Grant Writing
Grant Writing Preparation Guide for Teachers

Before *ANY* organization awards grant funds, they must be convinced that their funds will be used responsibly to address an educational need. The best way to ensure investors are convinced is to make sure *YOU* understand what is needed and why. Completing a *Needs Assessment* will keep you on track and aide in gathering information to support you in the grant writing process.

1. **Identify the educational need/Define the problem.** Are you attempting to improve student understanding of a challenging state standard? Are you seeking technology that will engage your students in an innovative manner? Will the funds be used to support a school or district initiative?

2. **Determine affect addressing the need or problem will have on:**
   a. Curriculum and Scope & Sequence,
   b. Department and colleagues,
   c. Campus Improvement Plan – does it address an identified campus initiative?
   d. District initiatives – does it address an identified district initiative?

3. **Determine the aim, objectives, and evaluation methods.** Grants have a structure similar to a lesson plan. There is a targeted outcome with objectives designed to reach desired outcome. Sometimes called "aims" in grant writing, these goals and objectives will help funders better understand the benefit of the funds.
   a. What are the goals or aims of the grant proposal?
      i. An aim is a hypothesis statement. In one or two sentences describe what you plan to do and the anticipated outcome.
      ii. *Example Aim*: Engaging high school students in activities with temperature and pH probes will (1) assist students in differentiating types of chemical reactions as they (2) analyze and evaluate empirical evidence.
         1. In the example aim, the intervention or equipment provided by grant funding is identified: temperature and pH probes. There are two outcomes for this single aim: (1) differentiate between types of chemical reactions *and* (2) analyzing and evaluating evidence.
         2. Outcome (1) can be evaluated through assessments but being a process skill, outcome (2) will be more challenging to assess.

   b. What is the anticipated impact on students or instruction or the school community?
   c. How will the success or impact of the proposal be measured?

4. **Evidence to support grant proposal.** Data provides evidence of a need or problem. Data can focus on a specific sub-population, grade level, or the entire student population.
   a. Describe the targeted student population:
      i. Demographics,
      ii. Socio-economic status,
      iii. Subpopulations
   b. Data to support the educational need:
      iv. Academic performance,
      v. Social emotional or accommodation need
      vi. Passing/Dropout rates.

5. ***Meet with the Principal***. Before you begin writing the grant application, you MUST meet with the school Principal. With site-based management, any awarded grant money will be deposited into the general school budget. *If the Principal is not aware of the grant, any funds received <u>will</u> be spent on something else!*

    Share the identified need or problem, the supporting evidence, how addressing the need/problem fits with curriculum and initiatives. Present the aims, objectives, and planned evaluation methods. The Principal's approval is necessary *BEFORE* submitting any grant application. The Principal can guide you through any district policies that could impact your grant proposal (additional approvals needed, district forms, approved vendors, etc.).

6. **Create a budget.**
    a. Identify specific items that will be used to meet objectives and support the aim(s).
        i. Talk to your department chair to identify district approved vendors.
        ii. Some grants adhere to strict budget limitations and others set a top limit.
            1. If your budget exceeds the funders limitations, consider dividing the proposal into parts. Example: A proposal for alternative seating includes yoga balls and rolling desks.
                a. Identify two funding sources and submit a proposal for yoga balls to one funder and another proposal for rolling desks to the other potential funder.
                b. **IMPORTANT**: the proposals cannot be the same! Each funder will have their own guidelines. Also, the justification for the two types of seating will be different (yoga balls for fidgeting students and rolling desks for collaboration or group work).

7. **Identify possible funders.** Consider the nature of the need/problem and the budget.
    a. Target grants that align with the aims/goals and objectives.
    b. Grants are competitive. Federal and state grants are extremely competitive.
    c. Local funders consider their grants are investments that benefit their local community. Check out:
        i. District Educational Foundations (Cap ranges from $2000 - $5000).
        ii. Local businesses, corporations, service organizations, and private foundations.

8. **Read the grant application carefully and repeatedly.** Requirements differ from one grant to another. Know what is required for the application and beyond. Some grants have additional requirements for grant awardees:
    a. Regular feedback or progress reports during the grant period.
    b. Presentations to the funder.
    c. Publicity photos/statements/appearances for promotional use by funders.

9. **Collaborate with Colleagues:** Invite colleagues to collaborate in the grant writing process. Colleagues can:
    a. **Collaborate**
        i. Clarify the need/problem
        ii. Provide evidence and data
        iii. Identify alternative approaches
        iv. Develop evaluation methods
        v. Share the workload

10. **Submit the grant application!**