

Grant Writing 101
Arts BC Conference: THE WAVE FORWARD
Ucluelet — April 2017

Michelle Benjamin & Kathryn Molloy

CONTENTS

1. Two Key Questions and Some Wise Advice
2. Grant Writer's Toolkit
3. How's your Budget?
4. Ten Things You Should Always Do
5. What to Do When You're Successful
6. What to Do If You're Not Successful
7. Wrap-up & Handouts

TWO KEY QUESTIONS AND SOME WISE ADVICE

1. Why are you writing a grant application?
2. Are you applying to the right funder? Do you know your funder?

Beware the perils of grant-chasing!

GRANT WRITER'S TOOLKIT

- Library of generic text.
- Grant Tracker.
- Generic and specific support letters or partner letters.
- Budget.
- A proofreader.

HOW'S YOUR BUDGET?

- Start with the costs.
- Build administrative costs into project costs.
- Be realistic.
- Include other funders.
- How to get to a balanced budget?
- In-kind funding on Revenue and Expense side.

TEN THINGS YOU SHOULD ALWAYS DO

1. **Contact your Program Officer in advance.** A conversation with the grant or program office is the perfect opportunity to:
 - ❖ confirm that your project is suited to the funding program;
 - ❖ review areas of the application you may not understand;
 - ❖ get feedback on a previous (unsuccessful) application;
 - ❖ get a heads-up on new programs suited to a future project;
 - ❖ familiarize your granting officer with other things you're doing;
2. **Review the application form and guidelines in advance,** and give yourself enough time.
3. **Write clearly. Be succinct. Answer all of the questions. Be passionate. Use their key words.**
4. **Create a realistic budget.**
5. **Get input and feedback.**
6. **Gather support materials *in advance*. Get your toolkit together and keep it up to date.**
7. **Follow Instructions.** Don't send materials that aren't requested. Include everything that's asked for.
8. **Refresh your text!** Do not submit a generic application.
9. **SUBMIT ON TIME.**
10. **Triple Check Your Application.** Re-read the guidelines and funder's priorities.

Bonus tip: Get yourself on a grant jury.

WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU'RE SUCCESSFUL

- **Celebrate!** Acknowledge your success!
- Review funding contract agreement
- Call funder immediately and thank them (and discuss contract agreement)
- Are all funds in place (i.e. other funders). If not, what's the plan?
- Inform your board of funding success.
- Announce publicly.
- Ensure you know what you are responsible for to the funder.
- Set up grant tracking sheet and reporting template.
- Make time in your schedule to report on funds.
- The final report is essential.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU'RE NOT SUCCESSFUL

- Call funder or program officer and ask for feedback.
- UNDERSTAND that funders often talk amongst themselves and share information.
- NEVER be defensive, argumentative or angry that you didn't get your funding. Be inquisitive, ask if there's an opportunity for reconsideration.
- Don't take it personally!
- Thank the funder for considering your proposal and ask if they are willing to assist in the development of a proposal concept or application for the next round of funding.
- Stay in contact with the funder if it's a good fit.

RESOURCES

These websites and organizations offer grant-writing advice, information on grants and other funding programs, and fundraising workshops and webinars. Many have e-newsletters that you can subscribe to. There are dozens more — these are just some of our favourites.

CanadaHelps — canadahelps.org

Charity Village — charityvillage.com

GrantStation — www.grantstation.com

Imagine Canada — www.imaginecanada.ca

Little Dog Consulting — www.littledog.ca

Nonprofits with Balls — www.nonprofitwithballs.com

Review other organization's websites to see who they are thanking and acknowledging