

TEN TIPS ON GRANT WRITING AND PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Compiled by the Chicago Public Schools Office of Arts Education

For the uninitiated, the process of grant writing and proposal submission can be daunting. Yet many foundations, corporations, and government programs are eager to support projects and programs in the arts and arts education. Here are ten essential tips to guide you through the grant writing process.

1. Start early: good proposals often take a month or more to research, write, review, revise, assemble, and submit.
2. Read through the guidelines and application very carefully several times, and follow the grantor's instructions to the letter. Applications are turned away when they do not meet the funding agency's requirements.
3. Research the donor organization and sources of information on grants and grant writing before writing your proposal. If possible, cite research to support the effectiveness of your program ideas.
4. Collect successful grant applications to use as models for your own proposal. The more good proposals you read, the more you'll understand the techniques of effective grant writing.
5. Make sure your goals are realistic, given the resources of your organization.
6. Write concisely, and to the point. Do not use extraneous or verbose language.
7. Have several readers – including at least one person not involved in the project – read and critique your proposal narrative.
8. Prepare a reasonable, detailed budget that includes every program activity that will incur costs. Be sure to explain the details of your budget in a budget narrative, even if there are no requirements to do so.
9. Include an evaluation plan that tells your readers how the effects of your program activities will be measured.
10. Proofread! Spelling and grammar errors do not convey a positive image.