



Grantwriting Tips

You don't have to be a professional grantwriter to put together a good proposal!

- 1. Research funders.**
 - What is the funder's focus? What kind of work do they usually support?
 - Is your organization a good match for this funder? If not, keep searching for a match. MaineCF's *Resources: Nonprofit Support* document provides a list of funding resources. <https://www.mainecef.org/apply-for-a-grant/help-for-applicants/grantwriting-and-research/>
- 2. Call or email funders.**
 - Many funders are willing to answer your questions and offer feedback.
 - Explain what your organization is planning and ask if it makes sense to submit a proposal.
- 3. Avoid waiting until the last minute to complete the proposal.**

Staff may not be available to help with last-minute technical support or questions.
- 4. Read ALL the guidelines and directions CAREFULLY to include all the requested information.**

Don't submit items not required unless you check with the funder first.
- 5. Keep your proposal answers short and direct.** You don't have to fill the space provided.
- 6. Don't use jargon or special words (including abbreviations or acronyms).**
- 7. Clearly describe your organization's mission statement and work.**
 - Don't assume the person reading your proposal knows your organization or work.
 - Answer questions simply so your ideas are easy to understand as funders may be reading many at the same time. Include a description of the organization's day-to-day activities.
 - Explain why the work is important and why a grant would make a difference.
- 8. Be as specific as you can using numbers, percentages, and other data.**

Don't write, "Last year, we served hundreds of developmentally disabled children."
Do write, "Last year, we served 1,235 individuals between the ages of 10 and 16, or more than 27% of all developmentally disabled young people in Waldo County."
- 9. Provide an accurate budget.**
 - When possible, show the project has other sources of support (other grants, donations, and in-kind support such as volunteer time and/or donated supplies).
 - Always double check the budget to make sure it is correct.
- 10. Before submitting the proposal, ask another person to read it.** Asking someone else to edit or check your work helps you make sure your application is clear or identify if you missed something.

Don't be afraid to check in with the funder by email or telephone if you don't receive a grant to ask for feedback to improve future proposals.