WRITING A GREAT GRANT APPLICATION

TIPS FOR IMPROVING YOUR APPLICATION’S SUCCESS

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AGENDA

PART One: Granting Context at the Municipal Government Level

PART Two: Preparing to Write Your Application

PART Three: Writing Your Application

PART Four: Avoiding Pitfalls

Questions & Answers

“A grant application is a reflection of your organization, the quality and value of your work, and the impact it has on the community.”
Municipalities & Grant Giving
The Legal Framework
The Legal Framework

- Municipalities operate within the parameters of the Municipal Act.
- Section 107 of the Municipal Act enables municipalities to “make grants…”
- Section 107 is silent to whether a grant can be “monetary” in nature
- Courts have ruled a municipality “has the authority to bestow a grant… which maybe monetary in nature”
GRANTING POLICY

Every municipality operates differently respecting the provision of grants.

Granting policy establish the parameters through which Council will carry-out the process. It defines:

- Purpose and Strategic direction;
- Administrative structures;
- Authority;
- Areas of responsibility; and
- Specific Actions.
THE CITY OF MISSISSAUGA

Granting focus on 4 service areas:
1. Arts & Culture
2. Festival & Celebrations
3. Heritage Preservation
4. Community Development

Eligible recipients include:
1. Registered Not-for-Profits
2. Groups (non-registered)
3. Property Owners
So, You’re Considering a Grant Application?

Your success will depend upon your preparedness and your planning...
Being Prepared: Keys to Your Success

1. Understanding the grant context
2. A well defined concept
3. Clearly defined service
4. Demonstrated organizational capacity
5. Linkages between budget & outcomes
Navigating Granting Process Ask Yourself...

- Have I researched all available granting opportunities?
- Have I identified and sought out past organizations who have successfully applied for grants?
- Have I discussed my proposal with the grant administration staff?
- Have I confirmed my organization and service is eligible for consideration?
DEFINING VALUE AND NEEDS: ASK YOURSELF...

- What program or service gaps will you address? Why are these critical?
- What are your program and service goals, objectives, and activities?
- What are the intended results? What changes will occur as a result of your services?
- How will your proposed program or service support the mission of your organization, and that of the granting body?
DEFINING THE PROGRAM DETAILS: ASK YOURSELF…

- Who are the stakeholders you will work with to deliver the program and services? How have they been consulted, and how will they be involved?
- What is the timeline and required resources (financial and staffing) for the service?
- How will you monitor and evaluate the impact of your services?
- How will the program and service continue after the grant?
Clarifying your Governance
Ask Yourself...

- What is your organizational and governance structure?
- What are the roles and responsibilities?
- What are the relevant skills of your staff and volunteers?
- What are the organization’s most recent accomplishments?
- What networks do you belong to? What partnerships have you formed?
LINKING BUDGET TO OUTCOMES: ASK YOURSELF:

• How will funding be used to support the goals, objectives and activities?

• What revenues are expected? What monetary or in-kind contributions have you secured?

• How will you account for expenses? What systems and process are in place to address potential deficit?
So, You’re Ready to Write

Your success will depend upon how persuasive and cohesive you make the grant application...
THE GRANT WRITER’S APPROACH:

- Start with a Draft
- Write in Your Own Voice, Clearly and Directly
- Ask For Feedback
- Check for Errors
- Ensure completeness
KEYS FACTORS TO ADDRESS:

- Relevance
- Feasibility
- Impact
- Sustainability
- Capacity
- Credibility
- Financial Management
**Relevance**

**Your application must...**

- articulate how the service will address known needs, and/or build on local opportunities
- define the manner in which the benefactors of the program and service will be involved
- demonstrate how the service will address a diverse population
- Identify measure you will use to evaluate the program’s success
FEASIBILITY

YOUR APPLICATION MUST...

- Identify examples of the proposed service application elsewhere, and the factors for its success
- Provide documentation showing the service can be practically delivered, with minimal risks
- Demonstrate the budget is appropriate for the scope
- Prove the service is manageable within the stated timeframe
COMMUNITY IMPACT
YOUR APPLICATION MUST...

• Clearly outline the results of the service and how it will be measured

• Identify the specific qualitative and quantitative impacts to the community served

• Identify any potential impacts which may occur beyond the specific objectives of the service
SUSTAINABILITY
YOUR APPLICATION MUST...

• Define lasting benefits from the service following completion
• Identify the partnerships which will help sustain the services
• Describe plans to continue service beyond the life of a grant, and funding opportunities available
• Present a clear business plan for building a sustainable future
ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY
YOUR APPLICATION MUST...

- Highlight experiences and successes of endeavors of equal size, scale, and focus
- Identify relevant staff and board skills which will ensure success
- Clearly describe the organization’s governance model, and its relevance to the proposed service
CREDIBILITY
YOUR APPLICATION MUST...

- Provide evidence of organizational achievements, and relate these to the proposed service
- Describe the organization’s relationship and reputation with the community, and beyond
- List any affiliations or professional network(s) the organization belongs
- List the partners and any external contributors to the organization
Financial Management
Your application must...

- Provide a clear budget identifying income, expenses, and contributions
- Clearly identify any deficit, the reason for its existence, and plans for its elimination
- Ensure budget items are reasonable, justified, and well researched
- Illustrate the percentage of the budget allocated for salaries versus that which will be for the benefit of participants
PITFALLS TO AVOID

A summary of helpful tips...
COMMON MISTAKES – THINGS TO WATCH:

Your application should:

- be complete;
- be clear and comprehensive;
- be professionally presented;
- provide adequate level of detail; and
- include some signs of originality.
QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

THANK YOU
We wish you every success