



Are You Grant-Ready?

Organizational Preparation

1. Legal and Administrative Compliance:

- Ensure the organization has a current 501(c)(3) nonprofit status.
- Confirm that all required filings with the state and federal governments are up to date (e.g., IRS Form 990, registered charity with the State of California).
- Maintain current bylaws and articles of incorporation.

2. Governance:

- Assemble a qualified and diverse Board of Directors.
- Establish clear roles and responsibilities for board members.
- Hold regular board meetings and keep detailed minutes.

3. Financial Management:

- Develop a detailed and realistic budget.
- Implement robust financial controls and accounting practices.
- Prepare financial statements, including balance sheets, income statements, and cash flow statements.
- Conduct regular financial audits or reviews (minimum \$750k annual for federal requirements, \$2m annual for California).

4. Strategic Planning:

- Create a strategic plan outlining the organization's goals, objectives, and strategies for achieving them.
- Develop a mission statement and vision statement.
- Identify key programs and services, including descriptions and expected outcomes.

Documentation and Readiness

5. Program Documentation:

- Document the organization's history, achievements, and impact.
- Develop detailed program descriptions, including goals, target populations, and methods.
- Gather data and statistics that demonstrate the need for the programs and their effectiveness.

6. Evaluation and Metrics:

- Create a system for tracking and measuring program outcomes.
- Develop metrics for success and methods for data collection.
- Prepare evaluation reports and impact assessments.

7. Grant Readiness:

- Compile a list of potential grants and funders that align with the organization's mission and programs.
- Develop a grant calendar to track deadlines and submission dates.
- Gather and organize supporting documents often required for grant applications (e.g., letters of support, partnership agreements, resumes of key staff).

Grant Writing Preparation

8. Capacity Building:

- Train staff and/or volunteers in grant writing and fundraising, or hire a grant writer.
- Develop templates for common grant components, such as needs statements, program descriptions, and budgets.

9. Community and Stakeholder Engagement:

- Build relationships with community leaders, stakeholders, and potential partners.
- Gather testimonials and letters of support from beneficiaries, partners, and community leaders.
- Create a compelling narrative that demonstrates community impact and support.

10. Marketing and Public Relations:

- Develop a professional website and online presence.
- Create marketing materials, including brochures, flyers, and annual reports.
- Maintain active social media accounts to showcase the organization's work and successes.

Application and Submission

11. Grant Application Preparation:

- Review grant guidelines and requirements carefully.
- Write a strong, clear, and concise proposal tailored to each funder's priorities and guidelines.
- Develop a detailed project budget and timeline.

12. Review and Submission:

- Have multiple people review the grant application for clarity, coherence, and compliance with guidelines.
- Ensure all required attachments and supporting documents are included.
- Submit the application before the deadline and follow up with the funder if necessary.