



Is Your Organization Grant Ready?

A free resource from:

TheGrant
Helpers.com

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What is “Grant Readiness”?

A “grant-ready” organization is one in a good position to:

- 1) Identify appropriate funding opportunities, and
- 2) Respond to them in a timely manner with competitive proposals.

The end result is increased funding that helps the organization achieve its mission.

Grant opportunities come in different shapes and sizes. The tasks of finding the best matches and selecting those worth the investment to develop are every bit as important as generating the proposal itself. Also important, especially with the inevitable short-fuse deadlines, is having a library of materials ready to customize for opportunities as they arise. In addition to all these, a grant-ready organization has the resources, tools, and processes in place to develop strong proposals with a high chance of success.

There are many factors you cannot control in world of grant writing. You can improve your odds of funding success, though, by submitting increasingly competitive grant proposals and by increasing the number of quality proposals you submit.

TheGrantHelpers.com Grant Readiness Inventory below is a checklist of several typical grant readiness items. Use the checklist to help get a sense for where you could improve your own level of grant readiness.

Our Grant Helpers are qualified and available to assist in any of the areas in the checklist, and would love to do so (naturally—it’s our business). [Contact a Grant Helper](#) at TheGrantHelpers.com with any questions or to work with us in any area of grant proposal readiness and development. We hope you find the Inventory useful, and we wish you luck in your search for funding.

The Benefits of Being “Grant Ready”

Grant-ready organizations increase their likelihood of funding in several ways:

- They follow a well-thought-out, focused, cohesive strategy rather than a ‘pot-shot’ can’t-win-if-you-never-try approach.
- They identify a large pool of possible opportunities that match their funding needs.
- They carefully review opportunities and select only those that they have a good chance of winning, wasting little time on less-likely proposals.

- They constantly monitor proposal progress, and are willing to stop work on a proposal if the odds of success dip to unacceptable levels during the development process.
- They can respond quickly and competitively to grant opportunities as they become aware of them, even if the application timeline is short.
- They have libraries of materials, organized to be re-usable, thus shortening development time.
- They have documented, self-improving processes, roles, and tools to support and manage the grant development process.
- They have sufficient, skilled resources to devote to grant development, either in-house or contracted, or a combination of these.
- Over time, they become increasingly efficient and effective at writing proposals, the likelihood of success always rising while costs of development decrease.

TheGrantHelpers.com Grant Readiness Inventory

TheGrantHelpers.com Grant Readiness Inventory is a tool to help your organization identify gaps in grant-readiness. The checklist contains many typical grant-readiness items, but it is not comprehensive. Blanks have been added so that the list can be customized to fit your organization. In general, the more items your organization has prepared, the more “grant ready” it is.

Questions? TheGrantHelpers.com wants to help. You can reach us at 217.487.2395 or online at TheGrantHelpers.com.

Overall Corporate Grant Strategy

- Documented, well thought-out descriptions of the likeliest areas/projects to be funded (we call these “funding focus areas”). For each funding focus:
 - Brief justification of need (expanded in boilerplate documentation)
 - Relationship of funding focus to mission of organization
 - Goals for number of proposals attempted each year, dollar amounts
 - Associated key words
 - Any other requirements or related information
- Ongoing list of potential funding sources, including specific organizations and general types of organizations
- Systematic set of steps you take to decide whether or not you will apply, with key factors to help decide
- Identified roles, responsibilities, and expectations for those involved in grant writing efforts
- Budget (both time and dollars) for grant writing efforts, expected results, periodic review and adjustment of grant strategy
- _____
- _____

Organizational Status and Information

- Organization’s address, website, and contact information for key officials
- Business plan for organization
- Annual budget for organization
- DUNS number
- Employer/Tax Identification Number (EIN)

- Registration with CCR , grants.gov, and/or any other appropriate agencies
- 501(c)3 status letter and start date for nonprofit status
- Bylaws and other governing documents
- Number of employees (full and part time), number of volunteers
- _____
- _____

Standard documents (boilerplate), ready for customizing

- Organization mission and goals, population served
- Organizational history, especially previous successes, demonstrated impact (with data), collaborations
- Organizational chart and description of management structure, size of staff, number of volunteers
- Tax and financial data, for example:
 - Past tax forms
 - 501(c)3 authorization letter
 - Most recent annual and quarterly financial statements, audit statements if available
- Documentation of indirect cost rate calculations, letter(s) of cost rate determination by authorized agencies
- Description of the ability to meet requirements of grants - matching funds, management of efforts, available resources, other forms of support, etc.
- Description of how the organization is unique and effective
- Awareness of similar service providers in the same region (if applicable)
- Evaluation plans in place (or available for reference) from previous successful programs
- Any other qualifications, professional memberships, etc.
- Resumes of key personnel and Board of Directors
- Case statement (justification of need and solution) for each funding focus area, with as much numerical data as possible to support need (To find out how to structure each case statement, see our separate document “Making the Case” from TheGrantHelpers.com)
- Invitation for letter of support, with a letter template for collaborators and community partners
- Evaluation plans
- Bibliography of relevant, current research related to your funding focus areas
- _____

Potential Collaborators

- List of potential collaborators for each funding focus area, with contact information for each
- List of organization officials that must approve all grant proposals
- _____
- _____

Processes and Tools

- Written procedures for identifying, selecting, and writing proposal—to include:
 - Typical tasks and timelines
 - Main factors for determining go/no-go decision points
 - Storing proposal documents for re-use in future proposals
 - Recording and storing any specific notes about a proposal effort
 - Continual improvement of the proposal processes, including review of process after each submission, and examination of reviewer comments after each notification of results
- Tracking system for compiling proposals written and results
- Tools for tracking proposal status and time spent
- Roles of all those involved, especially who must review and approve proposal before submission
- External or quasi-external advisors and reviewers in place (Ideally, every grant application should be reviewed by someone who is removed from the proposed project prior to submission.)
- Central list of registration information for online proposal submission
- Templates for generating budgets
- _____

Where Can We Help?

Get a **Free Consultation** to help with your readiness gaps.

Once you've completed the checklist, contact a Grant Helper at TheGrantHelpers.com to get a free consultation on areas where you would like to improve. A Grant Helper will answer any questions you might have, and make suggestions to help your organization become more competitive.

Who are The Grant Helpers?

TheGrantHelpers.com is a grant writing company committed to helping organizations get the funding they need. We can help prepare your organization to apply for grant funding, as well as identify potential funding sources, perform supportive research, and apply for grants. We also enjoy working with clients after proposal award to make sure the project runs smoothly.

We Love Feedback!

Did you find the tool useful? Have any suggestions? We would love to receive your feedback. Please let us know by emailing Katie.Adams@TheGrantHelpers.com.

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