



Tips for Selecting a Third-Party Grantwriter

Selecting a grantwriter can be a difficult process. Grants Office, LLC would be pleased to provide grantwriting services to your organization on a consultative basis; and, as an established professional grants firm with a proven track record, we are a solid choice. We do understand, however, that your organization may feel that utilizing another firm or an independent grantwriter may be the best way to meet your needs at this time. For that reason, we have created the following list of key points for you to consider during the decision-making process in order to ensure your organization hires the right professional for your situation.

- 1) Make sure your third-party grantwriter understands the needs and opportunities that are specific to your organization.**

Grants Office's qualified grantwriters, Grants Development Consultants, and division managers work directly with clients to ensure each proposal accurately reflects the needs and resources of the organization it represents. Each proposal created by Grants Office is entirely unique to the contracting client, and each proposal is edited by a division manager prior to submission.

- 2) Understand that your grantwriter will need to thoroughly review the RFP (Request for Proposals) pertinent to the program you are applying to and be aware of any additional proposal and budget guidelines established by funder.**

Grants Office tracks grant programs throughout the year, and we are immediately aware of the release of RFPs. All Grants Office grantwriters receive the RFP before accepting an assignment, and are fully aware of the submission requirements, supported and edited throughout the process by the Grants Development and Administration Division Manager of Grants Development Services, required to respond exactly to the RFP, and evaluated after each and every project assigned to them. This allows us to ensure our writers are the best in the business—and your chances of success are the highest possible!



- 3) Be wary of grantwriters who claim to have an unusually high proposal success rate. The national average success rate is 17% (approximately one proposal approved for every six submitted). Even highly experienced grants firms seldom see success rates higher than 40% (approximately one proposal approved for every two to three submitted). If grantwriters are honest with their numbers, unusually high success rates can indicate that they have either little and/or limited experience or only pursue “low-hanging fruit.”**

Grants Office pays close attention to the competitiveness of grant programs in order to inform the potential applicant of the likelihood of *that organization's* success, based on a variety of factors specific to the organization and the grant program of interest. Our overall success rating is approximately 33% (approximately one proposal approved for every three submitted)—well above the national average. We have pursued countless opportunities at every level (federal, state, foundation, and corporate; open competitive, formula, invitation-only, and unsolicited) and in nearly every topic area.

- 4) Avoid third party writers who claim a high percentage of the award. Writing grantwriting percentages into the budget can weaken the competitiveness of your proposal or, in fact, be in direct violation of the grant program's funding rules. Reputable grantwriters generally require an upfront fee. If a bonus is required in the event of funding, the amount should be modest.**

Unless grantwriting services are written into the award per the programs allowable costs, all of your grant award will go to the intended project. Grants Office charges an up-front flat-fee for grantwriting based on the average number of hours needed to complete a proposal for the specific grant program to which your organization wishes to apply. Our fees are consistent with or below current industry standards and have been established with the limited resources of municipalities and other not-for-profit organizations in mind.



- 5) **Ensure that your grantwriter has experience with the program you want to apply to or with similar grant programs. In other words, a grantwriter who has only ever written local foundation grants for small, non-profits to create or continue community programs may not be the best choice for a government homeland security proposal.**

Grants Office has over 60 grantwriters nationwide with a wide range of professional, successful grantwriting experience. We can select the writer most qualified to work on the type of proposal you want to pursue.

- 6) **Look for inquisitiveness about your institution and its mission when interviewing grantwriter candidates. Are they asking questions that you feel get to the heart of what you do and seek to accomplish? Freelance assignments require writers to quickly get to know an organization. Ask for references from both freelance assignment and full-time positions.**

Grants Office utilizes only grantwriters that have demonstrated success in a variety of work environments. Our writers understand that they need to know the client organization as well as they know the Request for Proposal. Grants Office can provide your organization with a list of references upon request, or you can obtain a list from our website.

- 7) **Ask whether your grantwriter has experience with grant research. A "no" doesn't necessarily make the writer incapable of doing a good job, but a writer who is adept at research is sure to be adept at determining whether the program is truly a good fit for your organization and/or if something better is available—which might not be the case otherwise.**

Grants Office has a full-time research and consulting staff working directly with our grantwriters to ensure the program is the best possible fit for your needs. We have a database of grants updated daily that contains information on 90% or more of all federal grant opportunities, as well as state, corporate, and foundation grant information. We are keenly aware of what is available to meet your needs and have 12 years of successful experience matching organizations to appropriate funding sources.