



Grant Writing Glossary

A

Addendum

Extra pages that you include with your grant, such as letters of support. These must be labeled (e.g., Addendum II) and referenced with the narrative of the grant.

Administrative Costs

see Indirect Costs

Assets

The amount of capital or principal — money, stocks, bonds, real estate, or other resources — controlled by an organization.

B

Boilerplate

Sections of a proposal applicable to a variety of requests; e.g., organizational descriptions, professional resumes, etc.; often maintained by organizations submitting numerous proposals in order to reduce preparation time.

Budget Narrative

A document included with the application package which, in narrative form, describes the budgeted expenditures and activities in greater detail. For example, a line item for travel may include \$1,500. The budget narrative will include a breakdown of those costs (i.e. \$500 for rental of three school buses to transport transferring student to local college/university tours).

D

Declining grant

A multi-year grant that becomes smaller each year, in the expectation that the recipient organization will increase its fundraising from other sources.

Demonstration Grant

Generally of limited duration which seeks to test the feasibility of an idea, approach or program.

Direct costs

The total dollar amount necessary to fund your project. Includes cash money only, not indirect costs.

Disallowed costs

Any charges to the approved grant that the sponsor or grantmaker has determined to be beyond the scope of the purpose of a grant, excessive or otherwise unallowable.

Discretionary grant

An award made in accordance with legislation allowing the funding source to exercise reasonable freedom in selection the project and the grantee and determining the amount of the reward.

E

Endowment

Money contributed to provide a continuing income for support or maintenance. The endowment may be general or specified for a particular project.

Evaluation

A quantitative assessment of what was, or was not, accomplished by a project; a comparison of project objectives and actual project outcomes; an increasingly important part of proposal writing and project management.

F

Fiscal agent

An organization, acting on behalf of an organization lacking legal status to be an applicant. The Fiscal Agent acts as its legal applicant and agrees to submit and sign a grant application on the applicant's behalf and to pass on such grant. Please note that in such cases the Fiscal Agent remains legally responsible for the use of grant funds.

Fiscal Year

Usually a 12-month period for which funds are appropriated and during which expenditures must be made.

G

General/operating support

A grant made to further the general purpose or work of an organization, rather than for a specific purpose or project; also called an unrestricted grant or basic support.

Goals

General statement of anticipated project outcomes; usually more global in scope than objectives and not expected to be measurable; if used, goals should be supported by well stated objectives.

Grantee financial report

A report detailing how grant funds were used by an organization. Many corporate grant makers require this kind of report from grantees. A financial report generally includes a listing of all expenditures from grant funds as well as an overall organizational financial report covering revenue and expenses, assets and liabilities.

I

In-kind contribution

Refers to a contribution of services or items that an organization donates instead of a monetary sum, in order to help fund the project (e.g., Volunteer services, space, transportation, and donated goods)

Indirect costs

Overhead or administrative charges related to a project but not easily and separately identifiable; e.g., utilities, clerical, office space, accounting, library, and custodial services necessary for proper implementation of the project; usually assessed against the project as a predetermined rate established according to standard accounting procedures.

Inputs (resources)

Items you will need to carry out the objectives or activities (surveys, money, staff time, volunteer time, etc.).

L

Letter of Commitment

Written assurance of participation/support from an organization, individual, department concerning a project to be undertaken by the organization, if the proposal would be funded. Letters of commitment from organizations and/or individuals from outside are often required to be submitted with the grant application and should be obtained from organizations and/or individuals who are considered credible in the eyes of the funder.

Letter of inquiry / Letter of intent (LOI)

A brief letter outlining an organization's activities and its request for funding that is sent to a prospective donor in order to determine whether it would be appropriate to submit a full grant proposal. Many grant makers prefer to be contacted in this way before receiving a full proposal.

Letter of support

A simple letter attached as an addendum to your proposal. This letter should be from an "expert" or supporter of your project who tells why he/she believes that your project should be funded.

M

Matching funds/grant

Refers to a dollar amount that the grantee or other outside party agrees to contribute to the project.

Measurable Objectives

Goals stated in such a way that the achievement or nonachievement of this goal may be determined with a relative degree of precision by objective observation and measurement.

Multi-year budget

Budget representing the cost of a project of more than one year's duration; a separate budget is prepared for each year, with a budget summary presented preferably at the beginning of the budget pages.

N

Narrative

The written portion of your grant proposal. The story of who, what, where, when, why and how. Every grant has at least 2 parts: a narrative and a budget. Often the grant guidelines will specify that your narrative may not exceed a certain page length. Always adhere to these instructions.

Need statement

The part of the grant in which you explain, using both qualitative and quantitative data, why you should be funded. Remember to outline your problems and give data to verify the problem areas. (Also called justification)

NOA (Notice of Award)

The formal document to inform the grantee that the proposal has been funded.

O

Operating support grant

A grant to cover the regular personnel, administrative, and miscellaneous expenses of an existing program or project. See also general/operating support.

Organization budget

All funds budgeted for an organization's operations, activities, programs, and services during a fiscal year. Operating funds do not include capital funds, endowment funds, reserve funds or any other funds not allocated to the annual operating cycle of the organization.

Outcomes

Expected results of the project which can be used to measure its success.

R

RFP (Request for Proposal)

an invitation to submit a proposal, which a grant maker may issue broadly or in a targeted fashion to those working in a particular field.

Replication

How your project can be used or duplicated by others.

S

Site visit

A final step in the review of some proposals; involves a team of evaluators designated by the funding source who examine the project facilities and other resources on location; includes review of project plan and objectives with key personnel; an encouraging sign to the project director; occasionally conducted during the life of a project.

Summative Evaluation

The final evaluation, occurring at the end of the entire grant period, that includes both quantitative and qualitative data. The summative evaluation focuses specifically on whether project goals and objectives were achieved and project success indicators.

T

Three-Column budget

Style of budget in which you show three sources for funding: the grant maker (agency or foundation, outside funding (matching funds from a supporter), and your own in-kind support.