



GRANT WRITING GUIDE

Writing a Successful Grant Proposal

Grant writing can be a daunting task, but we are here to help!

We have created this guide to assist you with the entire process. It is important to know that anyone can get a grant! But like the lottery, if you don't participate, there is no chance you will win.

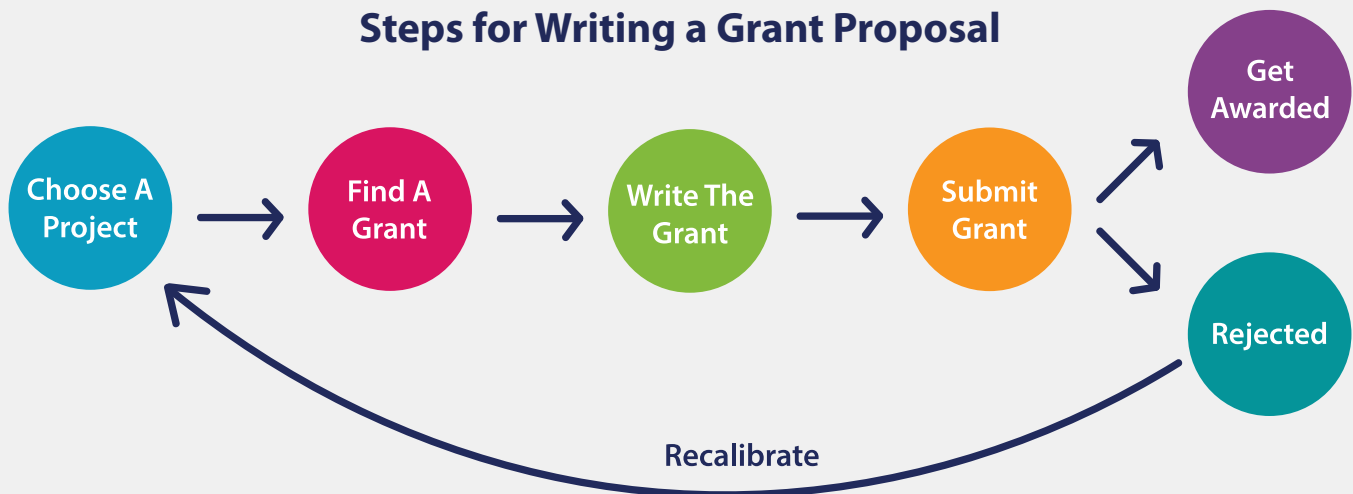
Getting a grant is more than just getting money for your idea. Give yourself plenty of time to fully understand the various components of the grant program application.

The process consists of **choosing a project and developing your idea, finding the right award, writing your proposal, and editing (and re-editing) all before submitting.**

Don't worry - we will walk you through all of that (and more) in this guide, one step at a time.



Steps for Writing a Grant Proposal



1. Choose a Project

So why do you want a grant? Is there a particular activity you want to try in your classroom? Are you trying to bring new technology to your students? Do you have a new initiative that you want to bring to your school, district, or program? Are you looking to grow professionally as an educator or leader?

If you answered YES to any of those questions, then a grant or award can be the perfect way to get funding for these ideas. Make sure that your proposal highlights the importance of the project to your community, showcases innovation and engaging strategies, and stands out among the rest of the applicants. Show your passion for your students/school and why they are deserving of any funds.

Be sure to take time to develop your idea. Talk to colleagues that have written proposals and learn what made them want to apply (and hopefully get awarded). Think about what will make your idea have an impact in your community. As an example, if you want to bring rocketry into your classroom because it is cool, that is not a valid motive. We agree, rockets are pretty cool but there must be more! Think about the students you are serving and how you are looking to make an impact with the money you could receive.

2. Find a Grant

Look for grants that fit your goals, project interests, and funding amount. This step can go hand in hand with choosing or developing a project idea. But where do you look?

- Look at groups and non-profit organizations to see if they offer grants. (Note: you might have to become a member to apply for their grant)
- Network and consult with colleagues and administrators to learn about opportunities they have taken advantage of.
- Reach out to companies and businesses since they often have foundations that support schools and community groups.
- Consider government award programs, at both the state and federal levels.

TEACHER TIP: Check out our website for our [*grant finder tool*](#) - we made it just for you!

Once you have an idea of which grant you are going to apply for, look closely at the application information and details. Be sure you have the support of your administration before pursuing any grant. Be certain that you can complete the grant by the deadline. It helps to set up a timeline to make sure the proposal gets done on time.

3. Write the Grant

Each grant program is distinctive and will require different content. Take the time to understand what the funder is requiring. Be sure to respect the limitations on the number of characters as you write your grant. We have outlined the most common sections you might encounter on a proposal application.

Title

Sometimes this is the last thing you write for your application. It is the first thing a reviewer reads so you want to make sure it is:

- Catchy and unique
- Descriptive and informative
- Not too long
- Emphasizes the impact or takeaway

Project Summary or Abstract

- This is a clear, concise summary of your proposal that outlines what you plan to do with the funding.
- In the summary, you are trying to sell your idea and highlight important details.
- Try to avoid teacher jargon and unnecessary abbreviations.
- It is important to discuss any partnerships or collaborations you are a part of or looking to create.
- You might write this first and then return to it at the end of writing your proposal to fine tune and add details.

Description of Need/Potential Impact

What is the potential impact of your project? Why do you (over other applicants) need their money?

- **If you have relevant data and information, be sure to include it.**
- **Use the following questions to guide your response:**
 - *What is the problem that might exist in your school or community?*
 - *How will you address it with this funding?*
 - *How will the students and community benefit from this idea getting funded?*

Target Population

- This is a list of various descriptors of the people being impacted by the grant.
- Information can include:
 - *Age*
 - *Number of students (and any community members)*
 - *Socio-economic background*
 - *Special needs (including gifted or special ed.)*
 - *Information on anyone who will benefit*
- Try to be as accurate as possible when including this data.

Objectives/Activities/Methods

- In this section, detail your goals for the project. Be as descriptive as possible.
- The goals should be attainable, measurable, and age appropriate.
- Limit the number of goals so you can focus on what is most important and impactful.

TEACHER TIP: For STEM related projects, we suggest checking out our Classroom Kits and Lesson Plans that are perfect for integrating STEM into your proposals!

3. Write the Grant (continued)

Timeline

- Submit a timeline to the funders about when major events will be completed.
- Events to include:
 - *Purchases*
 - *Implementation of the project*
 - *Pre- and Post- assessments*

Budget

- Be sure to follow the directions and required format for the budget.
- Budgets need to be detailed and include small items like wood glue for rockets.
- For some proposals, you may need to provide justification for each item, how it relates to your project goals and why you need to use grant money to buy this item.
- Mention any additional resources that you have access to at your school or organization and any in-kind contributions received.
- Aim to come as close as possible to the award amount.
- Include if you have established any partnerships or collaborations that can impact your budget (free items or discounts).
- Make sure you know how the money will be paid out and if it will be paid to you or to the school.
 - *Note that some grants will send you the money in advance for you to purchase, some will reimburse you after the purchase, and others will purchase the items for you.*

TEACHER TIP: Estes Education can help guide your budget planning by creating a quote for any rocketry items you need for your project.

Evaluation

- Outline how you plan to evaluate the success of your project.
- Identify benchmarks to show progress throughout the project.
- What quantitative and qualitative data will you obtain? How will it show if the objectives have been met?
- Types of evaluations to consider:
 - *Pre- and post- tests*
 - *Journals*
 - *Interviews*
 - *Surveys or questionnaires*
 - *Amount of community involvement*

Organizational Information

- Funders typically want to know more about the school or organization they are funding.
- Required materials might include:
 - *Project staff resume/CV*
 - *Endorsement or letter of support from district or school administrators*
 - *Resources the school already has that could support or impact the project*

Other Components

- Letters of support from collaborators
 - *Funders want to know that potential partners can confirm their support for your project.*
- Project sustainability/dissemination plan
 - *Explain your long-term plans for this project and how you plan to share your results.*



4. Submit the Grant

Nice! You finished your grant – or so you thought. Before you press submit there are a few things to consider.

- Proofread and check for grammar, organization, and more importantly, make sure you answered the questions they are asked.
 - ***Have someone else read it (preferably someone familiar with the funder, grant, and/or your project).***
 - ***Grant writing workshops are also great resources for developing your proposal and optimizing your grant.***
- Verify you are within the desired word count and character limit.
- Ensure your materials are in the correct format for submission.

You want to have enough time to review your draft and edit it before submitting. Be aware of any relevant deadlines.

You submitted – well done! Now it is time to wait for your funder to get back to you. The timeline for a response is usually listed with the grant application and can vary depending on the funding source. If you have any questions about the status of your application, you can follow-up with the funder if there is a pressing or urgent matter.

Once you hear back, there are usually two possible outcomes:

Get Awarded

- Congratulations! Celebrate and share the news!
- Now, you get to do what you proposed!
- Some grants require updates or reports to see how their money was used. This can be in the middle and/or at the end of a funding cycle. Information they might want can include:
 - ***Update on the number of people impacted***
 - ***Progress or updates on the project***
 - ***Any changes you had to make to the proposal and justification for why they were made***
 - ***Observations, pictures, artifacts, or assessments***

Rejected

- Have no fear, there will always be other opportunities!
- If you received feedback, use it to edit your proposal.
 - ***If they didn't provide feedback, ask the funder or a colleague for additional comments.***
- Recalibrate and adjust your application.
- Once you have adapted it, re-submit your proposal for the next grant deadline or consider submitting it to a different funding agent.
- Consider reworking your proposal for a different grant application.



Miscellaneous Tips

- As you write your proposal, try to put yourself in the funder's shoes. They want to give money to people who have well-developed ideas, a clear plan for executing their project, and someone who really needs and will benefit greatly from the money.
- Organizations want their money to go as far as possible. Emphasize the impact of this grant on your community, and how it will reach beyond your classroom or group.
- Use data wherever possible.
- While it feel a bit awkward, now is the time to brag about all you do! Think of all the ways you go above and beyond for your students or kids. Give specific examples that show how much you care and how committed you are to getting the best for them.
- From grant recipients we have talked to, most who receive grants do so because they apply to many different grants. The more times you apply, the better chances you have, right? Recipients also mentioned that the application process got easier the more they did, so if the first one seems tough, don't get discouraged. You got this!

We hope this guide was helpful and supports you on your grant writing journey. Writing a successful grant takes time and you're on the right track by reading this guide. Good luck and let us know how Estes Education can further support you in bringing learning to new heights.