

Elements of a Successful Grant Proposal

Grant applications can vary greatly depending on the funder. State and federal government grant applications are typically longer and have more requirements than local or foundation grants. Regardless of the source, when funders posts a funding or grant opportunity, they will usually include guidelines that outline the requirements. These guidelines can be referred to a Request for Proposal (RFP), Request for Applications (RFA) or Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFA).

While the guidelines and specific requirements of a grant application can vary, most grant proposals will include the following elements:

Executive Summary	Also referred to as a Project Summary or Abstract, this should be a concise overview of the project for which you are seeking funding. Depending on the application, it can be as short as one paragraph or up to one page. It should include the overall goal, major activities and impact of your project. While this is usually at the beginning of the application, it's best to write this last, after the proposal is fully developed.
Need	Describe the community need that your project addresses. Ensure this need aligns with the funding priorities outlined in the grant guidelines and the College's strategic plan, and include evidence and data (and sources) to support the need for your project or initiative.
Program Design	This will be your plan of action for how you will provide a solution for the stated need. Detail what you're going to do and how you're going to do it, including: goals/objectives (SMART goals), target population, location/s, activities and timeline.
Outcomes and Evaluation	What will you measure to show success and how will you evaluate the results? The anticipated outcomes should be evidence of change that results from your project, such as number of students who show increase in knowledge after taking a proposed training, rather than citing just the number of students who enroll in the training.
Organization, Personnel, and Partners	Organization information, personnel and/or staff sections should outline who will be responsible for the implementation and management of the project. Funders want to know that you and your organization have the experience to manage grant funds. Identify project staff and their relevant experience, and roles and responsibilities of each. This may also include community and/or business partners. Partners should be named, and should include a letter of support to show they are committed to the project.
Budget	The budget should be a comprehensive breakdown of how you will use the proposed funding, such as project staff, materials, equipment, promotion, etc. The budget should connect directly to the activities described in the Program Design section. Some funding opportunities require a match from the organization, and often have restrictions on what the funding can be spent on. Refer to the grant guidelines for allowable and unallowable costs.
Attachments	Required attachments, such as Letters of Support, President signature, logic model, resumes, etc., should be gathered early to avoid last minute requests and ensure you have what you need to submit before the deadline.

**Developed by St. Petersburg College Grants Development Department, with information from [Resource Associates](#).*