

HERITAGE COMMUNITY INVESTMENT PROGRAM

GENERAL GRANT WRITING TIPS

Please note: The following are general points to consider before starting any grant writing process. They are not a substitute for specific guidelines for particular programs.

Whether or not your project receives funding relies in large part on how well you match your purpose and goals to the priorities of an agency or program. Target a funding source that is likely to have interest in your project and do your homework.

When you are preparing your application:

- Follow the grantor's instructions exactly: page counts, formatting, and presentation rules are usually strict.
- Begin early. If you need the money now, you may have started too late. Also, if you need letters of support, this can take quite a bit of time, so contact people as soon as possible.
- Create a plan, not just a proposal.
- Answer all questions and try to address any potential areas of concern or confusion.
- Be as specific as possible.
- Be realistic with your project goals.
- Show enthusiasm for your work – it's contagious!
- Proofread! Spelling and grammar errors can hide your great idea.
- Get an outside perspective. Somebody with no prior knowledge of your project will be able to tell you if anything needs explanation or clarification.

The majority of grant programs recruit jurors with knowledge of the disciplines and/or grant program areas. When writing your proposal, imagine your reader is a colleague who is knowledgeable but not familiar with your specific project. Also, remember they may have many proposals to review, so make yours as organized and well-written as possible.

Also, even though you may have to write about a project that is still in the planning stages, you need to convince the jury that you can do it. And, while you may need to pretend you have the funding to write the proposal, never count on being successful until you get official notice.

You could submit a very strong application and still not receive the grant. Most granting agencies have limited resources, and the number and strength of applications vary every intake. So take any feedback you receive, improve your application, and try again!

Revised: August 2017