[Title]

[Institution name] submission for [full grant name and number]

Submitted on [date] to

[Grantor name, address]

Submitted by:

[Institution name]

[Address Line 1]

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For questions regarding this submission, please contact:

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# Project/Program Abstract

[This is the section where you will describe your project in very brief terms. It is not necessarily the place to do the hardest sell of your project. It should include the most pertinent details. It is an abstract, so we’re talking maybe a handful of paragraphs. Don’t worry about making it unique. If you include an “abstract,” it should almost certainly NOT include any conclusions or ideas that aren’t discussed elsewhere in the grant.]

# Overview or Executive Summary

[Generally, an overview here would be an either/or versus the abstract. If you’re going this route, it will likely take the form of an Executive Summary, at least briefly visiting all parts of the grant proposal. An executive summary will probably be longer, will likely include multiple sections and may make certain later portions of the grant proposal unnecessary.]

[A NOTE ABOUT GRANT RFPs]

* Many grants have an associated Request for Proposal (RFP). In such cases, make sure you follow their prescribed format. They will probably give you an exact list of the sections they want to see and maybe even a numbering format. They might ask specific questions. If you are to provide specific, itemized responses to their questions, a good technique is to offset their questions like this,

And then to offer your responses like this. It clearly delineates between the RFP and the proposal while making it easy to follow their format/order.

Some notes about this document:

It contains general sections. Use these, use your own, or (when required) use those requested by the granting agency.

The document includes some “styles” which help you manage documents, especially as they get larger. This document includes the following critical styles:

Heading 1-5 (1-3 are captured in the Table on Contents) will help you create a document hierarchy

“Grant text” is the style you should use for body paragraphs

“Grant text bullet point” can be used for bulleted lists.

“RFP Question” is what you should use for questions, requests, etc. copied direct from the RFP. These will be understood as direct quotes from the granting agency’s documents and your institution’s response will follow directly.

# Statement of Need

[A “statement of need” is a common part of grant proposals. It is often a specific requirement but is also useful in more open-ended grants. The idea is to spell out why you are applying for the grant, why you’re a worthy recipient, and why you have specifically targeted their grant.]

## Who we are and what we need

[Describe your organization. To have the highest degree of success in grants, you should have some content already on deck, particularly for introductory sections like this. This can be a full-on database shared by multiple team members or it can simply be a folder on a computer containing relevant documentation, writeups, etc. that can be used on multiple grants.]

[Section should tell a generally positive story about your institution. But REMEMBER, they want to help out. Do not shy away from saying some of the areas where you fall short. Be honest about those things. Ideally, you should have some quantitative and some qualitative data to describe your institution and your challenges.

## Our community

[Describe your user community. MANY grants are based on a variety of targeted demographics. For example, some grants are for K-12 education, some are intended for communities with certain racial or economic demographics. Remember, your community is almost certainly more diverse than you realize.]

In the United States, the following resources can help you:

* + The American Community Survey: <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/>
  + (Formerly called the American Fact Finder) <https://data.census.gov/>
  + Kids Count Data Center: <https://kidscount.org/>
  + You will also, in many instances, need to know some things like the congressional district in which you’re located (and which ones are in your service area).

Apologies for the US-centrism in this part, in particular. But grants in the US are often quite particular about these things.

Smart institutions (and those with sufficient resources) will also have some demographics about their own user community. This can be useful in contexts where you are trying to illuminate gaps between your user community and your community as a whole. It can also be useful because it might help you qualify for certain grants even when your community as a whole would not.

[Do not assume you know your community without doing lots of work. Your community can be looked at in lots of ways. You should spend a lot of time looking at an analyzing this data. This analysis is something that you should keep in your grant folder.]

## Alignment

[Demonstrate in this section that you understand what the purpose of the grant is. You would be wise to repeat back to the granting agency some of their own stated goals, reference past projects they have supported, etc. Describe back to the agency what their goals are with the grant and describe how your organization meets those.]

# Project/Program Description

## Rationale for the project

[Describe why this is the project you have designed. Why is it important enough for a grant but not “important” or reachable enough for you to do it without a grant. Describe how it ties to the mission of your organization, how it will benefit the community, etc.]

## Project design

[Make it clear that this is a project/program you have thought hard about. Describe the way it will be structured, who will be involved, the extent to which the project/program will be temporary versus ongoing, etc.]

## Resources

[Describe some of the resources that are necessary for the program. This includes things you’ll need to build, things you’ll need to buy, services you’ll need to use, and even people you’ll need to hire and/or reassign.]

# Goals and/or objectives

[Institution name] is firmly committed to [mission statement] and believes that [program brief description] would contribute to our overall mission by [outcome description].

## [Goal 1]

[Describe your goal in a narrative format. You’d be surprised by how often even seemingly clear and even measurable goals can be misconstrued. The description should include qualitative and quantitative (when possible) descriptions.

## [Goal 2]

[Feel free to refer back to your statement of need if it helps you express your goal. “X% of planetarium visitors could not name a star other than the sun. We hope to improve that number to Y%.”

## [Goal 3]

[At least one of your goals should be quite measurable. And you should try to identify goals that you have more control over. For example, attendance goals tend to be easier to meet than survey result goals.]

## [Goal 4]

[Be cautious not to list too many goals. Assess the grantor’s interests in your goals versus your project. Combined goals are okay, but should be related. Be reasonable, but not so un-ambitious that the grantor might think your project isn’t worth the money. You might want to under-promise, but only to the extent that it helps you be sure to over-deliver.]

# Methods/strategies/plans

[This is the place to describe your plans. Don’t be afraid to be too specific. But also, don’t be afraid to admit which elements you plan on allowing to develop organically.]

## Philosophy

[This is a section that can definitely vary pretty dramatically in terms of how “academic”/praxis-based it is. Know the granting agency. Try to understand what their interests are. Do they have agendas you can leverage here that allow them to help themselves by helping you? If so, hit those hard in this section.]

## Programs

[When your grant involves a program, describe how it’s going to be structured? How integrated will it be with your other operations? Do you need to hire staff? Is there a new department? What will the program look like right after it starts versus after an onboard/implementation process?]

## Communication plan

[Describe how you are going to let the public know about your program, how you are going to encourage their participation, etc. Describe internal communication plans as well. How are other departments or partner institutions impacted? Do they already know about your grant application or are you only going to tell them after you’ve won? Who needs to know and how are you going to tell them?]

# Evaluation

## Internal Evaluation

[Describe the types of evaluations you are going to do in order to demonstrate the efficacy of the grant project, including the methods used (surveys, attendance counts, educational attainment metrics, etc.) and the intervals for evaluation. This is the main part of this section.]

## External Evaluation

[Describe any external evaluations that might be applicable. For example, school district test data, local government evaluations, etc.]

## Accountability to grantor

[Describe the ways in which you hold yourself accountable to the grantor. Are you going to publish a report in one or two years? Are you going to supply raw survey data to the agency? Don’t assume “more is better.” They want to feel good about their grant, but they usually don’t want extra work. Make a commitment of how you’ll supply them evaluation data and when. They very well may tell you exactly what they want and when. Deliver it.]

# Budget

[You should discuss what types of costs are involved. What costs are fixed? What costs are for goods? What costs are for personnel? What costs are one-time and what costs are ongoing? And, perhaps, what your plan is to sustain a program, maintain goods, etc. after the grant funding is exhausted. Make it crystal clear whether you are committing any other funds or if the entire project is grant-funded. If other funding sources are involved, describe them including whether they have been secured yet or not.]

## Methodology

[Don’t be afraid to describe how you calculated this budget. While you may think no one wants to read text in the budget section, it is often wise to demonstrate that you have been thoughtful about how you calculated what you’re asking for. You will have the best chance of success when you have actually put in the work and can properly describe what planning work went into the grant application. You won’t win many awards based on the vague notion that “it sure would be nice to get a grant.”]

## Itemized Budget

| Item | Description | Cost | Quantity | Total Cost |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| [Short name] |  | [unit cost] | [number included] | [cost x quantity] |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| TOTAL | | | |  |

# Supplemental Documents

[Agencies don’t usually want all your marketing documents. Give them what they want, what they ask for, and what they need. But avoid falling into the trap of supplying them with documents in lieu of answering their questions. In other words, don’t answer their question with “this is answered in X document” and simply attach it here (especially since their answer is probably one sentence on page 21 of a 76 page document and only you know that).]

## Personnel

[They may ask for a personnel list, even for resumes/CVs of the people who will be responsible for carrying out the work. Try to have those on hand in your grant folder. They are much more stressful to gather and/or create when you’re also writing a grant than when you do it in advance.]

## Past work

[Particularly if you’re applying for a grant to produce something (a video, a manual, training materials, educational curricula, etc.) they may ask you to supply copies of past work you have produced. Feel free to interpret broadly to include the best things you can—personal work, professional work, past programs, etc. Multi-media is fine so long as you have a means of getting it to them.]