

5 Reasons Your Grant Proposals Might be Rejected

Writing successful grant applications isn't something that comes naturally to most people. It takes a lot of knowledge, skill, and trial and error to get good at grant writing. The best grant applications are those that clearly show the funder that your program is the perfect way for them to achieve their objectives and deliver their mission. So if you've done that, why are your grant proposals being rejected? Take a look at the top five reasons below to see how you can improve the chances of your proposals being accepted.

Not the right fit

This may mean that your project doesn't fit the funder's priorities at this time, or in this funding cycle. Perhaps their focus has changed or your program might not be within their criteria according to their take on your application.

Not fully addressing the evaluation criteria

If your grant application does not completely fulfill the funder's criteria, you will not be successful. Does your application clearly answer all the questions and does the project proposed meet all of the criteria in the RFP? A successful grant is one that makes the funder confident that your organization can better fulfill their objectives than any other.

Lack of clarity

This may be because your proposal was too ambitious or, alternately, not large enough in scope. Your needs statement may not have been clear or the project outline was ambiguous. Make sure that throughout the application you are providing specific information and details about who, what, when, where, why, and how. A good test for clarity is to have someone outside your organization read your proposal and give you a short summary. If what they report back isn't accurate or clear, you've got some revising to do.

Poorly budgeted

Grant proposals require a specific format for your budget proposal and if the exact items and terms were not completed, or were done incorrectly, this could mean rejection for your application. A budget that is too vague, or highly inflated, will not be acceptable to the funder's review. A detailed and accurate budget should clearly align with the program's plans and objectives and show a realistic and clear projection of how the funds will be used.

Almost there, but not quite

For many organizations, a first attempt at funding will be rejected. For some government agencies this is the norm. Don't be discouraged, use the opportunity to get feedback and revise and edit your application. Further refinement of your proposal, or a new direction in the project, may mean that next time you are successful.

Writing a winning grant proposal takes practice. Resource Associates is available to review your grant proposal before you submit it. We can also review rejected proposals and give you tips for how you might improve them for the next round of funding. Take advantage of the experience and resources of others as you build your own expertise.

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