

## Group Assignment: Grant Proposal

The guidance for this assignment was created using these sources:

- Oliu, Walter, et al. *Writing that Works: Communicating Effectively on The Job*. Bedford/St. Martin's, 2020.
- [https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/subject\\_specific\\_writing/professional\\_technical\\_writing/grant\\_writing/making\\_the\\_request.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/subject_specific_writing/professional_technical_writing/grant_writing/making_the_request.html).
- <https://csic.georgetown.edu/magazine/write-successful-non-profit-proposal/>
- <https://donorbox.org/nonprofit-blog/grant-proposals/>
- <https://smallbusiness.chron.com/write-good-project-proposal-donor-funding-11345.html>
- <https://smallbusiness.chron.com/write-grant-nonprofit-organization-59764.html>

**Pick a nonprofit group and write a grant proposal for a project to benefit your nonprofit. Address your proposal to a specific company.**

- 1) Nonprofit must be “real”**
- 2) Grant-providing company must be “real”**
- 3) Your group must *create* the project. While you can gain ideas from previously approved grants, your project must contain originality! “Dazzle me!”**

**To help your group get started:**

1. Select your nonprofit organization – it must fall under tax code 501(c)(3). Possibilities include professional organizations, a charitable group, community organizations, etc. (Google: “**technical nonprofit organizations**”)
2. Create your project to resolve a problem/concern for your selected nonprofit (**requires a great deal of group brainstorming!**)
3. Determine the grant-providing company to whom your group will address its proposal. Do your research just like with your college papers - visit potential corporate websites and take a close look at the other organizations they have previously funded (Google: “**companies offering grants to nonprofits 2022**”)
4. Define proposal sections and divide effort among group members

Links to lists of companies offering nonprofit grants:

- <https://www.fundraiserhelp.com/corporate-grants-source-list.htm>
- <https://nonprofitmegaphone.com/corporate-donation-opportunities/>
- <https://www.giveforms.com/blog/25-companies-that-donate-to-nonprofits>

**Overall:**

Grants present significant revenue opportunities for a nonprofit, but to receive this funding, you must craft a well-organized, compelling, and complete grant proposal. There are many nonprofits vying for the same money as your group!

- Clearly indicate why/how your solution improves on existing or previous ones and cite evidence to support this
- Your proposal needs to be eye-catching and employ document design principles for font, white space, and graphics, in addition to inclusion of all required sections
- A logical and persuasive statement of need demonstrates that your nonprofit sufficiently understands the problem and is therefore capable of addressing it satisfactorily
- It is acceptable to request the funding amount twice: once in the Introduction, and again in the conclusion. Never apologize for asking for \$\$\$ or imposing on your recipient's time - your request should be reasonable and mutually beneficial, so there is no need for an apology

### Guidance for required sections:

#### Each section:

- Begins on a new page
- One page in length – some may only be ½ page
- x *Exceptions:* Problem Statement and Project Plan sections, which are not to exceed two pages (each)
- **Title page:** On a single page, show the title of the project, name of the organization to whom it is being submitted, date submitted, names of your team members, and the name, address, phone, email, and website of your nonprofit organization. **This is an opportunity for creative design implementation**
- **Introduction:** The introduction paragraph announces that this is a proposal to xxx. From the very beginning, your audience should know exactly what it is you are asking of them. You should concisely state your project and its benefits, how much money you need, and for what reason. Being unclear may come across as unorganized, unprofessional, and makes your audience less likely to contribute
- **Problem Statement (also called a “Statement of Need(s)”):** This section tells the grant-providing company *why* project funds are important and necessary. This is where your group defines the problem that exists and explains why this project will help fill the gap to better serve the community.
  - For example, an established women's shelter could be at capacity and has an opportunity to buy and renovate a building next door to expand within 12 months to serve 50 additional women monthly

The information that your group provides in this section will be based on facts and evidence from your research that support the need for the project. The information can come from authorities in the field as well as from your own agency's research. Keep in mind, citations and statistics which refer to current research are very persuasive. The sources you use will be included in the **References** section.

Be specific and clear about what your need is. If you want your audience to contribute, they must first believe that there is a need. This explanation should go beyond the obvious need for a donation.

- For example, if your college organization needs money to attend a conference, explain *why* your organization *needs to attend* the conference, not just why they need the monetary donations.

The company you are approaching for the grant will more likely respond to relevant, quantifiable data, such as statistics and other numerical data to help describe and justify a need. It is also important to provide concrete, specific details to help your audience imagine the impact of their donation and to support your professional ethos as an organized nonprofit.

- For instance, if you are requesting donations in increments of \$5 for an after-school Thanksgiving dinner, tell your audience how far \$5 will go with detail: “A donation of \$5 will provide a hungry, middle-school child with a home-cooked turkey dinner.”

For most companies, donating is ultimately a business transaction. They may have a specific budget set aside for donations, and there are more than a million registered nonprofits in the U.S. all fighting for the same money. Emphasize the benefits of the proposed activities for the company's (grant-provider's) target population and why your project fulfills the need.

The proposal audience needs to see how their donation helps their company directly. The benefit should be clearly identified and indicate how it meets their values and needs. Possible benefits are:

- *Providing publicity at your event or through your nonprofit*
- *A tax-deduction for their donation if your organization is so certified*
- *Formal recognition, perhaps at an appreciation banquet or in the form of a displayable token of appreciation*

- **Project Plan (also called “Methodology”):** This section clearly outlines *how* you will use the requested funds to accomplish your project’s objectives. The bulk of this discussion should contain detailed descriptions of the steps that will be executed. Your proposed methodology shows the funding agency that you have a logical, well-thought, step-by-step plan to complete the project. The tasks you describe should be presented in a coherent manner, naturally progressing from start to finish (**this is a good place to employ subheadings**).
  - For example, if your organization is looking for community development grants to provide increased emergency shelters for the homeless, the methodology/steps should detail how you plan to acquire shelter facilities, offer services, and reach out to those in need of the facilities

In addition, the methodology should have some form of expert approval/evidence to support the viability of the project. Your thought process should be along the lines of “We know this step-by-step methodology is successful because...” This could be documented through studies related to market analyses, site control, surveys, data collection, and other forms of justification (which would be included in the **References** section). It is also where you demonstrate your project’s feasibility by detailing your nonprofit’s experiences and resources that will be drawn upon to carry out the steps.
- **Project Outcomes (also called “Quantifiable Objectives”):** Describe what results the grant provider can expect based on their funding investment in your project. Include measurable outcomes you are trying to achieve. Be as specific as possible with your estimates.
- **Budget:** Include a couple of narrative statements that summarize the grant-related expenses. Then include a detailed, line-item table of personnel, equipment, hours, overhead, etc., with short explanations. The information must be clear and accurate. Grant donors generally prefer to fund unique, short-term projects
  - In the women's shelter example, your budget would include permits, the cost of the building, contractors, furniture, labor, materials, and supplies. It may also include costs for outreach and professional services
- **Schedule:** Include a couple of narrative statements that summarize the project from start date to completion. Then include a visual version of your timeline as a Gantt chart. Here are instructions for building a Gantt chart in Excel:  
<https://www.forbes.com/advisor/business/software/how-to-make-a-gantt-chart-in-excel/>

For Microsoft 365 subscribers, Excel provides a handful of premium Gantt chart options. **Go to File > New and enter “Gantt chart” into the search box.** From there, choose the “*Simple Gantt Chart*” template.
- **Organizational background:** Your goal in this section is to persuade the company to fund your project based on your wonderful nonprofit’s background. Granting organizations consider not only the quality of the proposed project but also your nonprofit’s standing in the community. This is a brief section. Describe your nonprofit by sharing any combination of the following:
  - History
  - Main mission
  - Qualifications of individuals
  - Kudos earned for significant, related projects
- **Conclusion:** This section provides one more opportunity to emphasize the benefits/advantages of your project. Detail how you want your recipient to proceed, making sure that it is clear and simple. It is important that you include a time frame: 1) When do you need to know if they accept your proposal (agree to provide the grant), and 2) When do you need the money? Your audience needs to know how

to send their money: by check? money order? online? in person? This is also the place to express your appreciation for the opportunity to submit the proposal.

- **References:** Prepare this section the same as a List of References for an essay in MLA or APA format. Include the references you cited in support of your **Problem Statement, Project Plan**, and any other section where you included facts/evidence to strengthen your proposal. This reference list allows reviewers of your proposal to assess your familiarity with current research in the field. Be sure your source research is up-to-date, thorough, and relevant. Your references also reveal whether conclusive research has already been done in an area or whether competing programs have successfully addressed the same problem.
- **Attachments:** Include as necessary (these are ***not*** tallied as part of the 10-12 pages). The attachment *titles* should appear at the bottom of your last proposal page (References) in the format we have been using in class:  
Attachment 1: title here  
Attachment 2: title here etc.  
Include the actual attachment documents in your BB submission, but *you do not have to print the attachments for the hardcopy.*

**Rubric: Everyone in the group receives the same score out of a possible 150 points**

- ✓ Meets due date/time in BB - **Be sure to allow group time for revisions and editing**
- ✓ Proposal submitted as a single, seamless WORD.docx in both BB and hardcopy (**you can print two-sided**)
- ✓ Falls within 10–12-page range
- ✓ Completely free of spelling errors and other critical mistakes
- ✓ Proposal addressed to a specific business/organization
- ✓ Headings and subheadings used effectively to break the proposal into sections
- ✓ Clearly cites evidence supporting project as a solution to an established problem
- ✓ Attractive document design principles employed
- ✓ Includes the following required sections:
  - Cover page
  - Introduction
  - Problem Statement (Statement of Need)
  - Project Plan (Methodology)
  - Project Outcomes (Objectives)
  - Budget
  - Schedule
  - Organizational Background
  - Conclusion
  - References
  - Attachments (as necessary)