

Grigg Lewis Foundation, Inc.

Application Tip Sheet

In order to help you earn the best possible outcome for your request, we are offering some suggestions to help you prepare a successful grant proposal.

What are we looking for? Here are some basic application process principles:

The most important requirement to writing a successful grant proposal is:

- presenting an outstanding cause to fund,
- and conveying your passion for your organization's mission.

Clearly convey the benefits of the project/program that you are requesting funding for.

In order to make your proposal stand out - assume that our board is unfamiliar with your subject. No one is as fluent in your project as you are. We need you to explain it to us. We are not looking for applications with minimal details or long-winded, drawn out explanations. You need to pack a lot of information into short, hard-hitting sentences that keep the reader engaged and adequately explain your project.

We are looking to invest in projects that will produce the greatest return/results for the community and the dollars granted, and we evaluate proposals based on that concept. Your winning proposal will be based on a number of variables, including (but not limited to) the following: (Please use this as a checklist as you prepare your request)

- 501(c)(3) status,
- Your ability to follow our grant request process and provide all of the required documents in a timely fashion – awareness of each phase of our grant cycle and abiding by the deadlines for each,
- Your project/program fits within our gifting guidelines and has a heavy focus on benefitting the residents of Eastern Niagara County,
- Your proposal is presented in a clear and concise manner,
- Your ability to make a compelling case for funding and help us envision the anticipated results,
- The organizational capacity and credibility of your organization, your financials, and your project,
- Sustainability of your project beyond the grant,
- Whether or not your project advances the mission of your organization,
- Your project is not a duplication of services,
- Collaborations with partnering organizations,
- Your organization's track record for establishing and maintaining successful projects,
- The expertise and involvement of your Board of Directors and staff members,
- The need for your project within our community, and the level of community support it has received,
- The number of people that will be served as a result of the grant,
- What the impact will be if your proposal is not funded or if your problem is not addressed,
- The support of other grant funding sources, government agencies, businesses and members from a cross section of the community which can be demonstrated through letters of endorsement.

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GRANT PROCESS

LETTER OF INQUIRY - Step ONE:

- Send us a [letter of inquiry](#) as an introduction to your project which will help us to determine if there is a potential connection and interest for the foundation to request a more in-depth proposal from your organization.
- The one-or two-page letter suggests how your project fits into our gifting guidelines, the need for your project/program and the funding amount requested.
- If your request fits into our funding scope for the current quarter, we will send you an invitation to apply and instructions on what documents to include with your application.
- Please do not skip this step. Your letter of inquiry helps to save you from preparing an application for a request that may not fit into our funding scope.

APPLICATION - Step TWO:

- **QUESTIONS #1-15:** tell us about your organization. Information should come directly from your 501c3 determination letter, your Profit & Loss and Balance Sheets, and your program's business plan.
- **#16 – THE PURPOSE OF YOUR REQUEST:** Include a short summary (approximately 100 words or less) identifying the problem or need being addressed, the project objectives and method for addressing the problem. Discuss the project's goals and objectives. (Goals are broad statements on what you hope to accomplish whereas objectives are specific, measurable outcomes that can be achieved within a specific period of time). The goals and objective section is the most scrutinized by funders. So be sure to include goals and objectives that are reasonable, credible and verifiable. Write the summary after you've laid out other sections of the proposal. Have people that are unfamiliar with the project review the summary to see if it succinctly explains the problem and how the project will address it.
- **#17 – DESCRIBE NEED & IMPACT ON NIAGARA COUNTY:** Describe how your project/program fits into our gifting guideline of benefiting the residents of Niagara County, why it is different from others that currently exist, and/or why it addresses a significant community need. The needs statement presents a compelling argument on why your project is necessary and defines the problem you will address with the requested funds.
- **#18 – LIST ALL COLLABORATIONS WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS:** tell us about any other organization involved in your project, or about any other organization you work with on a regular basis.
- **#19 – DESCRIBE YOUR PLANS FOR SUSTAINING THE PROGRAM:** how do you plan to sustain your program after receiving this grant? Do you anticipate a yearly request, or do you have an alternate plan for revenue? Do you have the proper personnel to carry out the program?
- **#20 – FUNDING SOURCES AND AMOUNTS APPLIED FOR, RECEIVED OR COMMITTED:** What other funding sources have you applied to? Have you received money for this project from any other source? Have any other organizations/foundations pledged funding? Please list all.

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SUPPLEMENTAL DOCUMENTS - Step THREE:

- **(A) A complete budget for the project or program:** The budget should reflect the narrative section of the proposal and should make sense to anyone who reviews it even if they are unfamiliar with your organization or project. We should be able to quickly scan your budget and understand it.

When developing a budget, outline the expenses planned for the term of the project and what the funds will be used for. Include line items that identify direct and indirect costs such as in kind services.

Your budget should also include an itemized list of anticipated income sources, such as approved funds, pending requests and any income you expect to receive during the grant period. If you are planning a campaign to raise funds for your project, explain your fundraising plan and the likelihood of success based on past experience.

Ask yourself once you've developed a budget if it is realistic. Can the project be accomplished within the proposed amount and timeframe? Verify that the budget is consistent with the project's proposed activities and that the costs are reasonable. Although your costs are estimates, carefully calculate your figures. Try not to underestimate your expenses, otherwise you might be awarded a grant that is insufficient to fully fund your project. Conversely, don't inflate your budget to where the costs appear extravagant.

- **(B) The current/proposed operating budget of your organization.** – an organization's operating budget is required for all capital campaign requests.
- **(C) A Profit & Loss and Balance Sheet** – these financials pertain to your entire organization. Please make sure that the information contained coincides with your program budget. They will be reviewed together and must be consistent and supported by data.
- **(D) A copy of your 501(c)(3) determination letter** – if you do not have a 501(c)(3) you may contact our office to verify that you are eligible to apply. Churches, Schools, and governmental entities are eligible for grant funding and are not required to submit this documentation.
- **(E) A list of officers and directors and relevant affiliations** – please include a list of your current board of directors.

GRANT REVIEW:

Upon receipt of all of the above documents, your request will undergo the review process. Our office will prepare your request for our Board of Directors quarterly grant review meeting. If there are any questions or points needing clarification, you will be notified, and may be asked to submit additional information.

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A representative from the foundation, a board member, executive director, or staff member may call you from time to time, request a site visit, schedule an interview, or require additional financial documentation. Please note: Each grantee will be subject to periodic evaluations.

Following our board of directors grant review meeting, we will contact you within a week with the board's decision. If/when your request is approved a check will be mailed to you. The act of cashing/depositing of the check binds you to the following conditions:

- The grant is to be used solely for the charitable project description dated _____.
- Grantee warrants and represents that receipt of this grant will not adversely affect their status as a public charity. The Grigg Lewis Foundation, Inc. reserves the right to have all remaining grant funds returned if there is a change in the grantees tax-exempt status.
- Any funds not used for the specific charitable purpose of the grant must be returned to the Foundation unless otherwise authorized in writing.
- Funds may not be used to influence public election, voter registration, to carry on propaganda or attempt to influence legislation.
- Grantee must provide a written report as soon as possible describing progress, conclusions and status of how funds were expended before another grant will be paid or considered. The enclosed follow up form is acceptable.

The Grigg Lewis Foundation, Inc.'s mission is to make funds available to charitable organizations with services or programs that benefit the residents of Eastern Niagara County. We want to see your organization making a difference in our community and our primary goal is to help you attain the best possible outcome for your organization. If we are unable to assist you financially, we will do our best to connect you to other funding sources and/or link you to services that may be beneficial to your mission.

If you have questions or concerns our office staff is available to assist you. Please call us during business hours: Monday – Friday from 9:00am – 4:00pm, or email us directly at griggLewis@griggLewis.org.