

## Top Ten Tips for Getting Grants

- 1. Seek funds, don't chase them:** There are numerous sources of funding out there. Find that ones that fit your mission instead of fitting your mission to the funding.
- 2. Funders don't (usually) bite:** If you need assistance or have questions, pick up the phone and call before you write the first word. The vast majority will be glad to talk to you.
- 3. It's not about you:** Your organization's lack of a computer, cash, staff, etc. is not a problem to anyone except your organization. Focus on the needs in your community and how you think you can make a change for the better with adequate resources.
- 4. Follow directions:** Use their forms, abide by their word limits, follow their formatting, and don't ask for things that aren't allowed under their guidelines.
- 5. Make sense to an outsider:** An average reader – one who knows nothing about your organization or the problems you're trying to address – should be able to understand what you are trying to accomplish from reading your proposal.
- 6. Use both hard and soft data:** A combination of numbers (hard data) and stories (soft data) will produce the most compelling grant proposal.
- 7. Build in evaluation:** Evaluation shows your funder their money made a difference, but more importantly, it helps you determine whether your programs are working and where you can best focus your efforts.
- 8. Budget carefully:** Show you have all the resources, both cash and in-kind, to complete the project. If it's in your project narrative, you need to show how you'll provide it. And make sure your numbers add up!
- 9. Presentation matters:** Have others proof your proposal carefully for grammar, spelling, and sense. If the proposal is in hard copy, use readable font, white space, subheaders, and other formatting to make it easy to read.
- 10. Make a commitment:** A grant contract is a promise to spend the money and complete the activities proposed. Keep in touch with your funder if any changes become necessary.