



## Proposal Writing: Tips from the Funders

- Don't waste a funder's time—make sure you meet the admissibility requirements
- Research your funder and the specific granting program e.g. call for specific details, speak to other recipients, understand their priorities and where they are thinking of allocating monies in the future, etc.
- Cultivate a relationship with the funder in advance to submitting a proposal is often helpful e.g. Invite them to your events, involve in projects, etc.
- See funders as more than just money. Even if a funder cannot provide your organization with grant monies, a funder can support your work in other ways e.g. General info about the sector, inside scoop on how to approach other funders, who else you might approach, etc.
- Clearly articulate your program — get someone who doesn't know your organization to read your proposal to edit for clarity and jargon, etc.
- Solidly demonstrate need of the community — and not your own organization — through surveys, 3<sup>rd</sup> party research, etc.
- Show how project/program will not just serve a specific need but will also build autonomy, bridge organizations and break isolation.
- Demonstrate long-term impact of project/program
- Be concise and simple. More is not better in the world of proposals.
- Write the proposal as if you were sharing it with your members. Otherwise it can read as being too contrived and artificial in the eyes of the funder.
- Verify to see if project must be new or innovative
- Know the duration of the grant you are applying for (e.g.: Do not submit a 3 year project if the funder only provides for one-year grants.)
- Check to see if securing other (matching) funding will help your proposal (some foundations like to be the sole funder of a project for others it is the opposite)
- Check to see if a particular funder permits you to include "operational" costs or not
- Demonstrate in-kind and volunteer involvement in project
- Solicit active partnerships from other organizations
- If refused, call funder back to see if and how you should revise your proposal and resubmit
- Look for ways you can involve other board and volunteers in the process. Proposal writing takes time, involving others can save time and increase your success over the longer term. Having a board member as signatory to the proposal may increase its credibility.