



Illinois Municipal League

101st Annual Conference

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Chicago, IL

Grants for Municipalities: Find, Align & Get 'Em to Sign HANDOUTS

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Granting Agencies - Federal

U.S. Department of Agriculture

(Dept) <http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome>

(Rural Development) http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/RD_Grants.html

The Department is committed to helping improve the economy and quality of life in all of rural America by providing financial programs to support essential public facilities and services as water and sewer systems, housing, health clinics, emergency service facilities and electric and telephone service.

U.S. Department of Transportation

<https://www.dot.gov/grants>

The Department of Transportation's mission is to ensure fast, safe, efficient, accessible and convenient transportation that meets vital national interests and enhances the quality of life of the American people, today and into the future.

U.S. Department of Energy

<http://energy.gov/public-services/funding-opportunities>

The Energy Department supports a number of grant, loan and financing programs. Learn more about these programs and how they can help you -- whether you are a startup energy business looking to launch a pilot project, a company with proven technology that needs help reaching commercial scale, or a state, local or tribal government looking for funding resources for energy projects.

U.S. Department of Commerce

(Dept) <http://www.commerce.gov/>

The Department of Commerce fosters and promotes the nation's economic development and technological advancement through vigilance in international trade policy, domestic business policy and growth, and promoting economic progress at all levels.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

<http://www.hhs.gov/>

The Department of Health and Human Services is the federal government's principal agency for protecting the health of all Americans and providing essential human services, especially to those who are least able to help themselves.

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/comm_planning/communitydevelopment/programs

The Department of Housing and Urban Development's mission is to increase homeownership, support community development and increase access to affordable housing free from discrimination. HUD fulfills this mission through high ethical standards, management and accountability, and by forming partnerships with community organizations.

U.S. Department of Justice

<http://www.justice.gov/>

The Department of Justice enforces the law and defends the interest of the United States, ensuring public safety against threats foreign and domestic; providing federal leadership in preventing and controlling crime; seeking just punishment for those guilty of unlawful pursuits; and ensuring fair and impartial administration of justice for all Americans. \$2,273,000 in grant money was awarded in FY 2014.

Environmental Protection Agency

<http://www.epa.gov/>

The mission of the Environmental Protection Agency is to protect human health and the environment. Since 1970, EPA has been working for a cleaner, healthier environment for the American people.

Institute of Museum and Library Services

<http://www.ims.gov/>

The Institute of Museum and Library Services is the primary source of federal support for the nation's 122,000 libraries and 17,500 museums. The Institute serves as a leader in providing services to enhance learning, sustain cultural heritage and increase civic participation.

National Endowment for the Arts

<http://arts.gov/>

The National Endowment for the Arts is a public agency dedicated to supporting excellence in the arts; bringing the arts to all Americans and providing leadership in arts education. The Endowment is the largest national source of funds for the arts.

Federal Highway Administration, Illinois Division

<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/ildiv/roster.cfm>

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Division Offices are local field offices that provide leadership and guidance to State Departments of Transportation in the planning and construction of transportation projects.

Granting Agencies and Programs - State

Illinois Arts Council

<http://www.arts.illinois.gov/>

Resources to support the Illinois Arts Council Agency are provided by the Governor and General Assembly of Illinois and the National Endowment for the Arts.

Illinois Board of Higher Education

www.ibhe.org

The Board administers state and federal grant programs and receives funds for other initiatives. In all, FY2013 appropriations for grant programs totaled \$12.3 million (both state and federal funds) for a variety of programs and purposes related to the Board's goals and priorities.

Illinois Department on Aging

<http://www.illinois.gov/aging/>

The delivery of services administered by the Illinois Department on Aging is privatized through senior centers and other social service agencies. Much of their state and federal funds are coordinated through the 13 Areas on Aging, including 12 not-for-profit corporations and the City of Chicago. The Department works in partnership with the Area Agencies on Aging to contract with service providers that serve older people directly in their local communities.

Illinois Department of Agriculture

<http://www.epa.state.il.us/>

A variety of state and federal grant programs are available which could benefit rural residents, communities and other groups.

Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity

<http://www.illinois.gov/dceo>

The Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, which administers and oversees nearly 10,000 grants each fiscal year, manages various economic, community and workforce development programs, services, and initiatives.

Illinois Department of Human Services

<http://www.dhs.state.il.us/>

The Illinois Department of Human Services supports and partners with many initiatives throughout the State of Illinois aimed at increasing the availability, accessibility and/or quality of life and public services for thousands of Illinois families. Some initiatives are funded with public dollars, some with private dollars, and some reflect a partnership of public and private support.

Illinois Department of Natural Resources

www.dnr.illinois.gov/

(regional offices) <http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/about/offices/>

The Department of Natural Resources has numerous programs available to assist with recreational, educational and environmental improvements and projects. Includes Illinois Public Museum Grants Program: The Public Museum Capital Grants Program is designed to help public museums in Illinois expand and upgrade facilities and create new exhibitions.

Illinois Department of Public Health

<http://idph.state.il.us/>

Located at 535 West Jefferson Street in Springfield, Illinois, IDPH offers grants in minority health services, health insurance, finance and administration, health protection, health promotion; policy, planning and statistics; preparedness and response, and women's health.

Illinois Department of Transportation

<http://www.idot.illinois.gov/>

In Illinois, IDOT has statutory responsibility for the planning, construction, operation and maintenance of Illinois' extensive transportation network, which encompasses highways and bridges, airports, public transit, rail freight and rail passenger systems. This is accomplished by partnering with state, federal, and local entities to ensure the transportation network fosters and supports economic growth at the community, regional, state, and national levels.

Illinois Environmental Protection Agency

<http://www.epa.state.il.us/local-government/assistance.html>

The mission of the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) is to safeguard environmental quality, consistent with the social and economic needs of the State, so as to protect health, welfare, property and the quality of life. Grants are provided from the Departments of Land, Water and Air.

Illinois Historic Preservation Agency

www.illinois.gov/ihpa/

Money to support historic preservation is available in the form of low-cost loans, tax incentives and grants. This aid can come from federal, state or local government and from private organizations. Eligibility and application requirements vary according to the goals of each program, but most grant programs apply to public agencies and non-profit groups.

Illinois Humanities Council

<http://www.prairie.org/>

The Illinois Humanities Council gives Community Grant support to Illinois nonprofit organizations to develop public humanities programs for Illinois audiences and to provide technical assistance or general support to help accomplish their core humanities missions.

Illinois State Museum

www.museum.state.il.us/

The Public Museum Capital Grants Program, administered through the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, is designed to help public museums in Illinois expand and upgrade facilities and create new exhibitions.

Illinois Office of the Governor

www2.illinois.gov/gov/

The Governor's Office primarily serves in the administration and execution of the state laws, but also administers grant programs in the areas of early childhood education and other initiatives.

Illinois State Library

<http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/library/grants/home.html>

The Illinois State Library administers grants for library and literacy services, programs and initiatives. Grant programs provide access to ideas, resources and information through the efforts of Illinois' academic libraries, public libraries, school libraries, special libraries, regional library systems, literacy agencies and partnering workplaces.

Illinois Clean Energy Foundation

www.illinoiscleanenergy.org/

The Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation was established in December 1999 as an independent foundation with a \$225 million endowment provided by Commonwealth Edison. Its mission is to improve energy efficiency, advance the development of renewable energy resources and protect natural areas in communities all across Illinois.

Most Famous Grant Search Web Sites

General

Google

<https://www.google.com>

- The most common search site for finding opportunities
- Helps to know lots of search terms and strategies

Grants.gov

<https://www.grants.gov>

- Often returns large numbers of unrelated grants
- Both simple and sophisticated search criteria to narrow search
- Also the submission site for many federal grants

FedBizOpps

<https://www.fbo.gov/>

- Formerly Commerce Business Daily
- Mostly procurements, but occasional grants

Federal Register

<https://www.federalregister.gov/>

- Grant announcements as early as possible
 - Most are repeated by specific agencies
 - Search or subscribe for regular notifications
-

Example Grant Strategies

Greenville, USA

Greenville, USA is ready for development. The mid-size town has significant infill opportunities in Midtown, just east of its downtown. The area has attracted the attention of investors. Since the population of Greenville is especially interested in sustainability, Greenville's City Council established a Sustainable Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district. Developers building in the TIF district are offered financial incentives for incorporating sustainable practices in their projects. Midtown has prospered as a result of the sustainable development.

The new businesses in Midtown have attracted significant traffic to the area resulting in the need for an intelligent approach to managing the congestion. City Council has instructed the staff from Public Works and Planning to work together to address the problem. In particular, they required that staff:

1. Research intelligent traffic options that would be respectful of the sustainable nature of Midtown
 - a. Identify several traffic-related grants that address energy and environmental quality
 - b. Identify other traffic-related grants
 - c. With an anticipated project cost of \$400,000, contract with a professional grant writing firm and provide them a two year budget of no more than \$30,000 to assist in the identification and submission of grants
 - d. Pursue no grants under \$50,000
 - e. Develop a funding strategy where at least 50% of the cost of the Midtown traffic program comes from grant funds
 - f. Identify vendors who will participate in the grant procurement efforts

Big Box Expansion in Growth, USA

Five years ago, the City Council in Growth, USA, though of modest size, determined they would be the “anchor store” for their county. At the time there were only small shopping districts in the county. In fact, the closest big box shopping district was over 90 miles away.

Growth, USA decided to increase sales tax by establishing a block of land dedicated to big box stores. Growth, USA then attracted stores by building the infrastructure and offering three-year property tax abatements. In addition, Growth USA offered developers an additional tax abatement for hiring veterans. This strategy worked, and now Growth USA is a shopping destination. Unemployment rates are at an all-time low. However, the traffic gridlock must be dealt with.

The City Council instructed city staff to develop a task force to accomplish several goals, including the following specific to grant support for decreasing traffic congestion:

- Design an intelligent traffic system that would mitigate traffic problems, thereby enhancing the shopping experience, even during the holiday months.
- Develop an intelligent traffic system that allows for growth.
- Develop a cash flow plan that invests new property tax revenues in the intelligent traffic system.
- Hire a full-time grant writer who will spend one-third time on traffic related funding, and be available two-thirds time for other grant priorities.
- Submit at least three traffic related grants per year.
- Establish a database of traffic related grants and build relationships with those granting agencies.
- Identify grant funds for the traffic system that reward job creation and veteran employment.
- Develop a funding strategy where at least 20% of the cost of the traffic program comes from grant funds.
- Identify vendors who will participate in the grant procurement efforts.
- Make the case to elected state representatives indicating the need for and benefit of state transportation funds in Growth, USA

Opportunity Review Checklist

Here are several aspects of a proposal to consider when reviewing a potential opportunity. Responses to these questions will help decide whether pursuing the opportunity is worth the effort.

Goal/Scope Match

-
- ☐ How well can your project meet the funder's goals?
 - ☐ Can your project be reasonably funded within the award amount?
 - ☐ Can you meet or exceed all the evaluation criteria?
-

Eligibility and Other Requirements

-
- ☐ Is your type of organization allowed to apply (e.g., 510(c)(3) status, governmental unit, for-profit, research institution)?
 - ☐ Are you within the geographic region served by the funder?
 - ☐ Are matching funds required? If so, can you supply them?
 - ☐ Do you have the necessary partners in place?
 - ☐ Are there any designations or certifications required (e.g., population size, low-income, historically under-represented)?
 - ☐ Any requirement on length of time in business (some foundations require at least 3 years of operation)?
 - ☐ Are you within any quota or restrictions on the number of proposals from your organization or region?
 - ☐ Do you meet all the other eligibility requirements listed in the announcement?
-

Post-Award Requirements

-
- ☐ Can you successfully manage the project with sufficient oversight to assure success?
 - ☐ Can you follow through on all award requirements (e.g., partnering requirements, matching funds, etc.)?
 - ☐ Can you supply all required data for reports? All other required documentation?
 - ☐ Can you manage any travel or meeting requirements?
 - ☐ Can you clearly demonstrate the impact that you are proposing?
 - ☐ Any other post-award conditions to attend to?
-

Likelihood of Funding

-
- ☐ What percent of submitted proposals get funded (if such information is available)?
 - ☐ How well do you meet not only goals but other priorities?
 - ☐ What feedback and guidance have you received from the funding organization?
 - ☐ Does your proposal development team have a good track record of successful proposals?
 - ☐ Are past awards similar in scope to what you want funded?
 - ☐ What are the odds of funding based on historical award rates?
 - ☐ What strategies or alterations in your project would better position you for funding?
-

Resources and Time to Develop Proposal

-
- ☐ How much effort will it take to develop the proposal?
 - ☐ Do you have the resources in place for a competitive proposal?
 - ☐ If you do not have the expertise or time in-house, can you bring in qualified outside help?
 - ☐ Can you generate a quality proposal within the allotted timeframe?
 - ☐ Is the expenditure of resources worth the expected funding?
-

Strategies

-
- ☐ Does this opportunity fit within your overall grant strategy?
 - ☐ What additional or more detailed strategies are involved, if any?
-

The Case Statement

The Case Statement

The Case Statement is the basic argument—the reasons why a funding organization will choose to fund your effort. The Case Statement is a pre-proposal document, usually internal and informal, that outlines these points and provides key support for each. It often works best as a one-page outline, with bullet lists and short phrases.

The Case Statement can take a fair amount of time to develop. It is a planning document that can take some thought.

The Case Statement can be developed irrespective of proposal layout requirements. In most situations, especially with mature funding agencies, the items in the Case Statement will flow quite easily into the required sections of the proposal.

The main work of proposal development is providing strong support for each of the arguments. As you develop the proposal, refer frequently to the Case Statement and refine it as needed. Every item in the proposal should support one or more of the main points in the Case Statement.

The typical Case Statement addresses the five pillars listed below. However, individual Case Statements may need to address more, or fewer, or a combination. For example, if proposal guidelines clearly identify a need, the Case Statement can briefly reiterate the need without extensive justification.

Pillar I: Match Goals



This proposed project must meet the goals of the funding organization. As obvious as this may seem, not meeting the goals of the funding organization is the most commonly cited reason among reviewers for rejecting proposals. Your proposal must demonstrate clearly and conspicuously that your project will achieve the objectives of the funding program.

State your proposed goals and outcomes clearly, in ways that can be easily matched to the funder's goals and in ways that can be clearly measured and demonstrated.

Pillar II: The Need



The proposed project must meet a need or solve a clearly identified problem. It may require some research and data gathering to quantify the need. When generating the Case Statement, the research need not be complete, but the main points should be spelled out.

In addition to meeting a need, a project may also take advantage of a unique opportunity, emerging knowledge, or new technology. Research proposals often fall into this category. Text supporting the need can also demonstrate the applicant's knowledge and expertise in the field.

Proposals sometimes need a secondary pillar to demonstrate that the project could not be funded by other sources.

Letters of Support from authoritative, relevant sources can be used effectively to further document the need for a project.

Pillar III: Uniqueness



In order to compete with other proposals, the winning proposal must offer something that no one else offers. Describe what capabilities are available in the field or region, and cite specifics that prove your solution superior or not available from other sources. As with information in other pillars, hard data—actual numbers—are the most convincing.

Discussing the current state of the art is also a good opportunity to demonstrate your depth of knowledge in the field.

Pillar IV: Impact



Impact flows naturally from the proposed goals. Every goal of your project needs some method to demonstrate that you have achieved that goal. Unless your project results in a significant, positive outcome, there is little incentive to pursue it. Explain clearly all the benefits of your project to all beneficiaries, and how you will demonstrate them. Include some form of Evaluation Plan even if not expressly required by the proposal guidelines.

Pillar V: Feasibility



Demonstrate that the proposed effort has a high likelihood of success. Doing so entails several areas:

The **Project Plan and Schedule** must be well thought through and attainable, with required steps in place plus accommodations for contingencies. The proposed methods and approaches need to be workable and appropriate to the task.

All the necessary **Resources** to complete the work must be planned for and available—either requested in the proposal or provided by other sources. Resources include dollars (budget), person-power, equipment, facilities, and any others needed for the proposal. Provide letters of commitment from Partners who play key roles in the project.

The proposing organization must demonstrate the **Capabilities** to carry out the project, both technically and organizationally. Describe the skills of key players and past successes with similar projects.

Why Proposals Get Rejected

The Proposal does not meet all technical grant requirements.

Funding agencies reduce the stack by first rejecting any proposal that is deficient in some technical requirement. For example, the National Science Foundation will reject proposals if an entry in the bibliography does not list the names of all authors ("et al." is not sufficient). Make sure your proposal meets every technical requirement listed in the grant application.

What you can do

If you have a question about a prerequisite, contact a grantor representative and get a clear response. Also, before submission, have some fresh eyes review the proposal specifically against all technical requirements.

The proposal is not responsive to the guidelines.

Funding agencies look for proposals that clearly and demonstrably meet their goals and criteria. Applicants may have a project that is only tangentially related to the funding agency's goals. Such proposals stand a poor chance of funding.

What you can do

Write down your basic case for funding and review it for soundness. Make sure you can support every argument you plan to make. Also, review the case statement against the proposal review criteria listed in the funding announcement. Even before developing your case statement, it's a good idea to talk to the funding agency and get their feedback informally before deciding to develop a proposal.

The project or program to be funded is poorly developed.

Programs or projects that are already in place or are modeled after ones that are already in existence and producing results are more likely to be funded because most grant-making organizations wish to fund projects that have a high chance of making an impact. Next best are programs that are not in action currently, but have well-thought-out plans, including specific impact areas and budget figures. Such programs can begin quickly and provide results sooner than those with less advance planning. If the resources are not available for such planning, it may not be a good investment to develop the proposal.

**What you
can do**

Take the time to plan and detail your project or program. This requires thought and effort beyond simply writing. We often say that proposal development is primarily a research and planning task and only after that, a writing task.

The proposal is written or organized poorly.

Grants are exercises in persuasion and need to be written in a persuasive fashion, with the primary arguments clearly stated and well supported. While the proposal needs to be detailed, it also needs to be understood by a lay person that may not have a direct knowledge of your industry. And, of course, spelling and grammar really do matter. Any obvious problems show carelessness, which is not a good sign for a prospective grantee.

**What you
can do**

Structure the proposal before you begin writing, and review the text for logical flow and consistency frequently during the process. Make sure several extra pairs of eyes look over the grant application before it is submitted.

The team or resources are inadequate.

Do not undervalue having a competent and qualified team, as well as sufficient resources to implement your project. If members of your team do not have the background needed to perform the work (*e.g.*, using student volunteers to screen for complex medical conditions), your plan is not sound. Any unanswered questions about what resources or equipment you will use to facilitate your project are also negatives.

**What you
can do**

Make sure your team member's qualifications are made clear in the proposal and are sufficient to carry out the work. Additionally, support from all parties should state in the proposal, with letters of support as appropriate. The budget must be reasonable, and the means to provide facilities, equipment, and other resources should be determined before the proposal is submitted.

The evaluation plan is inadequate.

Most grantors require an evaluation plan as an integral part of the project to ensure the project has measurable results. If your evaluation plan is too vague and does not provide clear methods of evaluation, then it could be a strike against your funding request. Also, if your plan does not truly measure expected outcomes, grantors could be less likely to fund your project. For example, if you want to reduce obesity in youth, you need to measure obesity, not just the number of presentations or other activities held.

**What you
can do**

Spend quality time planning your evaluation plan and how you will track your results. Include baseline measurements and expected results over time. Make sure that your evaluation techniques are sound, and your results can be collected and reported numerically.

TheGrant
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701 Devonshire Drive, C-25 ♦ Champaign, IL 61820 ♦ (217) 487-2395

TheGrantHelpers.com provides grant development and management services to municipalities, non-profits, educational entities, research & development organizations, for-profit businesses, and organizations that work with and support grant recipients. Our expert staff has decades of experience and is prepared to assist you with all aspects of the grant development process. Key services include:

- Proactively find and review funding opportunities.
- Build and maintain databases of funding opportunities, customized and targeted for specific clients.
- Advise and consult on grant strategy and approach.
- Assist with all aspects of proposal development, preparation, submission, and management.
- Guide and train others in proposal development.
- Help manage projects once awarded—tracking, invoicing, reporting, and more.