



## Grants

Grants can help support a cultural organization's operations as a whole as well as specific programs or projects. They can also help fund individual initiatives. But they do require effort and diligence throughout the application process. Granting entities vary greatly by their funding source and structure, but understanding general etiquette and processes can help you submit a strong grant application.

General Tips for Submitting a Successful Grant Application

### TOPICS

[Research & Due Diligence](#)

[Be Proactive](#)

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[Spend Time on Your Application](#)

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## Research & Due Diligence

**STAY INFORMED ABOUT THE DIFFERENT KINDS OF GRANTORS AND RESEARCH OPTIONS.**

### **Ideas include:**

Conduct research at public libraries; many have resources on site or have staff to help get you started.

Search online sites, but recognize that some require a paid membership for in-depth queries.

Consider taking a class about seeking grant funding. Trainings vary by content. Find the right type for your experience level and overall goals.

## Be Proactive

**APPLYING FOR A GRANT IS NOT A PASSIVE PROCESS. BE PREPARED TO SEEK FEEDBACK AND INTERACT WITH OTHERS.**

Consider joining a networking group or organization related to your industry, to help alert you to grant and other funding opportunities.

Find out when grants open as well as their deadlines. For annual grants, this may change from year to year (don't expect to be notified directly of different dates even for grants that you've received before).

Do your homework – find out as much as possible about the grant.

After you've thoroughly reviewed information, ask questions. Find a contact person to discuss whether your proposal fits with their program.

Get help if you need it. Not confident in your writing? Stumped by the budget section? Seek help from a friend or colleague with expertise in the area where you're struggling. Depending on the scope of the project, it may even be worthwhile to hire someone for assistance and act as an advisor or consultant.

## Be Realistic

**AFTER RESEARCHING YOUR OPTIONS AND UNDERSTANDING THE REQUIREMENTS, TAKE TIME TO EVALUATE WHETHER YOU CAN MANAGE TO PREPARE AND SUBMIT YOUR PROPOSAL, BUT ALSO FOLLOW THROUGH OF OBSTACLES.**

Distill your idea or proposal into a clear, tangible initiative. Be able to describe it succinctly.

Be honest with yourself about whether your goals are attainable – and ask yourself if the effort is worth the potential reward.

## Spend Time on Your Application

**REALIZE THAT IT WILL PROBABLY TAKE LONGER THAN YOU THINK TO COMPLETE AN APPLICATION.**

Craft application closely with criteria and follow any formatting requirements– don't go rogue! This isn't the place to take risks by showing off your creativity. Guidelines aren't suggestions. They directly relate to how your application is scored.

Answer the questions asked and connect the dots. Make sure your answers correlate consistently with each other.

Use clear, concise language. State exactly what you're going to do and how. It takes a lot of time to review applications. You want the reviewer to contentedly sigh and smile when reading your application because you not only have a great project, but you get to the point.

## Submit Before Due Date

**GIVE YOURSELF PLENTY OF TIME TO DEVELOP AND REVISE YOUR APPLICATION.**

Factor in time for others to review your application and provide feedback.

Ensure you've hit all the requirements and followed criteria.

Double check spelling and formatting.

Make sure all supplemental materials are included.

Allow a time buffer in case of delivery delays for mailed applications or technical problems for those submitted online.

## **After Notification – Do's and Don'ts**

### **IF YOU'RE AWARDED THE GRANT**

#### **DO:**

Thank the funder for the award

Make sure you understand the expectations and reporting requirements - follow the funder's guidelines

Get to work! Even taking small steps right away will help you keep on track

Update the funder periodically, whether or not it is requested

#### **DON'T:**

Procrastinate

Change the project

### **IF YOU DO NOT RECEIVE THE GRANT**

#### **DO:**

Thank the funder for considering your application

Request feedback politely - the information may help you with future applications

Accept the decision with dignity

Stay motivated - be open to other opportunities with your project and use this experience as a way to strengthen your idea

#### **DON'T:**

React emotionally; express anger or frustration to the funder

Take rejection personally - recognize that although you may have had a very strong proposal, funders have to choose among many competitive applications

Give up