



OFFICE OF COMPETITIVE GRANTS

TIPS ON WRITING A GRANT

Office of
Competitive Grants

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1. Look for and tailor the request to the funder's specific requirements

Most foundations and large corporations publish their criteria for grants they make: who is eligible, how much they give, and what information the applicant must provide. Don't ignore these! Look carefully at the requirements and write your proposal to directly respond to these. Add information only if it is needed and compelling.

2. Be objective and specific

Generally funders want to make their decisions on an objective basis. Tell them the specific amount of funds you are requesting, what the funds will be used for, who will participate, and how participants will benefit from the activity.

3. Show how the activity ties to the funder's goals

If the funder wants to improve the health of children, for example, show what specific impact the activity will have on students' health; i.e., fewer students will start smoking. If possible, provide baseline data against which results can be measured.

4. Demonstrate accountability

Show how the funder can be sure the money will be properly spent. If true, say that the funds will be received, dispersed and tracked by YISD financial services department. Describe the qualifications or experience of the person who will be in charge of the program or activity.

5. Maintain a professional tone

Use a more formal tone. Avoid saying "we" and "you." Limit use of abbreviations. Don't presume funders know what's going on in schools. Like a good news story, add the "people" impact by including a quote from a student about the program's impact or the student's need.

6. Carefully proofread your submission

Leave enough time to take a deep breath and proofread – twice! Don't forget to proofread the funder's name and address. Watch out for classic punctuation and grammar mistakes.

7. Get your principal's approval for the submission

Talk with your principal before you write the grant to make sure he or she will approve. Complete a Campus Submission Form, have your principal sign it, and submit it to the Office of Competitive Grants along with your grant proposal.

8. Follow YISD grant procedures

Remember that ALL grant requests – no matter how small -- must follow YISD grant procedures BEFORE they can be submitted. Contact the Office of Competitive Grants as early as possible to make sure you know what procedures apply and the time needed to get approvals.

9. Keep a copy of your complete submission

Make sure you keep a copy of what you submitted to the funder. You will need it to answer any questions from the funder and, if you get the grant, to ensure you do what you promised. It can also give you a head start on the next grant you write.

10. Write grants early and often!

Even the best grant requests may not get funded. Don't despair! Try again! A grant request will often get funded on the second or third try.