plans for both assessing and evaluating the project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Do you have formative (during the course of the project) and summative (at the conclusion of the project) assessment data?</li> <li>✓ How will you know if the desired impacts have been achieved?</li> </ul>
<b>Sustainability</b>	<p>Sustainability refers to how the program will continue when funds expire. Include a description of the commitment to continue the project in subsequent years with reduced levels of funding along with a plan of support from district administration.</p>
<b>Project &amp; Resource Management</b>	<p>Describe how the grant activities will be managed and monitored. Include a list of the project team along with their roles, responsibilities, and qualifications.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ What existing resources will be utilized?</li> <li>✓ How will management of facilities best maximize the use of funds?</li> <li>✓ Will you work with other organizations to leverage resources?</li> </ul>
<b>Budget</b>	<p>The budget should be an accurate “estimate” of the associated costs. Be sure to include a line item for every cost described in the narrative proposal.</p>
<b>Final Assembly</b>	<p>Allow extra time to go through this final step.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Use the “<b>Evaluation Criteria</b>” as a checklist.</li> <li>✓ Choose a <b>simple design</b>; the emphasis should be on neatness and accuracy.</li> <li>✓ Use <b>easy to understand</b> language since the reviewer could be a “novice.”</li> <li>✓ Use “<b>active</b>” voice and persuasive writing techniques. If more than one person contributed, ensure the proposal is written in a “single” voice.</li> <li>✓ Have several people <b>proofread and provide feedback</b>, allowing ample time to make necessary revisions.</li> <li>✓ Ensure all required <b>signatures</b> have been obtained and review for required <b>formatting instructions</b>.</li> <li>✓ Mail or deliver the proposals <b>prior to the deadline</b>.</li> </ul>

## Useful Links

Check out these sites for additional ideas and insight:

[Grant Writing Basics  
from Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov/grants-writing-basics)



[Grant Writing Tutorial  
from NEA](https://www.nea.gov/grant-writing-tutorial)



[Grant Writing During the Pandemic  
from FundraisingLP.com](https://www.fundraisinglp.com/grant-writing-during-the-pandemic)



For more information on HMH solutions, visit: [hmhco.com/dont-call-it-learning-loss](https://www.hmhco.com/dont-call-it-learning-loss)