

# Nonprofit Toolbox

## Grant Writing Made Simple

### A Tip Sheet for Small Nonprofits

Many small nonprofits don't have the budget to hire a grant writer, but they can still write compelling proposals with the right structure and guidance. Grants can feel intimidating, but they don't have to be. With a little structure, you can write proposals that stand out—no professional grant writer required.

### Core Elements of a Standard Grant Proposal

#### 1. Cover Letter / Introduction

- ☐ Brief, one-page summary introducing your organization and request.
- ☐ Set the tone: who you are, what you're asking for, and why it matters.

#### 2. Executive Summary

- ☐ A short overview (usually one page).
- ☐ Include: organization, problem, proposed solution, amount requested, expected impact.
- ☐ Think of it as the “elevator pitch” of the proposal.

#### 3. Statement of Need / Problem Statement

- ☐ Describe the issue or challenge your community faces.
- ☐ Use data and human stories.
- ☐ Answer: Why is this issue urgent? Why should the funder care?

#### 4. Organization Background

- ☐ Who you are, your mission, history, and credibility.
- ☐ Why is your organization best positioned to solve this problem.
- ☐ Include past successes and partnerships.

## **5. Project / Program Description**

- ☐ Details of what you will do with the grant.
- ☐ Include: goals, activities, timeline, staffing, and participants served.
- ☐ Should tie directly to the “need” you described.

## **6. Objectives and Outcomes**

- ☐ Clear, measurable results you expect to achieve.
- ☐ Funders want both outputs (numbers served) and outcomes (changes achieved).

## **7. Evaluation Plan**

- ☐ How you will track success and measure impact.
- ☐ Could include surveys, data collection, reports, or outside evaluation.

## **8. Budget and Budget Narrative**

- ☐ Detailed income/expenses for the project.
- ☐ Budget narrative explains why each cost is necessary.
- ☐ Budget should align perfectly with your program description.

## **9. Sustainability Plan**

- ☐ How the program will continue after the grant funding ends.
- ☐ Show that you aren’t relying on a one-time grant forever.

## **10. Attachments (depending on funder)**

- ☐ IRS 501(c)(3) letter, financial statements, board list, strategic plan, letters of support, resumes of key staff.



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