

**Grant Writing**  
**Some Secrets for Success**  
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▪ **The Preparation Phase**

- Know how the grant-getting "game" is played
- Have a compelling project idea or need that you are well positioned (uniquely?) to execute superbly
- Identify and learn about some promising potential sponsors.
  - Federal Agencies: <http://www.grants.gov/>
  - Foundation Center: [http://fdncenter.org/for\\_individuals/](http://fdncenter.org/for_individuals/), plus resources in public libraries throughout the country
  - Philanthropy Northwest: <http://www.philanthropynw.org>
  - *Chronicle of Philanthropy*: <http://philanthropy.com/>
- Approach potential sponsors the way they like to be approached, or through a personal introduction. Networks and relationships often help.

▪ **The Grant-Writing Phase**

- Know your prospective sponsor and configure the proposal to emphasize how your work will accomplish its mission and goals
  - There are many types of sponsors: government, corporations, foundations, professional societies, individuals, and each one behaves in its own way.
  - Tailor your approach/interactions to what the sponsor likes.
  - Remember: The sponsor provides funding for ITS reasons, not yours. You've got to help it understand how YOUR project fits ITS purpose and needs.
  - Address its stated mission and selection criteria (if they exist) clearly and strongly
  - Meticulously follow **any and all** the directions provided: length, format, deadlines, etc.
- Write your proposal so it is easy for the sponsor and reviewers to read, understand, get enthusiastic about. Keep in mind that the readers and reviewers are smart, busy people, but not necessarily expert in the subject.
- Projects don't develop in isolation. Be sure to build on and reference existing, related work by others (or other relevant context). Show you know what the state of the art is, connect to research-based best practice, and show how your project will advance the frontiers or provide the needed service.
- Create a competitive advantage by incorporating special, important elements that use your (unique) strengths, resources, and environment. Why are you the best person or organization to do this project?
- Clearly state expected benefits and who will benefit.
- Describe your track-record of success and accomplishment, not just your "neediness." Sponsors need to be assured that their funds will be used effectively and are likely to achieve the desired goals.
- Describe how you will know the project was successful: evaluation.
- Seek and involve partners who will strengthen your project

- Involve them in early brainstorming
- Honor their interests (partners are equals, not tokens)
- Keep them involved and informed throughout the process
- If appropriate, get support letters or written commitments from them
- If appropriate, show additional value to your project from partners' perspectives
- Obtain and use support letters to show benefits to important third parties, especially those your prospective sponsor cares about.
- Show that you know how to accomplish the project (steps, phases, work plan) and that it can be done with the resources requested in the proposed time.
- Clearly describe what resources the project leverages (takes advantage of), without paying for, including and going beyond any "matching" requirements
- Ensure you build in Human Subjects review and protections, if applicable.
- Don't make claims or promises that are not credible.
- Let your supervisor and organization know what you are doing.
- **The Final Review and Submission Phase**
  - Have colleagues review, critique, and comment on a draft at least 3 weeks before it is due, pretending they are reviewers, and offering advice to make the proposal clearer, stronger, better, more suited to the sponsor. They don't have to be experts, just willing to be helpful.
  - Make sure the budget proposal is correct and consistent with Heritage the host organization's rates and practices.
  - Obtain whatever internal and partner approvals are required.
  - Submit the proposal in accordance with the sponsor's guidelines & deadlines
- **The Waiting Phase (after submission)**
  - Without being a pest, confirm that the proposal was received.
  - After appropriate period, check politely on status
  - Ask yourself: "What should I do to be well prepared to start the project, if the funding decision is favorable?" Do this.
  - Continue to cultivate and communicate with your proposed partners.
- **Funding is Approved!! The Project Performance Phase**
  - Use institution's procedures to set up and manage accounts.
  - Deliver what you promise, and more. ALWAYS!
  - Keep the sponsor informed and help them get credit, favorable publicity, and accomplish THEIR goals
  - Keep your partners involved and engaged
  - Keep the financial aspects impeccable, well documented, and above board.
  - Make sure that in doing the project you establish and maintain a track record of success, accomplishment, and propriety, thereby strengthening your position for future grants.
  - Disseminate results widely
  - **Have fun!**
- **If not approved, get feedback to understand why. Then strengthen and revise proposal for resubmittal to the same or a different sponsor.**