Grant Writing Tips	
General Tips	**Detailed Tips**

Study the Request for Applications (RFA) document to make sure you are eligible to apply and competitive.	• Read the Request for Applications (RFA) thoroughly!
	• Pay close attention to the eligibility requirements. Think critically about whether you are eligible and how competitive we will be.
	    o Does in fit with the mission of your organization?
	    o Does it fit with the strategic direction of your program?
	    o Does your program have the capacity to carry out the work required?
	    o Is the amount of money reasonable to cover the true costs of implementing the work required under the grant?
	    o Do you and your team have time to write a competitive grant?
	    o Are you likely to be competitive?
	• Depending on type of grant, you may need to have early brainstorming sessions (internal and external).

Think before you write.	• Always participate in the question and answer session, even if you don't have questions. Listen carefully to the responses from the funder for clues of what they are looking for.
	• Research the funding agency/program. Read the RFA to understand what they want to fund.
	• Have a solid idea for your project before you start writing.
	• Read through the grant narrative guidance and the evaluation criteria
	• Set up your grant narrative document.
	    o Format spacing, font, and margins according to RFA guidelines.
	    o Make sure to use the section titles that the RFA uses
	• Develop grant writing deadlines.
	• Make sure you know what appendices you will need.
	• Request letters of support EARLY.

Write to the RFA.	• Answer the narrative questions in the RFA, but WRITE to the evaluation criteria. • Use the RFA language in your proposal. • Pay attention to formatting. Use headers. Don't crowd the document to fit in more words. It is better to cut than to cram. • Use bold, italics, and underlines where appropriate to draw the reviewer's attention to key headers and/or information • Use logical numbering for objectives and activities • Do not submit supplemental information unless it is requested
Write concisely, specifically and clearly.	• Less is more! Be concise, specific and clear • Use plain language. Keep your sentences short and understandable. • Convey the main idea intended • Write cohesively—logically and smoothly • Use consistent tenses. • Put one space between sentences or phrases within a single bullet (do not double space). • Use left justification instead of full justification. • Don't use jargon
Be mindful of sentence syntax and word choice.	• Write in active voice • Don't use unnecessary adverbs (really, very, extremely) or adjectives • Don't use first or second person nouns (I, we, you) • Don't use qualifiers (sort of, rather, quite, somewhat) • Use key words and phrases at the beginning or end of a sentence. Avoid awkward interruptions in a sentence that distract from the key points • Avoid contractions. For example, use "do not" instead of "don't." Please remember "it's" means "it is." The possessive of "it is "its. • Avoid acronyms if possible. If you have to use acronyms, never use acronyms that are not explained at least once prior to their use, e.g., Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) at first use and then CDOT thereafter. • Avoid abbreviations whenever possible. Do not use an abbreviation as the first word of a sentence or bullet. • Treat "dataset" as though it was two words, e.g., data set. The same is true for **data base** and **seat belt**. •

Follow punctuation rules and style conventions.	• Follow the AP Style Guide. A cheat sheet can be found here: AP Style Guide Cheat Sheet • Put one space between sentences • In general, spell out numbers one through nine, and use figures for numbers 10 and higher (see the AP Style Guide Cheat Sheet for exceptions) • Use **percent** instead of % in sentences; at the beginning of a sentence, both the number and symbol are spelled. Using % is ok in tables and figures.
Edit, edit, edit.	• Look for common errors (word swap, from/form) • Make sure the writing is understandable • Ask yourself if you accomplished your objective in a logical manner • Edit three times - once for meaning, once for power, once for correctness • Have an outside reader that is not familiar with the grant review a full draft. If they understand the reviewers will too. • After the complete grant is done make sure you read though it with the evaluation criteria in mind. Think about how you would score the application if you were a reviewer.
Proofread thoroughly before submitting your grant.	• Read it aloud to yourself • Read it backwards • Read it forward line by line • Check and double check the attachments before you route the final version.