

GRANT WRITING TIPS SHEET

TIPS FOR GRANT WRITING SUCCESS

You want your application for grant funding to be successful. So do we. Which is why we have put together this handy guide.

Refer to this guide when putting together a grant submission. And remember, we are available to talk to you in person, so feel free to contact us if you have any queries – we are happy to help.



When you are ready to start

Applying for funding is a competitive process, with limited funds available and often many applicants seeking a share of the money. Therefore, the better you can demonstrate how your project meets the program objectives and assessment criteria the better your chance of success.

Before commencing you should read through the application form to make sure you understand the requirements and allow time to source the requested information.

We recommend discussing your project with our friendly team of regional development officers who are pleased to lend their support.

For information contact:

South West Development Commission

T: 9792 2000

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Before you get started

A lot of time and work goes into putting together an application for grant funding. Not only are there important questions to answer, but there are supporting documents to chase up.

Before you go to the effort of completing a grant application, we encourage you to check that the funding program you are applying for is the right one for your project. If it's not, we may be able to point you in the direction of programs that are a better match.

If in doubt check the program guidelines or contact us for more information.

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While there is no magic formula for writing grant applications, we hope the following tips help put you on track to writing an effective grant proposal.



Are you eligible to apply?

As a general rule, funding bodies do not offer grants to unincorporated groups or private citizens.



Read the guidelines

Read the guidelines carefully so you know what is required. Make sure you address the key criteria, just as you would when preparing for a job application.



Allow sufficient time

Start early to give yourself enough time to create a compelling application. This is especially important if you are required to provide support material. Always send in the application by the closing date and in the manner specified.



Letters of support

Letters of support must be current and support the project for which you are applying for funding. Request letters sooner rather than later as this will improve your chances of completing the proposal on time. Make sure to attach them to your application.



Highlight the benefits

Frame your application to highlight how the project addresses the objectives of the funding program and achieves the funder's intended outcomes.



Know the funder's priorities

Do your research! Your project should support the key strategic priorities outlined in the program guidelines and other relevant documentation.



Be succinct

Use dot points or a table if necessary to convey information clearly and succinctly.



Never assume

Check if your application is clear to someone who knows little about your organisation or project.



Answer all the questions

Not answering questions may weaken your application or render it non-compliant.



Show value for money

Demonstrate how your project represents value for money and achieves specific outcomes in creative and innovative ways.



Keep within the limits

Only use the supplied forms and adhere to any word limits imposed.



Balance the budget

Make sure the budget adds up and that figures are consistent throughout your application. Provide quotes where possible to verify items of expenditure and include ancillary costs such as signage, audit fees, freight costs, etc.



Be reasonable

Your request for funding should match the scale of the project and expected outcome/s in relation to the program objectives.



Consider other funding sources

Projects that include co-investment from your own organisation or from other sources will have a greater chance of success.



Check attachments

Make sure all requested documents are attached. These may include ABN, planning approvals, financial statements, insurance details and so on.



Proofread

Get rid of errors, typos and bad grammar so they don't let down your hard work! And make sure you have answered all the questions and provided all requested attachments.



Sign it off correctly

The application must be signed by the organisation's authorised signatory, usually the CEO, Director or Chairperson. If using a delegated authority be sure to include documented authorisation.

Don't sabotage your own grant application by falling into these pitfalls. Learn the common reasons why applications fail so that you can avoid making the same mistakes.

1 Eligibility is not met

If your organisation does not meet the required legal status or the outcome of your funding request does not align with the program objectives then do not submit an application. Funding programs have different eligibility requirements so read the guidelines to find out what requirements you must meet.

2 Objectives are not met

The guidelines provide valuable information about the program requirements and assessment criteria. Make sure your project meets these requirements and that you address the criteria in your application.

3 Unanswered questions

Each question in the application form is there for a reason. Make sure you answer everything and if a question is not applicable, provide a reason. You may jeopardise your chances of success by leaving questions blank or not providing requested information.

4 No co-contribution

Some funding programs require co-investment from the applicant's own organisation or through leveraged funds from other sources. As a general rule you will be more competitive if you can show that leveraged funds have been secured. Make sure this is reflected in the budget and where possible provide evidence.

5 Not using 'Plain English'

Most funders receive more applications than they have money to give, so make sure your application is clearly understood. Keep technical terms and jargon to a minimum. Using plain English enhances a reader's comprehension of your project.

6 Not leaving enough time

Your application will not be accepted after the closing date. Allow yourself sufficient time to write a compelling submission and don't leave it to the last minute to submit.

7 Budget is incorrect

Figures that don't add up, project budgets that are missing essential items of expenditure, and/or unsupported claims may jeopardise your application. If you are unsure about the budget requirements, contact the funding body and ask for clarification.

8 Unauthorised signatory

If the incorrect person signs an application it may be deemed ineligible. Usually the most senior authority in the organisation, such as the CEO, Chairperson or Director must sign grant applications and acquittals. If your organisation has delegated authority you should provide evidence that the signatory has the authority to sign.

9 Difficult to understand

Always read and re-read your application before you submit. Where possible get someone else to proof read and give you feedback. Applications that are poorly written, difficult to understand, contain errors or have missing information may be overlooked.

10 Attachments not provided

Make sure you have met all of the requirements prior to submitting your application. If you have difficulty uploading documents or providing the required information make sure you provide an explanation or seek advice from the funding body.