



THE FUNDAMENTALS OF GRANT SEEKING AND WRITING FOR IDAHO CITIES

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Welcome

Tell Me About Your City?



Introductions – Your Experience

- How many of you are a City Clerk or work in a Clerk's office?
- How many of you have previously written and submitted a grant application?
- Of those that have applied how many have been awarded a grant?
- Of those awarded how many have administered the award from beginning to end?

Questions About Your City

What was funded?

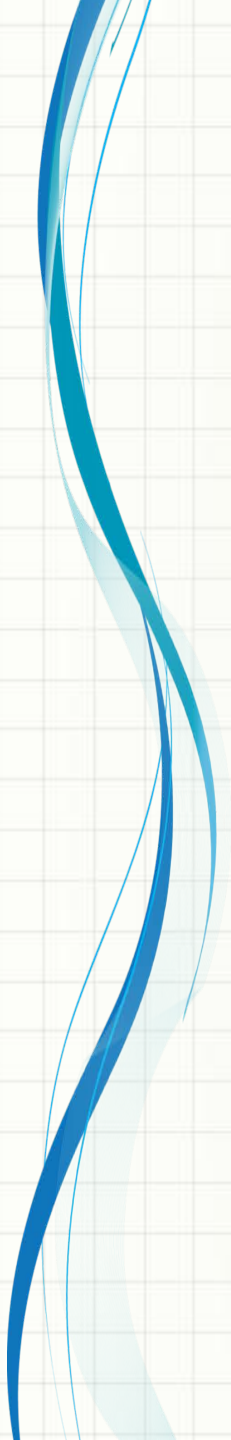
- Infrastructure (Streets, Sidewalks, Water, Wastewater, Sewer)?
 - Equipment (Police and Fire)?
 - Program Operations (Arts and Humanities)?
 - Historic Preservation?
 - Farmers Market?
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- Does your City have a capital projects budget that is accumulating funding in reserve for matching fund requirements?



A Few More Questions...

- Is there an accounting firm which performs the city annual audits that can assist in preparing financial information for a grant application?
- Does your City have a “Public Works or Engineering Department” or a firm on retainage to provide engineering services?
- Does your Police Department have sufficient operating equipment?

A Few More Questions...

- Does your Fire Department have sufficient personal protective equipment for paid staff and volunteers?
 - Does your City take advantage of the free grant workshops and certifications available through state sponsored programs?
 - Does your City have citizen volunteers and/or advocates who can assist with grant seeking and writing?
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A Few More Questions...

Does your City have Plans/Programs to support your requests?

- Strategic Plan (Capital Projects)
- Multi-Modal Transportation Plan
- Current Comprehensive Plan
- Economic Development Plan
- Facilities and Parks Master Plan
- Water Conservation Plan
- Urban Renewal District

Key to Success = Planning the Proposal in Advance

- Logic models are road maps to your destination – Does it make sense?
- Use graphics i.e. tables, charts and/or photos.
- Shows how project outcomes are linked to resources, activities, and outputs.
- Short & Long Term Outcomes – Be specific!
- Collaborate with other entities to create a multijurisdictional or regional project.

Developing the Proposal...

- Create a Concept Paper - Commit ideas to paper and describe the program or project.
- Be Concise - Outline the Goal, Objectives, Timeline, Costs, and Benefits
 - What is the background and historical information?
 - What do you intend to do?
 - What is the cost?
 - What is the timeline?
 - Who is responsible?
 - How do you plan to execute the project or strategy?
 - What is the expected outcome?

Developing the Proposal - Continued

- Executive Summary – Overall summary of project and funding request in a summarized manner.
- Statement of Need – Direct statement identifying the following:
 - What problem, issue or situation to be addressed or resolved -- Evidence – Quantitative and Qualitative.
 - Who are the proposed beneficiaries?
 - What is the project's intended outcome?
 - Are the project outcomes sustainable?
 - What happens if nothing is done?

Developing the Proposal - Continued

- **Project Description – Develop a Strategy**
 - Mission – Defines the “what” and “why” of the project.
 - Structure – How you intend to solve the problem, serve an unmet need, provide a program, create a safe environment.
 - Be Concise – Focus on the project outcome and achievable methods, what do you need help with a what will you do?
- **Develop a Work Plan**
 - Goals, objectives, relevant activities/tasks, who is responsible for completing tasks and what resources are needed.
- **Evaluation – Determining how you will measure successful completion of the project or program and intended outcome.**

Other Proposal Considerations...

- Describe your municipality to the funder.
- Describe organizational capacity (ability to do the work). Who is your “Rock Star”?
- Describe the organization decision making structure?
- Describe key staff, consultants, contractors, and partners and their functions related to the project.
- Describe who will maintain or sustain the project or program.

Where to Find Grants

Federal Grants

- Register with SAM <https://sam.gov/portal/SAM/##11>
- You MUST be to apply through: www.grants.gov

Grants from the Federal Government Agencies:

- Email project officer with questions.
- Most are need, performance, and preparedness based.
- Politics can be involved – consider resources.
- Participate in webinars and teleconferences prior to submission deadline.

Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA)

- Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA), signed into law in 2006, required information about Federal awards to be posted on a single, searchable website that is open for public access.
- Review prior awards on funders website.
 - Search websites for funded requests.
 - Call or email the awarded applicant and ask for a copy of their complete application.
 - Ask awarded project managers how they developed their project and grant request.

State Grant Programs...

Do you request State organizations who manage grant funds to visit your City in person and discuss grant programs available and explain how to become eligible to receive funds?

- Idaho Department of Commerce (IDOC)
- Idaho Transportation Department (ITD)
- **Local Highway Technical Assistance Council (LHTAC)**
- Idaho Department of Lands (IDL)
- Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (IDEQ)
- Idaho Commission on the Arts (ICA)
- Idaho Humanities Council (IHC)
- Historic Preservation Commission (HPC)

(State agencies may receive their funds from federal sources.)

Non-Federal Grant Programs

- Foundation Center <http://foundationcenter.org/>
- Community Foundation Locator
<https://www.cof.org/community-foundation-locator>
- Walmart Foundation
<http://giving.walmart.com/foundation>
- Local Banks – Community Reinvestment Programs
- Letter of Intent or Interest – Invitation Only

Non-Federal Foundation Grants – Idaho

- Idaho Community Foundation

http://www.idcomfdn.org/Regional_Cycle

ICF's Mission: To enrich the quality of life throughout Idaho.

ICF's Grant Making Goals and Values: To award meaningful grants in all 44 counties in Idaho for projects both large and small that address pressing community needs as defined by the people who live in and love those communities.

Eligibility: The Idaho Community Foundation makes grants to 501(c)3 nonprofit public charities under IRS Code Section 170 and governmental entities including special taxing districts and public schools.

Key Things to Consider

- Funder's Priorities.
- Funder's Objectives.
- Funder's Strategy.
- Eligibility Criteria.
- Method for Releasing Funds (lump sum, reimbursement, advance payment).
- Grants Management Requirements (organizational capacity).
- Award and Project Timeframe.

What are the First Questions?

Eligibility and Applicability

- How to determine if your City is eligible to apply for this specific grant program.
 - Look for City, Township, Local Government, 501 (c) 3 or Non-Profit (sometimes)
- Contact project officer with questions if unsure.
- Does the eligible activities of the grant announcement fit your project or program?
- Or, are you putting together a project or program after reading the grant announcement.
- Round Project Square Funding = Poor Proposal?!

Grant Maker (Grantor) Relations...

- Identify contact persons and email or call with specific questions, don't waste their time.
- Do not ask questions that are already answered in on-line materials (websites, printed guidelines, webinar Q&A, etc.).
- Foundation staff, federal project officers, corporate representatives are good resources for gathering information.

Most Effective Writing Style

- Use active rather than passive voice.
- Use the funders NOFA outline.
- Provide headers and subheadings.
- Simple sentences.
- Do not use jargon or acronyms, provide explanations if necessary.
- Write from the prospective of the beneficiaries.
- Remember funders goals and priorities.

Application Tips

- Allow plenty of time to prepare. Keep in mind approximately 25-40 (uninterrupted) hours is needed to complete a solid proposal.
- Read the application package in its entirety (NOFA), highlight and make notes list “must do’s” (i.e. letters of support or participation, matching funds commitment).
- If you have any questions, contact the program manager or refer to the application package.

Application Tips

Submitting Your Proposal:

- Do NOT wait until the last minute to submit an application – the spinning freeze!
- If you are submitting an e-application, know the specific deadline date and time zone.
- Have a fresh pair of eyes proof read your proposal before submittal.
- Make certain all the required forms are included in the correct order and all signatures are obtained for your application.

What are “Selection Criteria?”

Selection criteria are used by the grantor agency to target specific eligible project activities & benefits:

- Long Term Outcomes
- State of Good Repair
- Economic Competitiveness
- Livable Communities
- Environment Sustainability
- Safety
- Job Creation
- Innovation
- Partnership

Selection Criteria Continued...

- Peer reviewers score and evaluate the quality of application answers based upon the weighted percentage given to each of the Selection Criteria questions.
- Grant making decisions are based on proposals with clear budgets, timelines and outcome.
- The relevance of the project to the objectives must be clear to reviewer.
- Some applications also have another section of questions called the “Secondary Selection Criteria” which are usually weighted less in the scoring model.

Summary

- Define the Challenges – Ask for Help!
 - Technological as well as personal (are graphics not your forte; are you a procrastinator like me)?
- Set Realistic Expectations
 - Mastery is not achieved overnight, know the subject (grant writing takes practice)!
- Keep Your Eye on the Goal
 - The more you do the better you get (engage proofreaders and feedback, reach out to peers)!
 - Ask for a funder debrief if not awarded.

Review Key Elements of a Proposal

- Proposal Summary (Executive Summary)
Specific and Direct to Point – Entire Story
(Who, What, Why, Where, When, and How)
- Introduction - Draw a Visual Picture of Location, Situation, Need, or Goal.
- Problem Statement and/or Desired Outcome.
- Budget – Funding Required, Local Contribution, and Other Resources.
- Selection Criteria (i.e. Evaluation, Sustainability)



**QUESTIONS? WHAT DID
SPEAKER NOT ADDRESS
YOU WANTED TO KNOW?**



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