



Grant Writing 101

Grace Puc – Division of Agricultural Development

WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, TRADE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION (DATCP)

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SESSION OVERVIEW

Defining commonly used grant-writing terms

Considering funding opportunities

Grant writing best practices



GRANT TERMS – EXPLAINED



RFA or RFP: Grant program guidelines are often referred to using these acronyms, meaning “Request for Applications,” and “Request for Proposals.”



Eligible entity: The RFP will indicate who is able to apply to the opportunity. Considerations may include for- vs non-profit, business size or “age”, demographics served/represented, and more.



(In)eligible costs: The RFP will describe the allowable uses of the grant funding. Eligible costs may or may not include *Personnel, Travel, Marketing, Equipment, Supplies, Construction, and Indirect Costs*, among others. Expect to see further restrictions and guidelines defined for each category.



GRANT TERMS, CONTINUED



Indirect costs: This is a line item that accounts for expenses not directly attributable to a specific activity or line item. Typically referred to as “overhead” or “administrative” costs, they support the general functioning of an organization’s operations. If grant funding-eligible, they are calculated as a percentage of the budget’s direct costs.



Match: Funders may stipulate that a certain portion of the project cost must be covered by the grantee. Options for meeting matching requirements include direct financial contributions (“cash match”) and donated goods or services of value to the project by the grantee or their partners (“in-kind contribution”).



What should you consider when looking into funding opportunities?

Funding opportunities typically exist to achieve a goal(s), *not* to fund any project that meets the eligibility requirements to apply.

Is the program's purpose suitable to your goals and funding needs?

Would your project advance the funder's stated mission and goals?



What should you consider when looking into funding opportunities?

Consider whether the program's type of assistance (grant, matching grant, loan) and timeline is appropriate for your need.

What is the range of funding available per award?

What is the total pool?

Are the odds of success reasonable, considering your capacity to apply?

Is funding available up-front or as reimbursement?

What is the program's timeline?

When would funding become available?



I've confirmed I meet the eligibility requirements,
and the funding opportunity is well-suited to my
project needs, goals, and timeline.

What's next?



GET IN TOUCH



Watch informational videos & attend program webinars, if available.



Contact program staff, if allowed.



Find the list of previously awarded projects, if applicable.



Reach out to previous grant recipients, if appropriate.



GET ORGANIZED



Register for grant portal and any other accounts necessary right away.



Request letters of support, even if optional.



Draft responses on a locally-saved document before copying over to the application itself.



Plan to submit your application prior to the deadline day!



GET TO WRITING

1

Read the RFP like a position description and apply by articulating how you are the best candidate for “the job”.

2

Describe your project as it relates to fulfilling the program’s goals.

3

Clearly respond to every part of multi-part questions by organizing your response under separate headings.

4

Use list-formatting and bolded font to draw attention to the most important text.

5

Restate important points for reviewers throughout your proposal.



BEFORE SUBMITTING

No one is as familiar with your business and project plans as you are.

Have someone read through your application who is less familiar with what you do to identify areas that are unclear.

Evaluation rubrics are often provided in RFPs.

Use the rubric as a checklist to ensure you've addressed every criterion your application will be graded against.



Thank you!



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