

How To Write an Effective Grant Proposal

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Community Benefit Fund

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A grant can provide the opportunity for a community based organisation to make a significant impact on its community that it would otherwise be unable to fund. In applying, it is important to understand how much energy you need to invest in the process. Once you learn the basics, developing a successful grant proposal is a series of logical steps.

This document is not a summary of the grant opportunity's Terms & Conditions. This document should be used in conjunction with your own research and your reading, understanding, qualification and compliance with the grant opportunity's Terms & Conditions.

Steps to follow:

- Take time to analyse if applying for a grant is really the best way to fund the desired project/campaign.
- Read the grant opportunity Guidelines and Terms & Conditions carefully to make sure that your organisation qualifies.
- Write out a check list of requirements that need to be supplied with the application e.g. photos, videos, budgets, map location, Company Registration Number, Charity Registration Number, Supplier Quotation, Tax Clearance Certificates, bank details, committee structure etc.
- Make sure you have the resources and time to conduct your research. Are there any elements of the Guidelines and Terms & Conditions that you cannot adequately fulfil?
- Have you a strong broadband connection? Do you need other IT supports to complete the application e.g. scanner, printer etc.
- Have you the capacity to deliver on the proposed project?
- Is there somebody in your organisation that has the language and creativity required to write the grant proposal or do you need some external assistance?

Proposal:

- You need to be able to write a concise description of the project you propose and what need it will serve.
- Is there an identifiable need or are you creating a project to support the submission of an application? These are very different propositions.
- Have you the resources to deliver the project? Too often, community groups find themselves being the recipient of a grant award only to find that they do not have the available resources to deliver it.
- Prepare the information for each question in a WORD document so you can spell check, check the word count. When you are happy, copy and paste into the relevant application sections.
- Use any formatting opportunities within the online application itself for emphasis.
- In developing your grant proposal, look at past successful applicants and examine where they succeeded.
- How does your project stand out from others? Does it capture the reader's imagination?
- Tailor your proposal to the needs of the funder. What is it that the funder is trying to achieve?

- Is your proposal a natural progression for your community group i.e. is the connection to your group obvious?
- Do you have the Supplier Quotations you require? Is Tax Clearance required?
- Is the budget realistic and well thought through? Is the budget padded, or too tight? This balance is important.
- What are your plans in relation to a grant award that is lower than the requested amount?
- Are you factoring in “in-kind” supports from other organisations to reduce the project cost? If you are, this needs to be watertight as it may be difficult if next to impossible to source funding if this “understanding” fails to materialise.
- Does your project require ongoing operational funding after the initial development? If yes, how will you fund these costs and have you the track record in raising funds to support this?
- Explain why you can be trusted to manage the funds responsibly. Have you an example of a project you delivered previously through grant support?
- Statistics and numbers are helpful but successful grant applications focus on the impact. Use clear and plain language to address the need that the proposal will address.
- What is it that defines the success of the project and how will this be monitored? Are you establishing a specific committee to manage the project?
- Is there a timeline for the project? This is important in terms of the approval of funding.
- What is your Value-for- Money proposition?
- Is there anything unique about your proposal? Will it deliver added value long after the initial objective has been achieved?
- Share a closing thought about what this funding partnership can mean for the future of your project’s target audience.
- A key element of the grant application is that of acknowledging EIRGRID’s support if the application is successful. You need to define this and think outside of the box in terms of adding some value for EIRGRID.

Before you Submit your application:

- Ensure your committee have read the application and are on Board with the proposal
- Save the draft application and seek the support of a colleague to review. Feedback is important.
- Do you feel proud of your application? Are you comfortable with it?
- Have a colleague review the figures you are presenting.
- Read the draft as if you know nothing about the applicant and see if you understand and can readily identify the mission of the organisation, the proposal on the table, and the impact that is anticipated.
- Is your application clear and concise?
- Does the proposal stand out? Remember that the reviewer or evaluation panel most likely will have never heard of your organisation and may not be familiar with your community. It is important that your words and imagery convey all that detail.
- Final check your figures.
- Have you received your Supplier Quotations and Tax Clearance information?
- Review the application against your check list to make sure that you have all relevant information to attach to the application.

- Try to ensure that your application is presented well and that it is formatted correctly.
- Do I need a committee member / board member signature? Is that person readily available?

What should you consider:

- Is your project located within the geographic boundary established by the funder, or servicing individuals / a community(ies) within the stipulated boundary? If there any doubt, contact EIRGRID or the fund administrator.
- Pay careful attention to the fund Terms & Conditions
- Note the specific word count for individual questions
- Copy of your Budget
- Photos, Videos (300mb per file - 3 files only) we encourage applicants to use the video and photo sections to tell their story
- PPN Membership (Registered or registering)
- Outline your Governance Structure
- Supplier Quotations provided
- Attainment of, and link to, Sustainable Development Goals (at least 4)
- Ensure land ownership, leasing arrangements and planning permission are in place where applicable
- Your application is not official until you verify your signature in the email that is sent to you after you hit the “submit” button.