

GRANT WRITING IDEAS

- Developed by Alverno Graduate Student, Amy Fare
- Used and Distributed with permission, July 2009

ORGANIZATIONAL SUGGESTIONS:

- Develop a basic informational paragraph about your school that is available for all grants. (This may be already developed and on a school website. Remember website writing could be different than professional writing for grants however.)
- Develop and maintain a list of school data such as the following
(Note: any grouping that will show need or something outstanding):
 - Number of students (male and female break out)
 - Diversity of student body
 - Number of staff (degrees)
 - Free/reduced lunch populations
 - ESL students (and languages)
 - Special Needs students and their categories and inclusion
 - ADA students (504 student qualification)
 - Test score information
 - Graduation rate, college acceptance, employed, military etc.
- Develop and maintain an organizational system (such as a binder) of all information, grant ideas, grants already applied for, and grants already received. Electronic files must be maintained as well. Maintain and organize any grant sources.
- Develop and maintain a calendar system which tracks grant notifications, application deadlines, award times, and the like.
- Keep grants that are not awarded for re-submission with up-grades or for another grant.
- If a grant is not awarded, correct your grant based on ideas from the grants that were funded as this could be re-submitted another time.
- Maintain letters of reference. You may want to keep a sample of this type of letter for an author/writer. You may need to prepare a letter for the author's signature. Provide a due date for the letter which is well in advance of the date of submission.
- Develop a school grant writing committee. Develop "team concept" with this committee (form, norm, storm and perform). Consider parent or parishioner to join committee.
- Develop and deliver a publicity plan for the awarded grant.

WRITING SUGGESTIONS:

- Determine the voice, the view and description of the project (perhaps as though you were already doing this). Write clearly and without jargon.

- Follow grant directions exactly. Do not include extra “stuff”. Make sure page limit requirements are completely followed.
- Utilize good editors.
- Be able to explain your grant in a few sentences to others (both orally and in written form).
- Utilize students in the grant process (as appropriate, but especially in the thank you and post grant publicity).
- Ideas should be innovative or address a need for school. Grants for operating expenses are generally not funded.
- Grants that tie-in another organization/connection are necessary for some grants.
- Within the grant, make sure that your budget is realistic and not asking for inflated amounts (as readers will recognize this).
- Cite research that supports your proposal.
- Develop and write a clear path within your plan on how it will be developed, managed, publicized and evaluated. Make sure this is real and do-able. Make sure your grant is within rules and is really possible, doable and deliverable.
- Develop and share when appropriate what additional support you will provide if the grant is awarded. This could “in-kind” services, matching monies, donations, volunteers, supplies (paper, printing, postage) and the like.
- Do not publish that a grant has been applied for, rather, publish only awarded/received grants.
- Proof read again and again.
- Develop and clearly write an evaluation system.
- Remember to write and submit post grant documentation.
- Evaluate grant systematically (quarterly, trimester etc.) so that mid-course corrections can be made as well as develop data for the “end of grant” report.
- Develop, write and send a thank you.

SUGGESTIONS ON WHO TO ASK:

- Research grants, who is funding and what. Match your need to the source. Do not bend your needs to the grant or the grant to your needs as grants much match the funder’s intent.
- Read all the examples and past awarded to determine what has been awarded in the past.
- Search the net: some examples of grants may come from content areas (such as NCTM), religious organizations (Catholic, private schools), student scholarships (for tuition), local businesses (Target, Lowe’s).
- Search education periodicals, teacher’s magazines, safety magazines and the like.
- Search state (DPI) website.
- Search federal government education website.

OTHER SUGGESTIONS:

- Develop a relationship with grantor.
- Never give up. A grant that was not awarded doesn't mean it was a bad idea.
- Perhaps a non-funded grant needs to be refined, added to, tweaked, enhanced....and can be re-submitted another year.
- Always send a thank you. Consider student feedback as well as student thanks.
- Invite grantors to school functions and perhaps open house for recognition. Have students give testimony about how the grant has helped them.
- Keep grantors on school mailing list.
- Consider community organizations, parishioners, and business partners for financial support.
- Consider a wish list on school publications and website.
- Remember state and public district monies/services that are available for you.
- Develop a scholarship fund.
- Remember that "roll-over" grants still require a thank you and publicity.

OTHER/NOTES: