CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING: GRANT WRITING TIPS

http://www.cpb.org/grants/grantwriting.html

These guideposts are transferable to a variety of grant applications. However, we encourage you to carefully read the guidelines written for each grant you select.

Successful grant writing involves the coordination of several activities, including planning, searching for data and resources, writing and packaging a proposal, submitting a proposal to a funder, and follow-up. Here are some steps that will help.

PREPARATION

You are likely to find preliminary grant writing steps to be the most time consuming, yet most vital aspect of the process. If done well, your preparatory work will simplify the writing stage.

1. Define your project

Clarify the purpose of your project and write a mission statement.

Define the scope of work to focus your funding search.

Determine the broad project goals, then identify the specific objectives that define how you will focus the work to accomplish those goals.

Example:

> Goal: To improve production quality.
>
> Objective 1: Recruit advanced production talent.
>
> Objective 2: Train mid-level producers.
>
> Objective 3: Upgrade production equipment.

These goals and objectives suggest the proposal will request support for recruitment activity, production training, and equipment purchase. In contrast, a different proposal with the same goal might focus only on equipment upgrades.

Decide who will benefit. Benefits may extend beyond the direct beneficiary to include the audience, other institutions, etc.

Draft expected project outcomes in measurable terms.

Draft a timeline that includes the planning phase, the period of searching for funds, proposal writing, and the intended project start date. Periodically update the timeline as you learn more about submission deadlines, award timetables, etc.

2. Identify the right funding sources

Foundation centers, computerized databases, station development offices, publications, and public libraries are some of the resources available to assist your funding search.

Do not limit your funding search to one source.

Look for a match between your project and the grants you seek by looking for consistency between the purpose and goals of your project and the funder. In addition, pinpoint specific funding priorities and preferences.

Make direct contact with funders to support projects like yours.

Request proposal guidelines. Also request a list of projects previously funded. Perhaps an annual report is available.

Inquire about the maximum amount available. Also, find out the average size and funding range of awards.

Determine if funding levels of the grants you select are appropriate for your project. Note whether there is a funding floor or ceiling.

Find out whether the funder has other grant sources for which your project is eligible.

3. Contact the funders

Think of the funder as a resource.

Identify a project officer who will address your questions.

Some funders offer technical assistance, others do not. Ask for technical assistance, including a review of proposal drafts.

Inquire about how proposals are reviewed and how decisions are made.

Inquire about budgetary requirements and preferences. Are matching funds required? Is in-kind acceptable as a portion of applicants' share? What may be counted as in-kind, and how might it be applied? Learn about payment processes, including cash flow.

Remember, the contacts you make may prove invaluable, even if not for now.

4. Acquire proposal guidelines

Read the guidelines carefully, then read them again. Ask the funder to clarify your questions.

Guidelines usually tell you about:

- submission deadlines
- eligibility
- proposal format: award levels forms, margins, spacing, evaluation process and restrictions on the number criteria of pages, etc.
- review timetable
- budgets
- funding goals and priorities
- award levels

evaluation process and criteria

whom to contact

other submission requirements

5. Know the submission deadline

Plan to submit your proposal on or preferably before the deadline.

Be realistic about whether you have time to prepare a competitive proposal that meets the deadline.

Know the funder's policies on late submissions, exceptions, and mail delays.

Find out how the funder will notify you about the receipt and status of your proposal. Factor this information into your timeline.

6. Determine personnel needs

Identify required personnel both by function and, if possible, by name.

Contact project consultants, trainers, and other auxiliary personnel to seek availability, acquire permission to include them in the project, and negotiate compensation.

Personnel compensation is important budget information.

7. Update your timeline

This is a good point at which to update your timeline, now that you know about submission deadlines and review timetables.

Factor into your schedule time to write multiple drafts, gather relevant and permissible materials, and prepare an impartial critique of your proposal for clarity, substance, and form.

WRITING THE PROPOSAL

Structure, attention to specifications, concise persuasive writing, and a reasonable budget are the critical elements of the writing stage. There are many ways to organize proposals. Read the guidelines for specifications about required information and how it should be arranged. Standard proposal components are: the narrative, budget, appendix of support material, and authorized signature. Sometimes proposal applications require abstracts or summaries, an explanation of budget items, and certifications.

1. Narratives

Statement of need
Purpose, goals, measurable objectives, and a compelling, logical reason why the proposal should be supported. Background provides perspective and is often a welcome component.

Approach
Method and process of accomplishing goals and objectives, description of intended scope of work with expected outcomes, outline of activities, description of personnel functions with names of key staff and consultants, if possible.

Method of evaluation
Some require very technical measurements of results. Inquire about expectations.

Project timeline
Paints a picture of project flow that includes start and end dates, schedule of activities, and projected outcomes. Should be detailed enough to include staff selection and start dates.

Credentials
Information about the applicant that certifies ability to successfully undertake the proposed effort. Typically includes institutional or individual track record and resumes.

Tips on Writing the Narrative:

Narratives typically must satisfy the following questions:

What do we want?

What concern will be addressed and why?

Who will benefit and how?

What specific objectives can be accomplished and how?

How will results be measured?

How does this funding request relate to the funders purpose, objectives, and priorities?

Who are we (organization, independent producer) and how do we qualify to meet this need?

The HOOK:

There are many ways to represent the same idea. However, the HOOK tailors the description of the idea to the interest of a particular funder.
The HOOK aligns the project with the purpose, and goals of the funding source. This is a critical aspect of any proposal narrative because it determines how compelling reviewers will perceive your proposal to be.

2. Budget

Budgets are cost projections. They are also a window into how projects will be implemented and managed. Well-planned budgets reflect carefully thought out projects.

Funders use these factors to assess budgets:

Can the job be accomplished with this budget?

Are costs reasonable for the market - or too high or low?

Is the budget consistent with proposed activities?

Is there sufficient budget detail and explanation?

Many funders provide mandatory budget forms that must be submitted with the proposal. Don't forget to list in-kind and matching revenue, where appropriate. Be flexible about your budget in case the funder chooses to negotiate costs.

3. Supporting materials

Supporting materials are often arranged in an appendix. These materials may endorse the project and the applicant, provide certifications, add information about project personnel and consultants, exhibit tables and charts, etc.

Policies about the inclusion of supporting materials differ widely among funders. Whether to allow them usually depends upon how materials contribute to a proposal's evaluation. Restrictions are often based on excess volume, the element of bias, and relevance.

Find out if supporting materials are desired or even allowed. Be prepared to invest the time to collect resources, produce a tape, document capability, update a resume, collect letters, include reference reports or whatever is needed.

4. Authorized Signatures

Authorized signatures are required. Proposals may be rejected for lack of an authorized signature. Be sure to allow the time to acquire a needed signature.

5. Specifications

Tailor proposal writing to specifications found in the guidelines.

Include only the number of pages allowed.

Observe the format. Is there a form to complete? Must the proposal be typed, double spaced, on 8-1/2 x 11 inch pages? Are cover pages allowed or desired?

Caution! — The beautifully bound proposal is not always appreciated or allowed. Be concise. Elaborations should add depth and scope, not page fillers. Be prepared to write one or more drafts.

6. Submission checklist

The proposal must be NEAT, COMPLETE, and ON TIME, with the requested number of copies and original authorized signatures.

Address the proposal as directed in the guidelines.

Be sure to include required documentation.

FOLLOW-UP

Contact the funding source about the status, evaluation, and outcome of your proposal.

It is important to request feedback about a proposal's strengths and weaknesses, although this information is sometimes unavailable, especially with a large volume of submissions.

Reference information may also be useful if you choose to approach the same or different funder again with your idea.

GUIDESTAR.ORG: Grant Writing Tips

http://www.guidestar.org/news/features/grantadvice.jsp

Abbreviated from: Suzanne E. Coffman, 2003, © Philanthropic Research, Inc.

Two years ago, GuideStar asked a group of grantmakers what they would most like to tell applicants. The idea was to come up with some sound advice that would help nonprofits increase their chances of success in the competition for foundation money.

The resulting recommendations, 15 in all, were so good we felt the need to revive them. The grantmakers who shared their advice are Nathanael Berry, program director of the Sandy River Charitable Foundation in Farmington, Maine; Michelle L. Greanias, director of grants management at the Fannie Mae Foundation in Washington, D.C.; Kippy Ungerleider King, grants associate for the Mathile Family Foundation in Dayton, Ohio; and Tom Springer, staff writer and editor at the W.K. Kellogg Foundation in Battle Creek, Michigan.

1. Do your homework—research, research, research
2. Don't limit your search to the "top ten" largest foundations
3. Follow the application guidelines
4. Be concise
5. Be specific
6. Define precisely your goals, how you will reach them, and how you will measure your success
7. Show how the project relates to your organization's future
8. Describe how you will fund the project once the grant money runs out
9. Think beyond money Is there some other way that the funder can help you?
10. Make sure the application is legible
11. Provide clear contact information
12. Avoid sending piles of fliers, videos, books, and similar materials
13. Don't send copies of the same request to multiple contacts at an organization
14. Send information electronically whenever possible
15. Start early and be patient

Springer also warns, "Don't expect to send a letter for support and expect the check to arrive the very next month. Grantmaking priorities are often set years in advance and thoughtful review processes do not readily accommodate the quick turnaround time grant seekers sometimes demand."

Grants

Grant Program	Application Deadline	Description	Award	Contact Information
Adopt-A-Classroom Grants	20-Apr-06	Deadline is Ongoing. Public school teachers register onsite. They may include a description of their class and the kinds of supplies/materials they need. Classrooms are then adopted by an individual, a business, or a foundation and teachers order requested items through Adopt-a-Classroom.	$500 in classroom supplies and/or materials	Adopt-a-Classroom, 1521 Alton Road, #78, Miami, FL 33139. Telephone: (305) 674-4470 or (877) 444-7666. Fax: (305) 674-0665. E-mail: rhegberg@adoptaclassroom.com or jrosenberg@adoptaclassroom.com www.adoptaclassroom.com
Autodesk	any	Any	varies	Autodesk, Inc., Community Relations, 111 McInnis Parkway, San Rafael, CA 94903, Fax: 415-507-6138 http://usa.autodesk.com/adsk/servlet/item?siteID=123112&id=304851
Best Buy	Sept. 30, 2005	Interactive technology	$2,500 with additional grants awarded to school for $15,000	Web site: www.BestBuy.com/teach
Education Grants: William and Flora Hewlett Foundation	31-Dec-05	Letters of inquiry may be sent at any time. Grants are awarded quarterly. Focus areas for proposals in 2003 are: increased student achievement; improved access to exemplary education programs through information technology; achieving educational excellence in California; and,	There is no minimum or maximum amount awarded. Grants are made on a case-by-case basis.	All application information is available on the Web site. www.hewlett.org

		improving the effectiveness of universal basic and secondary education;		
Intel Community Grants	31-Dec-05	The focus of the grants is to fund programs located in Intel communities that improve teaching in math and science, increase classroom technology use, improve access to technology in classrooms, and encourage students to consider careers in technology related fields, particularly women and minorities.	Varies. Deadline Ongoing.	Intel Foundation, AG6-601, 5200 NE Elam Young Parkway, Hillsboro, OR 97124-6497 www.intel.com/community/grant.htm
Staples Foundation for Learning Grants	31-Dec-05	These grants provide funding to programs that support or provide job skills and education to all people, especially disadvantaged youth.	Varies, but typical range is $5000-$25,000. Deadline is Quarterly; check web site for exact dates.	Staples Foundation for Learning, 500 Staples Dr., 4 West Framingham, MA 01702. Fax: 508-253-9600. www.staplesfoundation.org
Target Gives Back	March 1 and May 31, 2006.	Currently our grants focus on three areas: arts, family violence prevention and reading.	$1,000 to $3,000.	Website: http://target.com/target_group/community_giving/grant_guidelines.jhtml
Verizon Foundation	Jan. - Nov.	varies	no limit	Website: http://foundation.verizon.com/04009.shtml

Best Buy Grant

Rewarding schools that integrate technology into the curriculum.

Grant Application Information:

Thank you for applying for a Best Buy **te@ch™** award.
Please provide all information requested below. Only complete applications will be considered. If you have questions while completing this application please refer to the FAQ section.

All applications must be submitted by midnight (Central Time) on **September 29, 2005**.
Recipients will be posted on www.BestBuy.com/teach on January 16, 2006.

Contact Information:

Millard Elementary
(School Name)

5200 Valpey Park Dr.
(Address 1)

(Address 2)

Fremont
(City)

CA
(State)

94538
(Zip)

510-657-0344
(School Phone)
(Format (xxx) xxx-xxx)

510-657-8720
(School Fax)
(Format (xxx) xxx-xxx)

Mary Anne Kolda
(Principal Name)

mkolda@mail.fremont.k12.ca.us
(Principal Email)
(Format example name@school.com)

☐
(Principal Submitting Application)

Lucia Hummel
(Educator Name)

lhummel@mail.fremont.k12.ca.us
(Educator Email)
(Format example name@school.com)

☒
(Educator Submitting Application)

Fremont Unified School District
(Name of School District)

George Pfaffenberger
(School District Technology Contact)

(Federal Tax ID number)
(Example: 11-1234567)

School Information:

Please select the category that most accurately describes your accredited, nonprofit K-12 school.

☒ Public ☐ Private ☐ Parochial ☐ Other (explain):

This program serves students in the following grade(s):

☐ 12	☑ 5
☐ 11	☑ 4
☐ 10	☑ 3
☐ 9	☑ 2
☐ 8	☑ 1
☐ 7	☑ K
☑ 6	

How many students will directly benefit from the program you are submitting for a **te@ch** award? **40**

What subject area does your project focus on?

- ☑ Math
- ☐ Science
- ☑ English
- ☐ Humanities
- ☐ Art
- ☐ Music
- ☐ Other

Ethnicity of children in your school must total 100 percent. (Decisions will not be based on or influenced by this information, it is for record keeping purposes only.)

27%	**16%**	**1%**	**5%**	**45%**	**6%**
Asian/Pacific Islander	Hispanic/Latino	American Indian	African-American/Black	Caucasian/White	Other

Store Information:

All schools qualifying for a **te@ch** award must be within 50 miles of a Best Buy store. Please visit www.BestBuy.com and use the Store Locator to provide the following information:

Store Name: **Milpitas CA**

Three-digit store number (e.g. enter store 6 as 006): **142**

How did you hear about **te@ch**?

- [ ] Student's Parent
- [ ] School administration
- [ ] Radio
- [ ] Newspaper
- [ ] Email
- [ ] Best Buy Employee
- [ ] Teacher Association Publication
- [ ] www.BestBuy.com
- [x] Other Another teacher at my summer

Application Question Information:

Please answer the following questions in the space provided

1. How are you using interactive technology to make learning fun for your students? Tell us about the project/program, when and how it started, the interactive technology you are using, and how you know the students are learning and having fun.

I share a classroom with another kindergarten teacher. There are 20 kindergarteners in the morning and 20 in the afternoon. Our kindergarteners have 4 computers to use that resided on a small counter approximately 6.75 feet by 1.25 feet. They use the computers during activity time to "play" an educational software game called Leap Into Phonics. This game goes along with our reading series. The game has various activities to help the children learn letters, sounds, rhyming and sounding out words. The computers we have were donated to the school and were set up for us last year by a parent who specializes in computers. The students enjoy the computers and always are excited when it is their turn to play. In the morning, we have 5 students using the computers at a time (2 have to share one computer), 4 days per week and another 5 students from the afternoon class using them in the afternoon.

2. If your school receives a **te@ch** award, what will you purchase with the $2500 Best Buy gift card to enhance the program described in this application? Please include a specific shopping list with quantity and estimated costs of items.

Software: JumpStart Advanced: Kindergarten #72048 5 @ $29.99 $149.95 MAG - 17" Flat-Panel TFT-LCD Monitor LT782s 5 @ $249.99 $1249.95 HP Pavilion 519K Desktop & LCD Monitor Package with Accessories $699.99 Microsoft Office Student and Teacher Edition 2003 $149.99 Sony Original Open-Air Headphones Model: MDR101LP 6 @ 9.99 $59.94 Tax (8.25%) $190.56 Total $2500.38

3. How will these products enhance your existing program?

Although most of the day we only have 20 students, it is still necessary to have equipment for 2 teachers and 40 students all in a regular classroom. The only space we have for the computers is a small counter in a hallway. The counter is approximately 6.75 feet by 1.25 feet. I can only fit 4 monitors on the counter. Since we are only able to have activity time 4 days a week, 2 of the children must share a computer. The CPUs sit on the floor. If I had flat screen monitors, I could fit 5 monitors on the counter and each child could have their own computer. In addition the monitors would not be so close to the children's faces and they would have more room to work the mouse. I would get the 5th CPU, mouse and keyboard by using the teacher computer (that was also donated to the school and is shared by both kindergarten teachers) and replacing it with a new desktop computer and Microsoft Office software that would have more memory to enable us to add video to our Open House presentation. I would also purchase new software to supplement the one set of software that we currently use. The JumpStart software has phonics and math games that would provide more variety for the students to keep their interest high throughout the entire school year. Finally, I would purchase new headphones to replace the worn ones we are currently using.

4. If your school is awarded a $15,000 Regional **te@ch** award, how will it be used to integrate interactive technology into classrooms throughout the school?
Our school is trying to implement a new supplemental reading program called Accelerated Reader. The program works by having students read books and then take a test on the computer. The computers (in classrooms and the library) need to be networked to a server in the computer lab which stores all the data. Data on the children's progress and reading levels is kept on the server so the same data can be used year after year. Although we have been successful in acquiring funding for the Accelerated Reader program (books, computer tests, record keeping program, etc) our challenge has been to provide classrooms with the necessary computers for the children to take tests and research books to read as well as for the teachers to be able to access the children's records. Many of the computers in the classroom are old and do not work with the new Accelerated Reader software. We currently have a school wide network but do not have networking equipment in individual classrooms. Only 3 of the classrooms were able to participate in the program last year although we are hoping to be able to have more this year. With the grant, we would be able to buy more updated computers and networking equipment so that all the children would be able to participate in the program.

To qualify for consideration, applications must be submitted by 11:59pm (Eastern Time) on September 30, 2005.

te@ch award recipients will be posted at www.BestBuy.com/teach on January 16, 2006.

Due to the volume of **te@ch** applications, Best Buy is unable to respond to individual inquiries. No phone calls or e-mails please.

By submitting this application you certify that your school's principal has approved this request, your school is a charitable or tax-exempt organization and that all information is accurate and verifiable.

Thank your for participating in Best Buy's **te@ch** program. Good luck

Evaluation

Self Evaluation Questions

Software

1. How often did I access the software database?

2. If software was purchased:

    a. Was the software good educationally?

    b. Did the children enjoy using the software?

    c. What did the other kindergarten teachers think of the software?

Grants and Grant Writing Tips

1. How many grants (besides the Best Buy) did I apply for?

2. Were any of the grants successful?

3. Where the items purchased with the grant funds worthwhile?

4. What mistakes were made in grant writing and how could it have been improved for next time?

Best Buy Grant

1. Was the grant successful?

2. Where the items purchased with the grant funds worthwhile?

3. Were any mistakes made in writing the grant? How could it have been improved for next time?