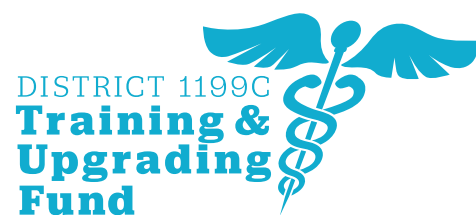




The Basics of Grant Writing Reference Guide Toolkit



District 1199C Training & Upgrading Fund
1 South Broad Street, 6th Floor, Philadelphia, PA 19107
Tel: 215-568-2220

www.1199ctraining.org

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Introduction

Most well-established organizations have spent years developing and implementing policies and procedures to become highly functioning and successful institutions. When overseeing organization budgets, institutions may be forced to decide between two or more initiatives that are deemed essential but not supported by the budget. Which initiative gets the green light, and which gets sidelined until it is fiscally achievable? How do you decide which to prioritize when they are often interlinked? It is during these difficult deliberations that decision makers often begin researching grant opportunities hoping to obtain outside funding to help support these important initiatives. However, many times the mere mention of grant funding elicits mixed reactions from leadership.

Fear, ego, and pride – the world of grant seeking and grant writing can, and usually does, bring these emotions to the forefront. These feelings can interfere with decisions that can help organizations reach their goals more quickly. Previous bad experiences, thoughts of being beholden to someone or some group, concern of unachievable outcomes, and stepping outside of comfort zones are all legitimate concerns for organizational leaders when it comes to deciding whether to pursue grant funding. On the other hand, when the budget does not support the essential initiatives, it leaves us with the difficult decision of potentially cutting programs.

If you are an individual inside an organization that is considering approaching leadership with a grant opportunity to help achieve or maintain an initiative, remember that all the emotions mentioned above will come into play as you make your pitch. However, once you become familiar with this reference toolkit, you will be armed with the knowledge that enables you to better prepare for the process and help put your organization's leadership and key stakeholders at ease. The grant application process does not need to be scary. Instead, grant funding can often be the answer to your organization's problems. The secret is knowing how to prepare your organization to apply for grants, where to look for grants, how to know which grants are best for your organization, how to complete a competitive application, how to manage a grant if you get it, and finally, how to evaluate your performance throughout and at the end of the grant funding period. This reference toolkit has been designed to help you through the process.

Toolkit Objectives

This document is designed to help organizations engaged in apprenticeship programs to: research grant opportunities, prepare strong applications, administer a grant, and evaluate its successes and shortcomings during the grant program. The following questions will be answered in this toolkit in hopes to better prepare each organization to apply for and obtain grant funding to help your organization achieve its goals:

1. Are you ready?

- Is your organization ready to apply for a grant?
- Is your organization eligible, and does it meet all the criteria required by the granting entity?
- Is your tax classification the right one for the funding opportunity?
- Are you registered with the proper agencies?
- Is your financial management software set up to allow for grant budget categories?
- Can you get letters of support from local leadership?
- Is your staff aware of the grant application and their potential role?

2. What are examples of entities that award grants?

- Federal entities
- State entities
- Local entities
- Private / Foundation entities
- Local or Regional groups

3. How do we prepare the application?

- Abstracts
- Letters
- Forms
- Work plans
- Program narratives
- Budgets and budget narratives
- Program evaluations
- Engage key staff

4. How do we administer the grant?

- Documenting activities
- Drawing down funds
- Monthly reports (budget and narrative)
- Preparing for visits (if applicable)
- Budget revisions
- No-cost extensions
- Defining staff roles

5. What are internal evaluations and are they required?

- If you were not awarded the grant:
 - Did you get feedback from the grant entity?
 - Is this good or bad?
- If you were awarded the grant, and now it has ended:
 - Self-evaluation
 - What did we do right?
 - What could we have improved?
- Is this an annual grant?
- Did we perform well enough to be considered for new funding?
- What did we gain as an organization after the grant was completed?

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Verify Legal Name Match

It may be common for an organization to change its name for various reasons, and sometimes name changes are updated on public-facing documents (signage, stationery) but the changes may not have occurred on legal documents. When you are registering with SAM.gov or applying for a grant, you must use the legal name of your organization. The legal name is the name associated with your IRS Employer Identification Number (EIN). If the name affiliated with the EIN is no longer relevant, you must submit a change to the IRS to reflect the name you use when doing business. Names on your trust document and IRS documents should match exactly.

In addition, your bank accounts must reflect the legal name of your organization. If awarded a grant, the funder will be submitting payments to the legal entity, and this should be reflected in your bank accounts. It is imperative that your name is consistent in all documentation.

Changing the Chart of Accounts

It is important to ensure that your current financial management software has the capability to use the budget categories that are standard in all federal and most state grants. Each of these categories is described below and should be entered into your chart of accounts.

Personnel: Most federal and state grants require personnel to be charged a grant at an hourly wage. The hourly wage must be determined even for salaried employees. This is necessary for full- and part-time employees.

Fringe Benefits: All fringe benefits must be attached to an hourly wage for a benefits-per-hour amount which must be calculated for all full- and part-time employees associated with the grant.

Travel: If the grant agreement allows travel, both local and long-distance travel expenses can be charged to the grant. When charging the grant, the following conditions need to apply:

- Local travel distances need to be recorded on a reimbursement form ([a sample local travel expense form is in the appendix](#)). Mileage documentation must be provided, and you can use tools like Google Maps, Waze, or a similar navigation app to calculate the mileage. Reimbursement must be at the approved IRS rate for business travel even if your organization reimburses at a different rate. You can also be reimbursed for tolls by providing an E-ZPass statement or receipt.

Long-distance travel can only be reimbursed at federal rates for hotels and meals, even if this amount differs from what your organization normally reimburses. People who travel because of work affiliated with federal grants are eligible to obtain federal rates at hotels ([a sample out-of-town travel expense form is in the appendix](#)). Federal grants use the rates established by the General Services Administration which can be found at <https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates>.

Equipment: For the purposes of many grant opportunities, equipment refers to large items such as forklifts or welding simulators. Computers, printers, and phones are considered supplies. Normally, items more than \$5000 require proof of a bidding process that includes three bids. You must maintain receipts or invoices for all equipment charged under the grant.

Supplies: The supply line includes office supplies, computers, printers, phones, curriculum materials, and other related items. You must maintain receipts for all supplies charged for a grant.

Contractual: This line item is for all services you may purchase, including audits, consultants, and maintenance agreements. You must have a written memorandum of understanding (MOU) or other agreements with each different partner or entity providing contractual services. You must also have invoices for contractual services. You cannot pay retainers with grant funds.

Construction: It is very unusual for federal or state grant opportunities to allow reimbursement for construction costs. This may vary from state to state, but federal grants usually do not allow this. Items such as construction mock-ups are considered supplies, not construction.

Other: Most grant costs should fall within one of the allotted categories. However, anything that does not fit in the categories above goes here. An example could be a program that provides reimbursement for childcare or participant travel (bus/train vouchers, etc.).

Indirect: There is a special application process to allow indirect or administrative costs to be reimbursed on grants. This is typical only for organizations with grant experience, for example after the first federal grant has been awarded. The process typically requires an audit of your entire administrative overhead.

It is best to charge directly for these costs by determining such things as office and classroom rental (dividing your square footage and calculating local permissible or average rents, insurances, and utilities by square foot). Some grants do have a flat overhead rate.

Timesheets

All staff that work on a grant must keep a timesheet regardless of the amount of time spent (this includes staff with one hour per month, for example). The timesheets can be kept on a weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly basis. The timesheet must record grant- and non-grant hours. If you are contributing time to the grant as a required in-kind contribution, that time must also be recorded on a timesheet. The employee and the supervisor must sign or electronically approve timesheets ([a sample timesheet is in the appendix](#)).

HELPFUL HINT:

Make timesheets as simple as possible for staff and consider setting up electronic timesheets so they can be completed and saved online.

Letters of Support

Many grant applications require letters from other organizations that will be involved in the work of the grant or who wish to voice their support. These organizations typically include employers, educational groups like school districts or community colleges, Workforce Development Boards, non-profit groups that are engaged in work relevant to the purposes of the project, and politicians. Political letters of support might need to be mailed directly to the grantor, rather than uploaded via SAM.gov or other electronic portals.

HELPFUL HINT:

Do not hesitate to ask for letters of support from politicians. Their staff provide support letters routinely for a variety of organizations.

It can take time to get the necessary signatures for letters of support, so this should be planned early in the grant application preparation process. Depending on the specific requirements, you should be prepared to supply draft letters to the organizations you are seeking to lend their support to the proposal. This draft may include a brief overview of the organization lending their support, the connection to your organization or project, and the ways they are offering support. There are examples of letters in [Section III: Abstracts, Support Letters, and Forms](#).

Determining Congressional Districts

Most federal grant applications require that you identify the congressional districts the grant project will serve.

It is helpful to have that information in advance. In some instances, such as in proposals that would support state-wide initiatives, you can state “All” if each district in a state or commonwealth is included. For help to locate the congressional districts in your service area:

- If you are a statewide program, a list of United States House of Representatives Seats by State can be found at the [Britannica website](#).
- If you only serve certain counties or cities, you can identify members of the United States Congress at [GovTrack.us](#)
- If you know your service area zip codes, find your representative by visiting the [U.S. House of Representatives website](#).

Congressional district information is useful for the granting agency to track. Congressional representatives may also be interested in seeing which funding opportunities are supporting projects in their district.

Finding Your State Legislative Districts

Some applications may require that you identify the legislative district on the grant application. Visit [Congress.gov](#) or your state assembly website to get this information.

Login.gov

A Login.gov account is used to sign in to many U.S. government websites. Login.gov accounts should be for a single user and not shared across an organization. To set up a Login.gov account, a user needs to provide an email address. Accessing Login.gov requires multi-factor authentication, which may include a text message, phone call, authentication app, or security key.

If you use the Registered Apprentice Partners Database System (RAPIDS), you should already have an Login.gov account. Visit [Login.gov](#) to create an account or learn more.

HELPFUL HINT:

It is a good idea to determine your square footage costs, as this can be used as an in-kind match for grants that require that.

You do not need to have separate bank accounts for grants, although sometimes organizations prefer separate accounts for larger grants to keep the finances cleaner.

SAM.gov

The System for Award Management (SAM) is an official website of the U.S. government. There is no cost to use SAM.gov, and the site can be used to:

- Register to do business with the U.S. government,
- Update or renew your entity registration,
- Check status of an entity registration,
- Search for contract opportunities,
- Access publicly available award data,
- And more! Visit [SAM.gov](https://sam.gov) to learn more.

A Login.gov account is necessary for SAM.gov registration. Your SAM.gov registration must be renewed every year. When your registration renewal date is close, you will receive a notification from SAM.gov requesting that you update and renew your registration. Plan to update your registration once you receive this notification.

There are third-party groups that will also send you a notification (including postcards, email, phone calls) and offer their services (for a cost) to renew your SAM.gov registration. It is not necessary to pay an outside vendor to do this since renewing the SAM.gov registration is free.

You are only permitted one SAM.gov account per organization. If an account already exists for your organization, confirm whether a colleague within your organization has access. If not, you will need to contact SAM.gov to gain access. This can take some time, so do this sooner than later, before you face a grant deadline.

UEI Number

A Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) is a 12-digit number that identifies businesses that are eligible for federal grants, awards, and contracts. A UEI is issued after completing SAM.gov registration and may take up to 10 days to receive. The U.S. government requires all organizations, foreign or domestic, to have a UEI to do business with them. Many states also require a UEI Number to apply for funding.

HELPFUL HINT:

Getting a UEI number is free. If you go to a website that tries to charge you, leave that site!

CAGE Code

The Commercial and Government Entity (CAGE) code is a 5-character identifier necessary for all organizations seeking contracts by the federal government. A CAGE code is issued after completing SAM.gov registration and may take up to 3 weeks to receive. The Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) issues CAGE codes, and it is the only entity authorized to do so. There is no cost to obtain or update a CAGE code.

Steps to Obtain a UEI Number and CAGE Code

Below are the steps to register with SAM.gov and therefore receive a UEI number and CAGE code. These steps are necessary to register with Grants.gov and apply for federal funding.

[SAM.gov](https://sam.gov) offers a useful checklist for registration.

You will need to provide supporting documentation to verify your organization’s information. A list of acceptable documentation can be found on the [Federal Service Desk website](#).

After the SAM.gov application is complete, the IRS will verify the organization EIN or TIN, and either accept or reject the application. If rejected, it may be due to a mismatch of the organization name on the IRS documentation, and this will have to be addressed. Once the IRS verifies the EIN or TIN, the application will then be sent to the Defense Logistics Agency to approve and assign a Cage code.

HELPFUL HINT:

You are only permitted one SAM.gov account per organization. If you are rejected because an account already exists, you may need to contact them to gain access. This can take some time, so do this sooner than later, before you are facing a grant deadline

Once you receive the UEI number and CAGE code, you may be prompted to send a notarized letter formally designating the Entity Administrator within 60 days of SAM.gov activation.

Upon SAM.gov entity approval and after receiving the UEI number and CAGE code, you can register with Grants.gov which will allow you to apply for various federal funding opportunities.

Grants.gov

Grants.gov is the online resource for all federal grants. It contains the grant application information as well as changes and updates to grant initiatives. You can visit Grants.gov to search for potential grants, register to receive newsletters and alerts, and submit grant applications.

Here is how you register:

- Go to [Grants.gov](https://grants.gov).
- Navigate to the applicant registration page.
- Complete the information form. This will give you access to newsletters and alerts.
- Complete the organizational profile

Make sure that the organizational access is shared with everyone in your organization working on grants.

You should take some time and familiarize yourself with Grants.gov. This website has a lot to offer in addition, you could search for informational webinars for a grant to see the types of questions that potential grantees are asking. Grants.gov also contains the forms that are referenced in this manual. Most forms can be filled out online and you can save them to your account. Using the search features allows you to get familiar with grant opportunities that are relevant to your organization.

Registering with Other Granting Organizations

Many states, municipalities, Workforce Development Boards or foundations may have registration programs to alert you about grants. If they do not have alert systems, reach out to them to find out when they usually announce grants and set up a reminder on your calendar. The opportunities may be listed as requests for proposals (RPFs) or as funding opportunities

as opposed to grants. Set aside time each month to check the websites of these groups for grant announcements. Remember, you usually only have 30–45 days to respond to a grant funding opportunity, so you want to have a good system for checking announcements.

Some potential sources for grants:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| 1. State Department of Labor | 8. US Department of Energy |
| 2. State Department of Education | 9. US Department of Health and Human Service |
| 3. State Department of Commerce | 10. US Department of Commerce |
| 4. State Workforce Development Board | 11. Federal Mediation and Conciliation Services |
| 5. State Foundations Websites | 12. Environmental Protection Agency |
| 6. Local Workforce Development Board | 13. Department of Transportation |
| 7. US Department of Labor | 14. Small Business Administration |

501(c)3 Organization Designation

If your organization is not currently registered as a 501(c)3 organization, consider reclassifying to become one if your organization fits the eligibility criteria. A 501(c)3 is a non-profit organization.

Reclassifying your organization as a 501(c)3 can be simple, but it may require the assistance of your attorney or Certified Public Accountant (CPA) Firm. They should know which forms to complete and send to the IRS to ensure a speedy, trouble-free transition. It can take several months to process the change to 501(c)3 status, so you will need to get started on this quickly. Consider making this change right away. You may not be eligible for most grants, especially federal grants, if you are not a 501(c)3 organization.

HELPFUL HINT:

ERISA Funds are technically NOT labor organizations and could be switched to a 501(c)3 to better reflect their purpose and mission. Becoming a 501(c)3 does not change or add to any auditing or tax filing requirements, it simply allows you to be properly classified, and open to the benefits available to non-profit organizations, like grants!

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Federal Grants

Federal grants are highly competitive. Funders consider past experience, and therefore having a federal track record on many of the larger grants is necessary. Organizations with little or no grant experience should plan to focus initially on smaller grant opportunities (\$50,000 – \$200,000 range).

Key Word Searches

Key word searches are one of the most common approaches to locating grant opportunities. In using the key word search, you want to be broad enough to get a wide range of opportunities, but not so broad that you must wade through too many grant announcements.

Below is a list of key words that should yield strong possibilities for grants for apprenticeship organizations.

- Apprenticeship
- Pre-apprenticeship
- Education
- Post-secondary education
- Employment training
- Training
- Safety
- Occupational safety
- Non-traditional occupations
- Labor-Management

Agency Searches

While key word searches can provide a broad range of grant opportunities across all departments and agencies, an agency search is much more focused. There are five departments and/or agencies that have traditionally given grants to apprenticeship organizations. These are:

- **U.S. Department of Labor (DOL):** The Department of Labor fosters and promotes the welfare of job seekers, wage earners and retirees by improving their working conditions, advancing their opportunities, protecting their retirement and health benefits, and generally protecting worker rights and monitoring national economic measures. The DOL will be the largest source of grant funds for union training programs.
- **U.S. Department of Education (ED):** The Department of Education ensures equal access to education and promotes educational excellence through coordination, management, and accountability in federal education programs. The Department works to supplement and complement educational efforts on all levels, encouraging increased involvement by the public, parents, and students. It offers a variety of grants related to career and technical education (CTE) programs.

- **U.S. Department of Energy (DOE):** The Department of Energy’s goal is to advance national, economic, and energy security in the U.S.; to promote scientific and technological innovation in support of that goal; and to ensure environmental cleanup of the national nuclear weapons complex. The department has offered grant programs to training centers that deal with energy savings.
- **U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC):** The Department of Commerce fosters and promotes the nation’s economic development and technological advancement through vigilance in international trade policy, domestic business policy and growth, and promoting economic progress at all levels. It has offered grants in the past that deal with training programs.
- **Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS):** The Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, created in 1947, is an independent agency whose mission is to preserve and promote labor-management peace and cooperation. The agency provides mediation and conflict resolution services to industry, government agencies and communities. It offers grants to training schools, labor unions and union employers.
- **U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT):** The Department of Transportation’s mission is to ensure fast, safe, efficient, accessible, and convenient transportation that meets vital national interests and enhances the quality of life of the American people, today and into the future. DOT offers training programs that address highway and rail safety issues.
- **Environmental Protection Agency (EPA):** The mission of the Environmental Protection Agency is to protect human health and the environment. Since 1970, the EPA has been working for a cleaner, healthier environment for the American people. The agency has offered grants dealing with green building and training programs that address environmental hazards.
- **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS):** The mission of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is to enhance the health and well-being of all Americans by providing for effective health and human services and by fostering sound, sustained advances in the sciences underlying medicine, public health, and social services. In addition to healthcare services, the agency for children and families and mental health services are covered under HHS.

However, if you limit your search to just these agencies, you may miss opportunities that will come out in new legislation. For instance, the Small Business Administration offered paycheck protection program (PPP) funds to apprenticeships.

Determining Eligibility

The eligibility requirements of a grant opportunity are typically listed at the beginning of a funding announcement. Make sure that your organization meets all the criteria. Be sure to thoroughly read the funding announcement to confirm if additional eligibility criteria are listed in other sections, as you will need to meet those as well.

Below is a sample criterion for a federal grant.

The following organizations are eligible to apply:

- State Government
- County Government
- City or Township Government
- State or Local Workforce Development Board
- Special District Government
- Regional Organization
- Independent School District
- Public/State Controlled Institution of Higher Education
- Indian/Native American Tribal Government (federally recognized)
- Indian/Native American Tribal Government (other than federally recognized)
- Indian/Native American Tribally Designated Organization
- Public/Indian Housing
- Nonprofit Organization with IRS 501(c)(3) Status
- Nonprofit Organization without IRS 501(c)(3) Status
- Private Institution of Higher Education
- Hispanic-serving Institution
- Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs)
- Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities (TCCUs)

Among eligible applicants listed above, the applicant agency or organization must also demonstrate collaboration or engagement with at least two employer/industry partners, as well as a public workforce system partner such as a State or Local Workforce Development Board, American Job Center operator or partner program, other training provider, or similar entity, and should partner with other appropriate organizations serving the economic, workforce, and other needs of the communities the application proposes to serve. These other organizations could include community- and faith-based organizations; human services agencies, academic institutions such as local school systems, universities, and community colleges; or other organizations providing job training. Such partnerships expand project capacity to reach and serve grant participants by leveraging and building upon existing community efforts, resources, and networks to benefit workers and address dislocated workers' employment and training needs. Partnerships also help to sustain the delivery of effective career and training services to address workforce needs.

Applicants are also required to demonstrate that they will only enroll eligible participants who live in the ARC or DRA regions. Applicants may train eligible participants for jobs that are located outside of either of the regions, so long as the applicant clearly demonstrates that employment in these occupations will not require participants to relocate outside the region. Such jobs must clearly align with the overall intent of the grant application and the statement of need.

Determining Appropriateness

When your organization secures grant funding, the funder is expecting the activities of that grant will be completed. You must be sure that the requirements of that grant are something you want to and can do. Additionally, if you do not have current staff that are willing or able to participate in the grant program, you can waste a lot of time hiring staff that will only be with you for a short period of time of the grant period.

A quick guide to determine appropriateness is to answer these three questions and see if the grant is for you:

1. Other than additional funds, what are the benefits of the grant to our organization?
2. Can current staff be used to operate most or all the grant activities?
3. Will the current administrative staff be able to manage the additional workload in terms of reporting requirements and financial management?

State Grants

Many states provide grant funding. Sometimes, state programs are connected to federal funds, so some of the forms and requirements may be the same or like federal grants. Key considerations of state grant programs are described below.

How to Find a State Grant

Some states have websites that list all their grant opportunities, like Grants.gov. If your state does not have a single website for available funding opportunities, here are some ways to find state grants:

- Go to your state's website to find agencies that offer grants.
- Check the websites of the state Departments of Labor and Education to see if they have grant listings. You can also contact these agencies via email.
- Contact your state apprenticeship council or apprenticeship agency to see if they have grant listings.
- Contact your state representative and ask them to get you a listing of all available grants.
- Contact the state workforce development board.
- Check with your partners, such as a local workforce development board or school district.

How Funding is Released

Like federal grants, most state grants use a reimbursement system once proof of expenditure is audited and approved. You can find out more about how funding is released by talking with the granting agencies. Even if the money is released up front (very rare), you must provide a report at the end of the grant to show how the money was spent.

HELPFUL HINT:

One of the best ways of finding out about state grant opportunities is through your state representative. It's a good idea to be in contact with them anyway for a letter of support if you apply for state grant funds

Determining Eligibility

Determining grant eligibility for state grant funding follows the same general rules as federal funding opportunities – read the eligibility requirements in the funding announcement and confirm your organization is a match. Make sure that your organization meets all of the criteria, including additional criteria that may be listed elsewhere in the funding announcement.

You may be required to register with the state agency as part of the program, you will need to determine what the registration requires and the timeline for that process. In some proposals, you must provide a partner and therefore you'll need to include a letter of partnership or MOU with the application. If the grant application requires that you list capabilities for certain administrative and programmatic issues, you should provide a track record of the capability for similar programs or grants that you have operated, or have individuals or organizations provide testimonial letters that speak to these capabilities (or both).

Below are sample eligibility criteria for a state grant that includes some of these caveats:

SAMPLE: Eligible applicants must be an entity that is or will be registered with the department as a pre-apprenticeship program and which will have the full responsibility for the administration and operation of the program. This applicant will be the program “sponsor.” The sponsor must be partnered with at least one school in a school district, charter school, regional charter school, cyber charter school, intermediate unit or career and technical school. The applicant must be capable of bringing together business, education, workforce, community, and other partners to achieve the overall project goals of this NGA. Additionally, the applicant must demonstrate the ability to coordinate the project design and implementation of the project, manage the project budget, and implement a strategy to collect, analyze, and report performance outcomes.

Determining Appropriateness

Although state grants may not have the administrative workload of federal grants, many of the appropriate standards mentioned above are still in play. Ask the same questions posed in the federal grant appropriateness section above before you start applying for the grant:

1. Other than additional funds, what are the benefits of the grant to our organization?
2. Can current staff be used to operate most or all of the grant activities?
3. Will the current administrative staff be able to manage the additional workload in terms of reporting requirements and financial management?

Other Grant Sources

While federal and state funds are the largest and most common source of grants, there are other sources of grant funding that are described below.

Workforce Development Boards

Many local or state Workforce Development Boards have grant programs. Usually, the applications for these funds are very simple. These grant opportunities are a great way to build a track record of grant management with public funds. State and local boards may also have apprenticeship committees which could be a source as well. One of the best ways to find out about the available money from this source is to contact the union, education, and employer representatives who serve on these boards. You can also check their websites or sign up for alerts if they are available.

Community Colleges and School Systems

Community colleges may be a source of available funds, and you can get this information from the college trustees or administrators. Additionally, community colleges or school systems are often looking for grant partners. This is particularly true if they receive Career and Technical Education (CTE) grants (community colleges are often looking for partners that can help them with their work placement numbers). If you have a relationship with a local school system or a school board member, contact them to see if you can partner with the school system to provide services or partner with a grant program.

Partnering with Other Groups

Federal and state grant opportunities often expect to see active partnerships demonstrated in the applications. One way to get started on the grant process is to partner with other groups that are either attempting to get grant funds or already have grant funds.

Foundation Grants

There are numerous non-profit organizations that offer grant funds. Many of these foundations provide money for innovative education programs. The programs usually need to be geared towards a topic related to the foundations mission. There are two main ways to look for these foundations: a general internet search; or using a website like the Chronicle of Philanthropy, which usually has a subscription cost. Foundation applications are usually simple, but they tend to be highly competitive and therefore may be difficult to secure. One way to optimize your success is to meet with the organization and to establish a relationship.

To apply for a foundation grant, you need to:

1. Search for grants that fit your organization type (non-profit, for example) and proposed program.
2. Review the eligibility requirements for the grant and deliverables expected of your organization if awarded the funds.
3. Write a tailored application for each grant opportunity.
4. Review your application to confirm you have addressed each application requirement, then submit.

General tips

Finding relevant grant opportunities can be time-consuming and applications are often competitive. However, if you devote the necessary time and effort, you may be able to secure free funds for your organization.

Use these four steps to get started:

1. Review your mission

You can start by reviewing your organization’s mission and what the organization hopes to achieve. Understanding your mission and goals will help you target the right grant makers and create a compelling grant proposal.

2. Refine your search with keywords

Although there are many grants available, especially for non-profits, not all of them will suit your organization. You can streamline your research process by searching with the right keywords. Focus your grant search using keywords that relate to your mission, goals and specific project. For example, if you’re looking to fund an apprenticeship program in a rural setting, you might include words like “apprenticeship” or “rural” in your search.

3. Narrow down based on location

Location can also help you find suitable grants for your organization. Community groups offer grants specifically to non-profit organizations within their state, city, or local area, for example. Your state or local government may issue grants as well. It can be helpful to add your location to your online search keywords or go directly to local government sites to see what opportunities may be listed.

4. Look for organizations with similar values

A foundation or company that has similar values or mission to your organization may offer grants that are well suited to your funding needs. For example, if your organization focuses on supporting adult education, you might look for other organizations that do the same.

If one of these companies offers a grant program, you may be more likely to qualify.

One of the best ways to get grants from foundations is to set up a meeting with them to determine whether or not you are a good match. Foundations are very open to these meetings, and it will save you time and money if you find that your program would not be considered by these groups.

HELPFUL HINT:

When you are searching for grant opportunities online from foundations or other organizations, consider adding “organization” in your search term. If you just type education grants or apprentice grants you will have to search through many opportunities for individuals rather than for organizations.

SECTION 3: Abstracts, Support Letters, and Forms

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Abstract

A grant abstract is a concise summary of the project usually appearing at the front of a grant application. The abstract is an important part of the funding application and should succinctly describe the major aspects of your proposal.

Abstracts give the funding agency staff and reviewers an idea of the scope of the work. Most abstracts are restricted to 30 lines of text or 300 words, which equates to approximately one page.

In general, your abstract should include the following:

- Organization name
- Funding opportunity and funding agency name
- Project overview
- Action steps
- Timeline
- Costs

A method to help prepare your abstract is to address the following components in one sentence or less:

- Project background
- Specific aims, objectives, or hypotheses
- Significance or impact of the proposed project
- Relevance of the proposed project to the mission of the funding agency
- Unique or innovative features of the proposed project
- Methodology or action steps to be implemented
- Expected results
- Evaluation methods

If your grant application asks for different information than above, use the information they request in your abstract development.

The abstract can be a useful tool to garner support for the program. For example, political constituents and other groups who you may seek support will need to understand the program and the abstract should provide the information they need. Your partners may also want this information to be distributed to their boards.

The following are two examples of abstracts:

Sample #1: General Abstract

The Program is seeking \$145,000 for one year to begin a pre-apprenticeship program with Middle Valley High School. We plan to hire a full-time pre-apprenticeship coordinator and would like to vastly expand this program in several ways as noted below.

First, we would like to be able to provide our high school pre-apprentices with our state-of-the-art coursework by providing them with access to the online curriculum. We would need to build a computer lab to provide them with access to these materials. This would better prepare the students for the apprenticeship entrance examination and admission to the apprenticeship upon high school graduation.

Second, we would like to offer these high school students the opportunity to earn credits towards their graduation while taking classes with us. This will require us to obtain a degree and degree granting authority from the state.

Third, we would like to expand the program to give the high school students the opportunity to spend more time at our location so that they can “work with the tools” and be more prepared when they enter our apprenticeship program.

Finally, we would like to build a collaborative relationship with our high school partners, so that all classes dovetail into the next level of education – this will be accomplished through curriculum committees that include labor management representatives so that the workplace experience is central to the academic outcome. Other features include shared faculty, employer engagement in building academic programs, and academic forums on employer needs and workplace preparation. Peer mentoring will also be incorporated into the learning experience through pre-apprenticeship/apprenticeship collaboration.

We believe this program will be extremely successful at both meeting the students’ need, and the employers’ need for a workforce with both technical and soft skills – an educated workforce for the 21st century.

Sample #2: Prescribed Format

Organization Name: Construction JATF

Project Title: Hands-On STEM Education in the Construction Industry

Competitive Preference Priority: 1 (a) Promoting STEM Education

Target Audience: Post-secondary students in the construction industry

Proposed Project: Every construction project should be aiming for a target of zero defects, getting everything right the first time, therefore removing the costs of “putting right” as well as reducing delays to completion. One method of working toward this goal is the use of mock-ups as a development and training aid. Problems can be identified and designed out through better sequencing, better training and ensuring that the most appropriate construction methods and materials are employed. The use of hands-on mock-ups both allows safe methods of work to be developed where construction methods are innovative, or a development is unique or ground-breaking and permits potential hazards to be identified and eradicated prior to the onset of the main construction phase of the project.

In this project, Construction JATF is proposing to build a simulated mock-up classroom to prepare its apprentices and future pre-apprentices for work on large-scale projects coming to the region. The JATF is seeking funds to provide mock-up training to 180 post-secondary students (apprentices), and eventually high school CTE students (pre-apprentices) through the Vocational Internship Program (VIP) with the Middle Valley Public Schools, where 37 percent of the students are below the poverty level.

Key Grant Activities: 1) Build Training Mock-up; 2) Develop STEM Curriculum for Mock-ups; 3) Pilot training; 4) Deliver Training to all post-secondary students (apprentices); 5) Develop a plan to expand the program to include high school CTE students through the Vocational Internship Program (VIP); and 6) Evaluate the program.

Geographic Areas to Be Served: Central Pennsylvania (12 counties)

Funds Requested: \$145,000

Support Letters

There may be a minimum or maximum number of support letters required, or specific organization types to include. Be sure to review the funding opportunity to confirm the requirements for letters of support. Support letters for a grant application can reference overall support for your proposal, or a more specific description of partnership for the program. Each of these types of letters are described in more detail.

Letters of General Program Support

Letters of general support for your proposed grant program can come from organizations or individuals like elected or appointed officials. You should consider getting letters of support from organizations that you may call on during the course of a grant. Some grant applications specify types of organizations they want to demonstrate support to, for example include a letter of support from a training provider if the funding opportunity includes the expansion of training programs.

Letters of support from elected officials can be impactful, especially if the official serves in the area that would be impacted by the proposed grant program. If you are affiliated with a labor union, you can work through your political action representative at the union to get these letters.

You should plan to provide the organizational or individual partners with the program abstract and a draft letter of support template.

Sample letters of general program support:

Support letter from an elected or appointed political official

To Whom it may Concern:

It is with great pleasure that I write this letter of support for funding an application by the (Organization Name) for a US Department of Labor Apprenticeship Readiness Grant. The (Organization Name) is keenly aware of the need to train a new generation of workers in the construction industry – particularly in their specific craft.

Each year the (Organization Name) trains over 1,000 incumbent workers and apprentices in classes that range from OSHA10 to first aid to specialized classes in the (name of industry). The proposed project would offer individuals the opportunity to enter a registered apprenticeship program that would result in a lifelong career with family sustaining wages and a full range of benefits. Indeed, it would lift many participants out of a life of poverty. The (Organization Name) provides state-of-the-art education in its related craft.

In its grant application, the (Organization Name) proposes to provide apprenticeship readiness training to over 300 underemployed or unemployed workers. The proposed project will serve Eastern Pennsylvania (37 counties), Southern New Jersey (7 counties) and Delaware (statewide).

The (Organization Name) provides an integral service to the region, and I believe that this federal funding is an opportunity to maintain their high level of training. I appreciate your time and consideration of this proposal. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,
 John Q. Politician
 Senator – District 9
 Philadelphia, PA

Support letter from a union

Grant Review Committee:

On behalf of the (NAME OF UNION) this letter is being sent to express our support and commitment to the Apprenticeship Readiness Grant Program. We believe that this grant will enable our school – (NAME OF APPRENTICESHIP SCHOOL)- to expand and support outreach to potential students and employers; enhance student support programs; and address common barriers to completion for low-income students such as childcare and support services for first generation students.

Labor-management apprenticeship programs have a long and successful track record of apprenticeship training. A GAO report published in 2005 showed that labor-management programs had excellent curriculum, prepared instructors and far exceeded graduation and placement rates of any other type of registered apprenticeship. The registered apprenticeship programs of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania have the lowest dropout and highest graduation rates of any schools in the state. They also far exceed any school’s ability to place students in a job in their field.

This is our opportunity to take the best of all our initiatives and develop a strong strategy that will change the direction of the industry, while allowing young people the opportunity for good careers with good wages, devoid of college debt.

We know that (NAME OF APPRENTICESHIP SCHOOL) can develop strong strategies under this initiative and we look forward to working as their partner in this endeavor.

We urge your strong support in this effort.

Sincerely,
John P. Leader
Business Manager
Member LU000 JATF

Support letter from a contractor

Grant Review Committee:

On behalf of the employers’ association, this letter is being sent to express our support and commitment to the (Organization Name) Grant Application to train job site Safety Professionals for our industry.

As you are aware, the employers of (Organization Name) work hard to provide a safe and healthy workplace for all our workers. We believe that the ability to have on-site Safety Professionals will:

- Enable us to quickly identify hazards and mitigate these situations.
- Help us to identify workers in need of safety certifications and re-certifications; and
- Allow for onsite safety awareness training as new situations occur.

Further, we are convinced that the (Organization Name) is capable of developing this program of study and we look forward to having a pool of well-trained Safety Professionals available to service our employers and work sites in the near future.

We hope that you will give every consideration to support this effort.

Sincerely,
Jane D. Bigwig
President
PMCA Contractors Association

Support letter from an organization

Grant Review Committee:

This letter is to express our support and commitment to the (Organization Name) grant application to train young workers in workplace safety.

As you are aware the industry is a high-hazard industry, and the (Organization Name) has worked hard to provide a safe and healthy workplace for all workers. We believe that the ability to reach young workers through training and social media will enhance the cause of safer workplaces across the country.

As you are aware, many young people enter the part-time workforce with little or no training and are often facing hazardous situations. We believe that this proposed program will mitigate that experience.

We have worked cooperatively with the (Organization Name) for several years, and we believe that they are capable of developing this program of study and we look forward to having a pool of well-trained young workers.

We urge you to support this effort.

Sincerely,
Hugh Gaphan
Safety Coordinator
XYZ Contracting Company

Letters of Partnership or Agreement

Sometimes grant proposals require you to partner with organizations to ensure that you will be successful in meeting your objectives. Some of your partners may receive grant funding for specific work with the grant program and others may receive services as a result of the grant efforts. The partnership letters need to specify the type of support that will be provided through the grant program. If you are partnering with other organizations, you should plan to specify how each partnership will address the proposed grant program objective(s). For example, if you are proposing the expansion of a certified nurse aide apprenticeship program, you can provide partnership letters from healthcare organizations that have agreed to provide on-the-job training for the program.

Sample Partnership Letter

Support letter from partner receiving funding support from the grant opportunity

Grant Review Committee:

On behalf of the (name of the organization), this letter is being sent to express our commitment to partner with the (Organization Name) in the Youth Apprenticeship Readiness Grant Program.

We know the (Organization Name) represents over one thousand members and apprentices, who are constantly seeking new ways to promote apprenticeship and to recruit and train young people to work in the rapidly changing construction industry that requires their members to have strong analytical skills as well as technical capabilities. We feel that the program proposed in this grant application will address this need.

As a financial partner, we are making a commitment to recruit the requisite number of young apprentices to our program and to integrate the promotional, recruitment and support services developed in this grant into the operations of their apprenticeship program long after the grant monies have been expended.

We know that the (Organization Name) can administer this program, and we look forward to working as their partner in this endeavor.

We hope that you will endorse this effort by funding this grant application.

Sincerely,
James Non-Profit
President
Community Partner Program

Support letter from partner receiving services from the grant opportunity

Grant Review Committee:

On behalf of our employers' association, this letter is being sent to express our support and commitment to partner with the (Organization Name) Grant Application to build an infrastructure and curriculum to provide Hands-On STEM in the Industry.

Every construction project should be aiming for a target of zero defects, getting everything right the first time therefore removing the costs of "putting right" as well as reducing delays to completion. One method of working toward this goal is the use of mock-ups as development and firsthand training aid. In this project, (Organization Name) is proposing to build a simulated jobsite classroom to prepare its apprentices and future pre-apprentices for work on large-scale projects coming to the region. Further, (Organization Name) will strengthen its STEM curriculum for use with the jobsite classroom, in the hopes of offering its students more career pathways and advanced post-secondary education opportunities.

We feel that it is imperative that STEM opportunities be provided to the skilled workforce – a group that has long been underserved by the traditional academic approach to meeting STEM requirements. Apprenticeship is that road to expansion. As a partner we will be providing new apprenticeship opportunities and sponsoring classes for our incumbent workers.

We know that (Organization Name) is capable of developing this program of study and we look forward to working as their partner in this endeavor.

We hope that you will support this effort.

Sincerely,
Jane D. Bigwig
President
Employers Association

Forms

The four basic forms used in all federal grants are discussed in this section, which include the SF-424 application form, budget form, disclosure of lobbying activities, and financial system risk assessment. Many states use the SF-424 and budget forms as well, particularly when the grant funding is tied to a federal agency, and the state needs the information to report back to that federal agency. The most important tip about completing these forms is that they need to be complete and accurate.

Make sure every item is filled out on the forms, even if you are entering a null value like “not applicable” or “zero.” Do not skip any fields unless the instructions of the funding opportunity specifically advise you to skip an item. If you fail to fully complete a form, your application can be rejected.

Make sure the information you provide is accurate. You should plan to review the responses on each form as a quality check for accuracy. This is especially true of the budget where you need to ensure each line item is included and the dollar amounts are correct.

SF-424 Form

The SF-424 is the basic application form for all federal grants and many state grants. The form includes information like organization EIN or TIN, UEI number, organization address, application point of contact, project title, congressional districts impacted, funding amount, and more.

A sample form and further instructions can be found [here](#) (search for “Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)” on the list of forms).

Budget Form

The grant budget form is one of the most critical pieces of the grant application. The funding agency will use this as the basis for releasing your funds and to make sure that your spending is accurate. If you have to make a change to your budget, such as a no-cost extension or need to move money from one category or another, you will amend this form with the approval of the funding agency. The amounts entered in this form must align accurately with the budget narrative that will be discussed in a later section of this toolkit.

A sample form and further instructions can be found [here](#) (search for “Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A)” on the list of forms).

HELPFUL HINT:

Budget Section B (Budget Categories) Item 6 (Object Class Categories) provides a cost breakdown by the activities of the grant (columns match the rows of Section A). For instance, you might be writing a grant for apprenticeship readiness classes. Activity 1 might be curriculum development; Activity 2 might be recruitment; Activity 3 might be classroom delivery; and Activity 4 might be program evaluation. If you have more than four activities, use additional pages. If you have less than four activities, leave the other columns blank. Follow the instructions on the form carefully.

HELPFUL HINT:

Program income refers to costs you might collect from participants in your grant program. If your project includes income, there will be added accounting and auditing efforts.

HELPFUL HINT:

Matching Funds are usually linked to contributions of salaries or space. These can be divided evenly over the four quarters of your grant’s fiscal year period if they are planned for the full project duration.

Disclosure of Lobbying Activities

The disclosure of lobbying activities form includes applicant organization name and address, funding agency, and lobbying registrant name and address. If there are no lobbying activities to disclose, enter “none.”

A sample form and further instructions can be found [here](#) (search for “Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL)” on the list of forms).

Financial System Risk Assessment

This is a relatively new form used by the funding agency to assess the applicant’s financial system. The details include organizational information like founding/incorporation date, principal officer contact information (including CEO, CFO, President or Chair of the Board of Directors, etc.), organization sales/revenue from past year, various accounting system questions, and assurances of financial stability. Many funding announcements include the form or a link to the form in the application package.

HELPFUL HINT:

Do not assume all funds can be evenly budgeted across a fiscal year. If you are buying supplies and equipment, you often need to purchase those in the beginning of the grant. Staffing may also be uneven if a role may start partway through a year, for example. Keep these examples in mind when planning the budget for the funding period.

Grant To-Do List

A to-do list for grant documentation preparation is shown below.

Item	Person Responsible	Due Date
Prepare Abstract		
Preparing Letters of Support		
Prepare Partnership Letters		
Abstract and Letters of Support to Politicians and Organizations		
Abstracts and Partnership Letters to Partners		
Required Forms		
Introduction		
Problem Statement		
Goals and Objectives		
Workplan		
Evaluation		
Budget		
Budget Narrative		
Resumes		
Required Appendices		
Submission to Grants.gov		

SECTION 4: Writing the Grant Application

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Overview

The opening statement of a grant proposal should grab the interest of the reader. This opening statement not only outlines your organization and why your project should be considered, but it should also provide some of the short- and long-term goals of the proposed program.

The grant application instructions can serve as guidelines, and following these guidelines can help ensure your proposal addresses the components the grant review committee is most interested in. You should not begin writing your grant proposal's opening statement until you have a clear understanding of what the review board is looking for. Follow the submission guidelines precisely. Even beautifully written proposals can be denied because they did not follow protocol.

Grab the interest of the reader with a powerful introduction. A significant statistic, a relevant quote, or an eloquent introduction can be highly effective in grabbing the reader's attention. If the opening statement engages the reader, the more willing he or she will be to continue reading and consider your funding request.

Introduce your organization to the reader, and showcase some of the organization's most enviable strengths, particularly ones that demonstrate your organization is a good fit for the funding opportunity.

Define your proposed project and its goals. This should be brief, but it should cover the most important aspects of your project. A paragraph about how the project will work, whom it will benefit, and why this project should receive funding should be included in the opening statement.

Problem Statement

The problem statement, also referred to as a needs statement or needs assessment, identifies the real meaning of your grant proposal. You will need to detail the problem you plan to solve and how you'll do it with the funds.

The problem statement is a key element in every grant proposal. It is a powerful and succinct explanation of your project and funding request. The problem statement must make a clear, concise, and evidence-supported statement of the problem you are addressing and proposing to solve.

The problem statement must grab the reviewer's attention and keep it focused. The problem statement should instill a sense of urgency in the reviewer and compel them to want to help you solve your problem.

When writing your problem statement, convey the scope of the problem, what sets your organization apart in its ability to solve that problem, and use supporting data to highlight your program's plans in detail.

HELPFUL HINT:

Keep your reader in mind and keep the language simple.

Remember, the reader might not have your technical expertise in an area, so do not overwhelm them with technical terms and jargon.

Sample problem statement:

Our youth have limited access to educational alternatives such as apprenticeship. They are mostly from low-income households, and our schools have no vocational education programs. We need more resources to reach our youth. We are asking for your help to change this pattern and bring an educational alternative to our young people so they can build a career with real opportunity and family-sustaining wages.

Use of Data, Statistics, and Anecdotes

It is important to provide relevant data or statistics in your problem statement. For instance, if your proposed program addresses workplace safety, you should plan to include relevant accident and incident data. If your proposed program involves youth recruitment, you should plan to include relevant data about youth unemployment. There are numerous resources online that have data or statistics that may be relevant to your application, including the [US Bureau of Labor Statistics](#).

In addition to supplying data or statistics, anecdotal evidence can further strengthen your proposal. Provide a few stories or examples that help to illuminate the data. You could include a brief quote from an employer discussing the need that your program would address. You could provide a success story to demonstrate your proven track record. For example, if your proposal is seeking to expand an apprenticeship program, include a success story from an apprentice or pre-apprentice from your program. This information will help to make your grant application more impactful.

Organizational Background

It is important to include some background information about your organization. At a minimum you should include the date you were founded, any significant awards, credentials that you are certified to offer, the number of people you serve, the size of your staff, and your geographical jurisdiction.

Explain Why Your Organization Is Best Suited to Address the Problem

The reviewer should understand that you can address the need you outlined in your problem statement. Focus on the information that demonstrates your organization's credibility and ability to accomplish the goals of this project.

The purpose of providing this information is to demonstrate to the funder that your organization:

- is financially stable,
- is well-managed,
- provides essential community services,
- understands community needs,
- has a board and staff members that reflect the makeup of the community, and
- is highly respected by the community.

Work Plan

The work plan section covers the goals for the project and how you plan to meet those goals. When considering your goals, stick to objectives that can be tracked and measured. Each project goal should be listed in the work plan. After you lay out the project goals, specify how you plan to achieve them. The more detail you can provide to demonstrate how you achieve each goal, the better.

The work plan should describe the step-by-step procedures you will enact to complete the proposed program. Sometimes the granting agency will request this information in a specific format, like a chart. If a specific format, like a chart, is not provided, you can develop your own ([a sample work plan chart is in the appendix](#)).

The following list are key elements of a work plan:

- Activity/Goal
- Implementers
- Costs
- Timeline
- Benchmarks or milestones
- Deliverables

Activity/Goal

List the major activities or goals of the proposed project. These should be framed as broad categories that will require several steps to bring them to completion. To keep your proposed project manageable, you should not have more than four goals or activity areas.

It is also important to include administrative tasks that may entail start-up activities such as hiring staff or setting up committees in the work plan.

Implementers

Specify each individual or organization involved per activity/goal of the grant, whether or not they are paid grant staff. This might include Trustees or in-kind contributions from non-grant staff. In some cases, this might include organizations that engage in the grant in either a partnership or peripheral capacity.

Costs

The total costs for the activity should be included. If it is a multi-year grant, total costs and annual costs should both be listed. If you are purchasing equipment, these costs should be separated.

HELPFUL HINT:

Costs must match your budget exactly.

Timeline

The timeline should show a start date and a completion date for each activity or goal. Month and year are sufficient. If the activity is ongoing throughout the entire grant period, list the grant start and end dates.

Benchmarks or Milestones

The benchmarks or milestones are the outputs that demonstrate progress toward completing a measurable goal of the project. These might include meetings of key stakeholders, classes held, social media postings, or enrollment activities. In some cases, these may be repetitive, e.g., holding the first of three classes, second of three classes, etc. The completion of benchmarks and deliverables (described below) will be the basis of your periodic reports to the granting agency.

Deliverables

Deliverables are concrete or tangible products that are produced through the course of the grant. Examples of grant program deliverables can include curriculum development, marketing material development, class lists, and program enrollment. Consider including everything that will provide a paper trail of your project. Not all activities will have deliverables.

Summary

Your ideal outcome for the work plan content is to have the funding organization read it and clearly understand what you plan to do with the funds, how you will manage and measure your project’s progress, and who will benefit from its success. Tie your goals into the overall organizational goals of the granting institution for an even stronger application.

You may also have to include a narrative section for the work plan. A sample work plan narrative for one activity is provided below:

HELPFUL HINT:

The activities/goals listed in the sample Work Plan should be the same as the activities you list in budget narrative.

Activity 1.

Promote. The goal of the PROMOTE phase is to incorporate social media and other new strategies for the recruitment of young people into apprenticeships. Our organization intends to build a strong youth promotional infrastructure into their existing programs and operations. The Steering Committee is a critical part of this structure. Representatives of each of the partner organizations will sit on the steering committee and make decisions about the direction of the promotional activities.

Deliverables/Milestones: Each of the partners will accomplish the following: A. Develop Social Media Accounts; B. Establish the social media calendar; C. Participate in Guidance Counselor Meetings; D. Develop Promotional Materials; E. Meet with WDBs and Community Organizations; F. Participate in college and career fairs.

Activities: 1.1 Hold Kick-off Meeting; 1.2 Set Calendar for the Year; 1.3 Establish Social Media Campaign with consultants; 1.4 Train staff on use of technology; 1.5 Meet with WDBs and community organizations, 1.6 Hold Monthly Meetings; 1.7 Determine success of social media through Constant Contact; 1.8 Meet with guidance counselor associations to talk about apprenticeship; and 1.9 Participate in college and career fairs.

Key Partners: (Name of Organization), WDBs, Community Organizations.

Evaluation

There are two reasons evaluation of grant-funded programs is so necessary. First, and perhaps the most important reason is that evaluation helps your program. It gives your organization critical feedback that tells you if it works, how well it works, and how to improve it. Second, funders require evaluation. Every funder, whether a foundation, a corporation or a government agency wants to know if the project they funded worked or not. Consequently, your proposal must include how you will evaluate your project, when you do it, and how you will report your results.

Measuring Success

Set up your goals, decide how you will achieve them, and then evaluate what worked and what did not. Decide upfront what success will look like so you will know how well you met it. Specific and measurable metrics should be proposed, which can include number of students enrolled, number of certifications earned, development of program curriculum, etc.

Methodologies

Here are some tips to help you develop the important evaluation section of your grant proposal:

- Grant funders often allow you to designate 5–10 percent of the total project budget for evaluation. Decide if you are going to do an internal assessment with your staff, or if you want to hire outside expertise to conduct your evaluation.
- Evaluations can serve various purposes. Consider the following examples, and identify which best suits your program:
 1. To find out if the hypothesis was achieved or verified. Did you do what you set out to do?
 2. To determine if the specified methods were used and if the objectives were met.
 3. To find out if an impact was made on the identified need.
 4. To obtain feedback from the people served and other members of the community.
 5. To maintain control over the project plan (evaluations often take place at various points in the plan allowing for corrections).
 6. To make changes in the program, mid-stream, if necessary, to ensure the program's success.
 7. Include outcome and process goals.
 8. Consider including summative and formative goals.
- Decide if you will use quantitative or qualitative methods for your data collection, or what combination of the two types you will use. Develop a good description of these methods and why you are using them.
- Make sure the evaluation component of your proposal connects with the proposal's objectives and methods. If those targets and methods are measurable and time-specific, the evaluation will be easier to design.

- Ask yourself these questions as you develop the evaluation section of your proposal:
 1. What is the evaluation's purpose?
 2. How will you use the findings?
 3. What will you know after the evaluation that you did not know before?
 4. What will you do because of the evaluation that you couldn't do before because you lacked the relevant information?
 5. How will your community and partners be better off because of the program?

Sample Evaluation

Currently, instructors administer both a pre-test and a post-test to youth participants to measure what information is learned by the students during the pre-apprenticeship program. At the conclusion of each session, we also ask participating instructors to complete a detailed evaluation questionnaire so we can continue to find ways to improve an already excellent program.

An outside panel of professional evaluators also regularly evaluates the pre-apprenticeship program. Because it is our goal to introduce young people to apprenticeships, the program coordinator and others are working to develop a more sophisticated, yet practical, evaluation process to measure the long-term impact of the program on youth who participate.

Sustainability

Sustainability is an important topic to address in your proposal. One of the things that all granting organizations are interested in is how you will maintain the program once the grant funds have been exhausted. Some grant applications require you to submit a formal sustainability plan.

The following list are some tips to develop a sustainability plan:

1. If you set up a steering committee for your grant, you can keep those meetings going after the grant period at little or no cost.
2. If you develop curriculum, you can continue to modify and expand that through your existing curriculum review process.
3. You can seek sponsorships from school systems or community organizations.
4. You have the opportunity to get your curriculum approved for CEUs, enabling you to offer programs at a reasonable cost.
5. You can offer certification classes which by their very nature offer sustainability for the individual.

A sample sustainability plan follows:

(Organization Name) has built several steps into the program to help ensure that strategic partnerships, promotion and recruitment strategies, education and training, placement and retention continue long after the grant is completed. To keep our strategic partnerships going after the grant, the (Organization Name) will use quarterly meetings of the primary partners to plan and provide services, exchange best practices and review data.

We also plan to keep our steering committee intact by establishing a strategic plan during the grant that can then be continued after the federal dollars are spent. By using our grant money to establish the infrastructure, the steering committee will begin to operate independently from a place of strength. We also plan to use this meeting to provide professional development activities for instructors and staff so that they can work better with

pre-apprentices and younger apprentices. We will seek CEUs so that the professional development classes for employers that were developed through this grant can continue and the expenses can be covered through the payment for CEUs. To make sure that our pre-apprenticeship offerings and training programs remain in place, we plan to make it a part of our strategic review cycle.

We plan to share our modifications to the curriculum with the International Union and hope to encourage them to share our modifications with apprenticeship programs across the country. It will also be important to keep the pre-apprenticeship program active after the grant expires. We believe that this could happen by working with the state and regional union affiliates as well as our local WDBs, school systems and youth organizations to seek sponsorship during the course of the grant. Since the curriculum will have been developed and will continue to undergo modification through existing curriculum committees, sponsorship of future pre-apprenticeship classes will only have instructor and instructional material costs associated with them.

We plan to ask the apprenticeship council organizations to contribute local time and the employers to cover the costs of materials. Ancillary costs, such as transportation, tutoring or childcare, we hope to have been covered by community organizations. By providing two certificates, as well as college credit, to all our pre-apprentices, we are providing them with employable credentials, even if they choose not to continue with apprenticeship. We believe this is a unique feature of our pre-apprenticeship approach and is appealing to a wide range of partners, employers, and community organizations. These certifications allow individuals to go to work right away and for our employers to bid more work. This opens more slots in our apprenticeship programs. Our limitation in accepting more people into our apprenticeship programs has always been a factor of placement for the on-the-job portion of the training, not our instructional capacity. By creating a pathway for graduates of our pre-apprenticeship program into our apprenticeship, they are immediately ready to work. We know that early certification increases the ability to place apprentices.

Several years ago, we switched our instructional program from teaching welding in the final year to beginning the program with the welding certification class. This meant that first year apprentices now had a strong certification that was very appealing to employers. We believe the safety certifications will have the same impact.

Retention activities are more difficult to plan for and conduct without external dollars although we will try to do tracking wherever it is feasible. We will be able to track those who have gone from pre-apprenticeship to apprenticeship through our existing data collection activities by simply asking this question on our application forms. We believe that we can get the commitment of the other partners from the schools and the community organizations to provide us with any retention data that we might need.

SECTION 5: Grant Budgets

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Budget Form and Budget Narrative

The budget is submitted using a form that was described in [Section 3](#) of this reference guide. The budget narrative provides the details of each line item from the budget and is described on the following pages.

Understanding The Line Items

Typically, federal and state funding opportunities use 10-line items that you will need to use when developing your budget and when requesting reimbursement of funds after the grant is awarded. A guide to setting up your accounting system for this purpose was provided in [Section 1](#) of this manual.

A. Personnel

Personnel costs must be described by title and include the hourly rate and number of hours to be allocated for the grant. All personnel must be included in this category, even if they are making an in-kind contribution to the grant. If you plan to hire personnel to work on the grant, give the best estimate for their hourly rate.

B. Fringe Benefits

Fringe benefits include health insurance, pension and any other health and welfare benefits employees receive. The fringe benefits are calculated hourly, so the hours must correctly correspond to the personnel hours above. If your staff work under a collective bargaining agreement, explain that in your narrative since that is how the fringe benefits rate was calculated.

C. Travel

Unless specified otherwise in the grant announcement, you can charge both local and long-distance travel for project-related purposes. An overview of travel was provided in [Section 1](#).

Estimate the travel expenses (including mileage, hotel, meals, and tolls). Sometimes the grant announcement indicates that you have to travel to a grantee meeting in DC or some other location. You should include the travel cost for this in the grant application.

D. Equipment

Equipment purchases are intended for large pieces of equipment such as forklifts or virtual welders. You must demonstrate why this equipment is needed for the grant. When purchasing any items in this category, you must get three bids. Computers, laptops and printers do not count as equipment and instead fit in the supply category.

HELPFUL HINT:

Even though you may have a hotel, per diem, and/or mileage rate for your organization, you can only obtain reimbursement at the government rate. You should let staff know this before they begin to work on the grant.

HELPFUL HINT:

Individuals who travel for grant-related activities may request government rates at hotels. These rates tend to be lower than rates the average person can get.

E. Supplies

Office and classroom supplies go in this line item. Computers and printers should also appear under supplies. Copies or copier rental would appear here. If you are doing special supply items to build mock-ups for instruction, that would also go in this category.

F. Contractual

List any costs incurred through a contract or memorandum of agreement (MOA) under this line item. This would include technical support for computers and servers and might also include MOAs that you develop with consultants, evaluators, or instructors. In this line item you should add funds for your auditor, as they are required to complete some additional audit forms for the government.

G. Construction

Construction costs are rarely permitted in federal and state grant programs. The federal government narrowly defines construction costs to cover brick and mortar. The creation of construction mock-ups for training purposes goes under the category of supplies.

H. Other

This category should be used sparingly for items that truly do not fit into the other categories. Examples of this include costs for a certification or credits for a class you might teach, e.g. First Aid / OSHA 10. Another example would be transportation costs for students, childcare, or tuition reimbursement.

If the granting agency wants you to relocate an item listed in this category to another area, they will let you know.

I. Direct Costs

Direct costs include the sum of all the budget categories listed above.

J. Indirect Costs

Indirect costs are an administrative fee used to cover overheads in a grant project. Items that go into an indirect fee include rent, utilities, and administrative services such as payroll. To get an approved indirect cost rate, you must go through an approval process with the federal government. You can only do this after you have established a successful grant track record, for example after the completion of a funded grant project. In certain cases, states allow a percentage of budgets to be allocated for indirect costs. Read the funding opportunity instructions carefully to see if this applies to you.

K. Total Costs

If you do not have any indirect costs, the total costs will be identical to Section I (direct costs). Otherwise, this would be the sum of Section I (direct costs) and Section J (indirect costs).

HELPFUL HINT:

A rule of thumb for differentiating between equipment and supplies is that the items that cost less than \$5,000 per unit should go in supplies and items more than that may be considered equipment.

HELPFUL HINT:

If you are including office or classroom rent in the grant budget either as a direct cost or in-kind contribution, this should be included in the other costs category.

Budget Narrative

When you are preparing the budget form and the budget narrative, follow the grant opportunity instructions and do not deviate from the prescribed format. Do not create additional categories. If you are uncertain about where an item is placed, put it in the “other” category.

The budget form allows for up to four activities or goals to be listed. If you have more than four activities/goals, you can use additional sheets on the budget form. If the project duration is for more than one year, the annual cost information should be described in the budget narrative.

Considerations

Be sure to carefully consider the costs to successfully run your proposed project. When you are preparing your budget, the costs to achieve each goal should be included. Below are additional budget considerations:

Allowable vs. Non-Allowable Expenses

Grant money cannot be used to pay extended warranties for equipment or supply purchases. Grant money cannot be used for insurance premiums. Grant money cannot be used for items that are not described in the original budget without written permission. It is a lengthy process to get these permissions, so budget carefully.

Making Adjustments to the Budget

A grant budget is an estimation of spending. In broad terms, you may be able to shift up to 10% of the grant funding between categories C through H, but you can’t change A or B (personnel and fringe benefit categories) without permission from the grant agency.

In-Kind Contributions and Organizational Matches

Some grants require that you make an in-kind contribution or an organizational match. There are two easy ways to do this.

First, administrative personnel costs are a good source of match money – the Grant Administrator, Administrative Assistants, and Bookkeepers are often called upon to assist with a grant. Since their salaries are already accounted for in your organizational budget, you will not be spending any additional money. These individuals must complete time sheets to show that a contribution is being made to the grant.

Second, office and classroom space rental are another area for the in-kind contribution. You will have to calculate your square footage costs with utilities, maintenance, insurance, and rent to do this. If office space is an in-kind contribution, the grant staff should have a designated space, which is used for the square footage costs.

HELPFUL HINT:

Do not assume you can save unused money on the grant to roll over to another year. If you have unused funds, check with your project officer about reallocating them to the next funding year.

Reimbursement vs. Upfront Funding

Many federal and state grants are set up so that the grantee is reimbursed. It is exceedingly rare to get upfront funding. In the federal grant cycle, once you submit your reimbursement request you are usually reimbursed within seven days (the initial reimbursement may take two to three weeks but after that it is usually within the week). You can draw funds down about two times a month – they usually want two weeks between draws. States vary in their disbursement cycles, but most take up to 30 days to reimburse your grant costs.

HELPFUL HINT:

You want to avoid outlay of cash when you make a match or in-kind contribution.

Sample Budget Narrative

This budget narrative provides detail for the line items in the budget request. The items are grouped by budget category and are further subdivided by activities.

HELPFUL HINT:

Be prepared to pay grant staff out of organizational money until the reimbursement is received.

Budget Categories

A. Personnel — Total Costs \$189,154.16

There are instructional positions, as well as three administrative oversight positions required to successfully meet all the goals of the project. The Grant Administrator is responsible for all grant activities and will be the primary liaison between the partners, community organizations and the staff. The administrative assistant will manage scheduling, the ordering of materials, tracking data and other logistical tasks. The Director of Training will assure that the grant is being managed properly and will be the primary liaison with the Department of Labor. We anticipate the need for two instructors per week for 16 hours for each instructor for the last six months of the grant. Personnel allocations by activity and year are depicted in the chart below.

Staffing Category	Status	Activity 1	Activity 2	Activity 3	Activity 4	TOTAL
Director of Training	(1@ 45.74/hour x 52 hours)	594.62	594.62	594.62	594.62	\$2,378.48
Grant Administrator	(1@ \$45.74/hour x 2080 hours)	23,784.80	23,784.80	23,784.80	23,784.80	\$95,139.20
Instructors	(\$40.14/hour x 832 hours total instruction)	.00	.00	16,698.24	16,698.24	\$33,396.48
Administrative Assistant	(1@ \$28/hour x 2080 hours)	14,560.00	14,560.00	14,560.00	14,560.00	\$58,240.00
TOTAL		\$38,939.42	\$38,939.42	\$55,637.66	\$55,637.66	\$189,154.16

B. Fringe Benefits — Total Costs \$124,206.16

Fringe Benefits include health and welfare, pension, and annual leave. These benefits are negotiated through a collective bargaining agreement and are applicable for all full and part-time staff. Benefits are allocated by staff hours.

Fringe Category	Status	Activity 1	Activity 2	Activity 3	Activity 4	TOTAL
Director of Training	(1@ \$32.74/hour x 52 hours)	425.62	425.62	425.62	425.62	\$1,702.48
Grant Administrator	(1@ \$32.74/hour x 2080 hours)	17,024.80	17,024.80	17,024.80	17,024.80	\$68,099.20
Instructors	(\$29.64/hour x 832 hours)	.00	.00	12,330.24	12,330.24	\$24,660.48
Administrative Assistant	(1@ \$14.30/hour x 2080 hours)	7,436.00	7,436.00	7,436.00	7,436.00	\$29,744.00
TOTAL		\$24,886.42	\$24,886.42	\$37,216.66	\$37,216.66	\$124,206.16

C. Travel — Total Costs \$1,924.00

Two members of the grant staff are required to attend a grantee meeting. Money for airfare, hotels and per diem have been requested for that purpose. Grant staff will be required to visit the various training sites and to attend meetings with investing partners across the region. This trip will be done by automobile. We have used federal allowable rates for hotels, meals and expenditures and automobile mileage as prescribed in the GSA schedule.

Travel Category	Activity 1	Activity 2	Activity 3	Activity 4	TOTAL
Airfare x \$300/trip x 1 trip x 2 people	600.00	.00	.00	.00	\$600.00
1000 miles x .56/mile	140.00	140.00	140.00	140.00	\$560.00
2 hotel nights x 1 trip x 2 people x \$125	500.00	.00	.00	.00	\$500.00
2 days M&E x 1 trip x 2 people x \$66/day	264.00	.00	.00	.00	\$264.00
TOTAL	\$1,504.00	\$140.00	\$140.00	\$140.00	\$1,924.00

D. Equipment — Total Costs \$65,988.00

We are requesting instructional tools in the form of virtual welders that will introduce pre-apprentices to the field without safety risks. Equipment purchases are detailed below.

Equipment Category	Activity 1	Activity 2	Activity 3	Activity 4	TOTAL
Virtual Welders (12 x \$5,499 each)	.00	.00	65,988.00	.00	\$65,988.00
TOTAL	.00	.00	\$65,988.00	.00	\$65,988.00

E. Supplies — Total Costs \$81,600.00

Most of the supplies that are required for this project are instructional materials needed for the 312 pre-apprentices expected for the project – toolkits and Personal Protective Equipment so that they can get to work right away. The toolkits will include uniforms as well as actual tools and will be customized to the craft that they choose to study. There are also some instructional materials required for pre-apprentices participating in the boot camps. There is also a request for office supplies. Finally, we will need to purchase some outreach materials to be used for recruitment purposes.

Supply Category	Activity 1	Activity 2	Activity 3	Activity 4	TOTAL
Laptops for Grant Staff and Students (14 x \$1000)	2,000.00	.00	12,000.00	.00	\$14,000.00
Office Supplies (2 staff x \$20/month x 12 months)	120.00	120.00	120.00	120.00	\$480.00
Classroom Supplies (\$20/class x 26 classes)	.00	.00	520.00	.00	\$520.00
Toolkits (\$150 per student x 312 students)	.00	.00	46,800.00	.00	\$46,800.00
Personal Protective Equipment (\$25 per student x 312 students)	.00	.00	7,800.00	.00	\$7,800.00
Promotional Materials (\$2 per unit x 6,000 units)	12,000.00	.00	.00	.00	\$12,000.00
TOTAL	\$14,120.00	\$120.00	\$67,240.00	\$120.00	\$81,600.00

F. Contractual — Total Costs \$61,400.80

There will be some students that will require special tutoring and remedial services to prepare for apprenticeship entrance tests. Our local community partners can provide these, and we have associated costs for these services included.

The services of a computer professional will be needed to oversee the enhancement of technology promotion and recruitment. The services of an evaluator are also needed to make sure that we are meeting the goals and objectives of the grant. Finally, we will need to secure the services of our auditor to compile the annual federal audit reports.

Contractual Category	Activity 1	Activity 2	Activity 3	Activity 4	TOTAL
Tutoring/Test Prep Services (\$150 x 312 students)	.00	.00	46,800.00	.00	\$46,800.00
IT Services (\$73.13 hour x 60 hours)	4,287.80	.00	.00	.00	\$4,287.80
Evaluation Contractor (\$73.13 hour x 1000 hours)	.00	.00	.00	7,313.00	\$7,313.00
Audit and Accounting Services	.00	.00	.00	3,000.00	\$3,000.00
TOTAL	\$4,287.80	.00	\$46,800.00	\$10,313.00	\$61,400.80

G. Construction Costs — Total Costs \$.00

There is no construction costs associated with this project.

H. Other Costs — Total Costs \$84,864.00

We are asking for additional funds to cover First Aid/CPR Certification for pre-apprentices. Students in the apprenticeship program may require supportive services in the transportation and/or child/dependent care costs that are detailed below.

Other Category	Activity 1	Activity 2	Activity 3	Activity 4	TOTAL
First Aid/CPR Certification (\$60 per pre-apprentice x 312)	.00	.00	18,720.00	.00	\$18,720.00
Transportation (\$6/day x 2 days x 312 pre-apprentices)	.00	.00	3,744.00	.00	\$3,744.00
Child/dependent care (\$100/day x 2 days x 312 pre-apprentices)	.00	.00	62,400.00	.00	\$62,400.00
TOTAL	\$.00	\$.00	\$84,864.00	\$.00	\$84,864.00

H. Total Direct Costs — Total \$609,137.12

The total direct expenditures are listed by activity in the table below.

Total	Activity 1	Activity 2	Activity 3	Activity 4	TOTAL
All Categories	83,737.64	64,085.84	357,886.32	103,427.32	\$609,137.12

I. Indirect Costs — Total \$.00

There are no indirect costs associated with this project

J. Total — Total \$609,137.12

The total expenditures are listed by activity in the table below.

Total	Activity 1	Activity 2	Activity 3	Activity 4	TOTAL
All Categories	83,737.64	64,085.84	357,886.32	103,427.32	\$609,137.12

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Managing Your Grant

Once you receive your grant, there are some basic administrative requirements that you will need to comply with. These administrative tasks are discussed below.

Periodic Narrative Reports

All grants will require you to submit progress reports. The progress reports are often due on a quarterly basis, but some funders may require you to submit them on a monthly or annual basis.

Below are some general suggestions for completing these reports. A template for a grant narrative report is presented at the end of this [section](#).

1. Use your Signed Grant Agreement as a reference when completing a narrative report. Keep in mind any changes that have been approved during the reporting period.
2. The content should be based on program efforts for the reporting period.
3. If a milestone was not met during the reporting period, explain how your organization plans to meet that milestone during the next period or address if the milestone will no longer be met.
4. Reports should be concise and include only relevant information from the reporting period.
5. Provide an honest assessment of how your organization and program are doing in your responses.

Narrative Performance Report Template

Grant Program Name: _____

Program Year: _____

Quarter End Date: _____

Date Report Submitted: _____

Section I. Contact Information.

Grant Number:	
Grant Recipient Name:	
Grant Project Name:	
Grant Project Address:	
Grant Period of Performance:	
Point of Contact (Name, Phone Number, and Email):	

Section II. Summary of Grant Progress.

- A. This section is an executive summary of grant activities, including planned and actual progress. For the current quarter, please include a description of all:
- services supported by the grant,
 - key activities completed, including partnership development and coordination,
 - performance improvement efforts undertaken to meet goals for the performance year if projected goals for the quarter are not currently being met, and,
 - additional activities performed by both the grantee and any sub-grantees, if applicable.
- B. This update may include additional information about service and training activities and outcomes to supplement the data submitted in the Quarterly Performance Report.
- C. In accordance with the funding opportunity under which the grant was awarded, grantees that are providing supportive services and specialized participant services should include:
- a description of the type(s) of services offered in the quarter,
 - how they were delivered, and
 - how they contributed to a participant’s ability to fully participate in grant-funded activities.
- D. Those grantees that have no changes to report on the above items relative to previous reports should indicate so, in addition to indicating the reason for their lack of changes.

Section III. Progress of Grant Timeline.

- A. Provide any updates for the progress of the approved grant timeline/work plan, including programming activities, key deliverables, and products available this quarter and in future quarters for broad dissemination.
- B. Use the timeline in the grant’s statement of work to identify all major program activities and training for the reporting quarter. The timeline will paint a picture of project flow that includes start and end dates, schedule of activities, and projected outcomes. It is important that the timeline is updated each quarter noting the actual date of each activity’s completion as accomplished.
- C. The following items are assessed during the progress of the grant: project goals, benchmarks, milestones, unique events, important deadlines, and deliverables.
- D. Include any challenges or concerns the project has encountered that may have affected or slowed grant progress or the timeline/work plan and how the project intends to resolve them.
- E. Describe the next steps or key areas of emphasis planned for the project in the next quarter (or reporting period).

Section IV. Development and Implementation of Effective Practices and Program Model Strategies.

- A. Describe how your program model is working towards/has realized the program’s intended purpose as well as the goals/objectives and activities outlined in your grant application and work plan. Examples may include developing and implementing an outreach campaign, designing education and training programs, identifying industry sectors, engaging employers, aligning policies and programs, measuring systems change and performance, developing new or enhancing existing curriculum or industry training, and creating new career assistance tools and resources.
- B. Grantees may also describe any lessons learned and how those lessons learned have been integrated into ongoing grant activities.
- C. Those grantees that have no progress to report on the above items should indicate so.

Section V. Key Issues and Technical Assistance Needs.

- A. Summarize significant opportunities, issues, or challenges (such as under-enrollment) encountered during the reporting period and any resolution of issues and challenges identified in previous reporting periods. Furthermore, describe actions taken or plans to address issues.
- B. Describe questions you have, as well as any technical assistance needs.
- C. Grantees who have nothing to report should indicate so.

Section VI. Significant Activities, Accomplishments, and Success Stories.

This section is intended to provide additional, more in-depth information than the summary section about promising approaches, new processes, and/or lessons learned ([Section IV above](#)).

- A. Report on any other significant activities and accomplishments.
- B. Describe promising approaches, innovative processes, lessons learned, and grant- and participant-level success stories in detail.
- C. Highlight one or two grant- or participant-level “success stories” each reporting period, with the participant’s express permission (if providing a participant success story).

In documenting success stories, please describe:

- background, problem, issue, or concern prior to project involvement,
- response or intervention provided by the project,
- results and outcomes, including who benefited and what changed or improved, and
- evidence of success, including how the data was collected and the methods used to measure success.

- D. Grantees can also include promising practices and success stories as additional documents for upload.
- E. Grantees who have nothing to report should indicate so.

Section VII. Evidence and Evaluation.

This section will provide information on how evidence and evaluations are being developed and applied.

- A. Describe how the grantee is using or planning to use data, evidence, and evaluation findings to make improvements to programs and strategies. In this explanation, please include a discussion on accomplishments, implemented strategies, and any barriers to success.
- B. Provide an update on participation and status of any evaluations required as part of the funding announcement or award. Include any requests for technical assistance related to these requirements.
- C. Include information about whether the grantee is participating in any studies or evaluations not required as part of the grant award, including any internal evaluations. Describe the study, any data sources, and whether a third party is managing this project.
- D. As part of the evaluations described above, or as a separate stand-alone data analysis project, is the grant used, or does it have plans or a desire to use administrative data to better understand the grant program or the population it serves? If so, what data sources has the grant been able to use or planned/desired to use? If so, what research or management questions do/can these data help the grant answer?

Periodic Financial Reports

Depending on the grant agency, you will also be required to submit periodic financial reports. These can be required on either a monthly or quarterly basis. Federal reports have a standard layout and are usually completed online. You will need to report on the expenditure in each budget category. For state and private grants, you may be required to submit a financial report that would show expenses in each category and how much money remains in each category. For any grant, you may be required to supply documentation including timesheets, invoices, and receipts. Make sure you print out a copy of the online report for your records.

Drawing Down Funds

Most federal grants and many state grants operate on a cost reimbursement basis. So, when you spend money and have invoices, receipts, or timesheets to document the expense, you can draw down funds. Most grants limit you to only two draws per month, so you should plan carefully for this. Most granting agencies will not permit you to pay late fees or interest out of grant funds. If you exceed your quarterly estimates, you may be required to provide an explanation. The drawing down funds system will be set up within the first 30 days of the grant.

Documenting Your Activities

While we have emphasized the importance of documentation in terms of cost reimbursement, it is also important to document the activities of the grant. To do that, consider collecting the following items, if applicable:

- Agendas, minutes, and sign-in sheets for all meetings related to the grant.
- Class lists, certification lists, and attendance sheets from grant events.
- Curriculum, lesson plans, and course materials.
- Evaluation or feedback forms.
- Publicity materials, including online posts and e-mails blasts.
- Correspondence.

All this material is important to the evaluation of the grant as well as your periodic narrative reports.

Preparing For Project Officer Visits

At some point during the grant, your project officer might want to visit the program. During that visit, the project officer will want to meet with staff and review your financial and program records. If your grant runs classes or other activities, the project officer might want to observe these sessions. They will always give you advance notice before the visit. You should try to develop an agenda with the Project Officer before he or she arrives on-site. This will ensure that all the things they want to review or observe are ready for them.

Requesting Budget Revisions

During the grant, there may be a need to revise your budget. You may find that you have an overage in one budget category and a need for additional funds in another. On federal and state grants, the following may be applicable:

1. You may move money between personnel and fringe benefit categories with formal agency approval. Personnel and fringe benefit funds cannot be moved to any other budget categories.
2. You may shift up to 10% of funds between the remaining budget categories (travel, supplies, etc.). You should discuss this with your funding agency project officer before making any changes.
3. In general, when you need to reallocate funds between budget categories, you need to send a letter to the project officer and inform them of your plans.

Developing a No-Cost Extension

If you are unable to use all the allocated funding, you may be able to request a no-cost extension.

Receiving a no-cost extension means that your grant work can continue for a specified period until the allocated funds are used as planned. Some reasons for no-cost extensions include the project getting a late start, personnel starting later than planned, or sometimes things cost less than expected.

You need to discuss a no-cost extension with the project officer, and you should revise your budget, establish a plan for the use of funds, and draft your plan in a letter. A sample of a no-cost extension letter can be found below. The revised budget will need to show the original requested amount, money spent to date, and where you will spend the leftover funds.

HELPFUL HINT:

Plan your budget wisely. Funding agencies can view unused funds as a lack of fiscal responsibility or poor grant management. A poor fiscal reputation could disqualify you from getting future grants.

Sample No Cost Extension Request Letter *(Must be typed on letterhead)*

January 1, 2025

Name of Grant Sponsor/Agency

Name and Address of the Grants Management Specialist/Administrator

Re: No Cost Extension of Grant (fill in grant number, including current year)

Dear (fill in name of Grants Management Specialist/Administrator):

We would like to request an additional (fill in number of months up to twelve) no cost extension for (fill in name of grant). If approved, the new ending date will be (fill in the new date).

Currently our balance is approximately \$... (insert unobligated balance). Provide a detailed paragraph on why the extension is needed.

Examples:

- (1) Need to finish any of the specific goal(s) as indicated in the plan.
- (2) Delayed start due to inability to hire certain personnel or delay in equipment.
- (3) Project not complete due to waiting for a piece of equipment, curriculum approval, etc.

We have provided a revised budget that we have attached to this letter.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact (fill in the administrator's names and contact information).

Sincerely,

Joe Q. Director

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Sample Local Travel Expense Form

LOCAL TRAVEL EXPENSES			
Name		Purpose	
Email		Approved by	
Trip Hours			
Dates	Hours	Purpose	
Expenses			
Category	Dates	Details	Amount
Mileage			
Attach Mapquest Documentation			
Tolls			
Attach receipt or E-Z Pass Bill			
		Total Amount Due Employee	
Signature		Date	

Sample Out of Town Expense Form

OUT-OF-TOWN TRAVEL EXPENSES			
Name		Purpose	
Email		Approved by	
Trip Hours			
Dates	Location	Purpose	
Expenses			
Category	Dates	Details	Amount
Transportation	Date	Air Parking Rental car Taxi Other Item not listed	
	Date	Air Parking Rental car Taxi Other Item not listed	
	Date	Air Parking Rental car Taxi Other Item not listed	
	Date	Air Parking Rental car Taxi Other Item not listed	
Own car	Date	Mileage	
Lodging	Date	Location Location	
	Date	Location Location	
	Date	Location Location	
	Date	Location Location	
Meals	Date	(Not to exceed \$50/day)	
	Date	(Not to exceed \$50/day)	
	Date	(Not to exceed \$50/day)	
	Date	(Not to exceed \$50/day)	
Conference fees	Date	Purpose Purpose	
	Date	Purpose Purpose	
Other	Date	Purpose Purpose	
	Date	Purpose Purpose	
	Date	Purpose Purpose	
		Total amount owed to employee	
Signature			Date

Sample Timesheet

DATE	START TIME	END TIME	REGULAR HOURS	GRANT HOURS	TOTAL HOURS
DATE					
DATE					
DATE					
DATE					
DATE					
DATE					
DATE					
<i>Weekly Totals</i>					

EMPLOYEE NAME:	
EMPLOYEE SIGNATURE:	DATE:
SUPERVISOR SIGNATURE:	DATE:

Sample Work Plan Chart

Activity	Implementer	Costs	Time	Deliverables
1. PROMOTE GOAL: Develop a succinct message and incorporate that message into social media and other new strategies for the recruitment of young people into apprenticeship.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ITP WIBs Community Organizations 	Strategy Total \$478,079.72 Year 1: \$120,363.68 Year 2 \$119,238.68 Year 3 \$119,238.68 Year 4 \$119,238.68	Start Date: September 1, 2020 End Date: August 31, 2024 Milestones <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional Social Media Launch Meetings with WIBs/Community Organizations Participation with Guidance Counselor Organizations 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Social Media Accounts Social Media Calendar Partner Meeting Calendar Promotional Materials Social Media Tracking Data from Constant Contact College/Career Fair Participation
2. RECRUIT GOAL: Offer pre-apprenticeship programs as well as test/interview programs linked to RAP application.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ITP WIBs Community Organizations 	Strategy Total \$693,280.52 Year 1: \$230,404.88 Year 2 \$154,291.88 Year 3 \$154,291.88 Year 4 \$154,291.88	Start Date: September 1, 2020 End Date: August 31, 2024 Milestones <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold at least one pre-apprenticeship program per year. Hold at least one test prep per year. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Training calendar. Training Curriculum. Follow up results. Enroll students. Provide certificates and credits to pre-apprenticeship completers.
3. EDUCATE GOAL: Support youth apprentices while they are in the program so that they can successfully complete their schooling.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ITP Postsecondary Institutions Childcare and Transportation Providers 	Strategy Total \$1,958,260.52 Year 1: \$546,649.88 Year 2 \$470,536.88 Year 3 \$470,536.88 Year 4 \$470,536.88	Start Date: September 1, 2020 End Date: August 30, 2024 Milestones <ul style="list-style-type: none"> High retention rates for young apprentices. Establish/enhance tutoring programs. Provision of childcare assistance. Provision of transportation assistance. Enroll 25% of young apprentices in degree completion programs. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Provide tutoring to young apprentices. Develop parameters for childcare/transportation reimbursements. Offer driver's education. Develop new articulation agreements with colleges. Secure college transcripts for apprentices. Enroll young apprentices in degree completion programs.
4. PLACE GOAL: Provide support to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ITP Employers and Employer Associations 	Strategy Total \$370,372.52 Year 1: \$93,436.88	Start Date: September 1, 2020 End Date: August 31, 2024	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Establish Peer Mentoring.

Entity Validation Documents

Entity Validation Documentation Requirements

Instructions:

- For proof of name and/or address, choose document(s) from List A. At least one document must have both your full, correct legal business name and current, correct physical address.
- For proof of your entity start year and state, choose document(s) from List B.
- For proof of your national identifier (international entities only), choose a document(s) from List C.

List A - Name and/or Address	List B - Start Year and State of Incorporation	List C - National Identifier (international only)
<p><i>Most Commonly Used Documents:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articles of Incorporation/Organization/Formation (if stamped as filed with an authority) • Bank Statements* (redact information that isn't necessary for validation) • Certificate of Formation/Organization (if stamped as filed with an authority) • Department of Treasury/IRS letter assigning your EIN • Secretary of State Certificate of Filing • Screenshot/PDF file of your business profile* in your state's online business registry or Secretary of State website (must be current registration and must include the registry URL) • Utility Bill (water, gas, or electric only) <p><i>Other Documents You Can Use:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bylaws for your company (if stamped as filed with in authority) • Certificate of Good Standing* issued by your state to your business that contains date of incorporation, organization, or establishment • City Business Tax Certificate* • Department of Treasury/IRS Tax Exemption Status Letter* • "Doing-business-as" or DEA document (if stamped as filed with an authority) • Driver's License (for sole proprietor or individuals doing-business-as only; must be non-expired and have your exact name) • IRS Form 8822-B or Form 990 for address change (filed only) • IRS forms marked as received by the IRS or processed by a CPA or e-filing software (e.g., Form 1040 with schedule C for sole proprietors) • IRS Form 1099* if you are the recipient (not the filer) • License to Operate* (issued by city, state) • Limited Liability Company Articles/Articles of Amendment (if stamped as filed with an authority) • Partnership documentation (if stamped as filed with an authority) • Passport (may only be used by sole proprietors or individuals doing-business-as where the physical business address is on the passport; must be non-expired and have your exact name and address. Passports without addresses or with addresses that are different than your physical business address cannot be used) • Share Certificate • State Sales and Use Tax Permit* • Tax invoice* (federal, state, local, international) • Town charter, documentation from State governments for town's formation; Governor's declarations; formal resolution from town council establishing office. 	<p><i>Most Commonly Used Documents:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articles of Incorporation/Organization/Formation (if stamped as filed with an authority) • Certificate of Formation/Organization (if stamped as filed with an authority) • Department of Treasury/IRS letter assigning your EIN • Secretary of State Certificate of Filing • Screenshot/PDF file of your business profile* in your state's online business registry or Secretary of State website (must be current registration and must include the website URL) <p><i>Other Documents You Can Use:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bylaws for your company (if stamped as filed with an authority) • Certificate of Good Standing* issued by your state to your business that contains date of incorporation, organization, or establishment • "Doing-business-as" or DBA document (if stamped as filed with an authority) • IRS forms marked as received by the IRS or processed by a CPA or e-filing software (e.g., Form 1040 with schedule C for sole proprietor, only if it contains your business start date) • Limited Liability Company Articles/Articles of Amendment (if stamped as filed with an authority) • Partnership documentation (if stamped as filed with an authority) • Town charter, documentation from state governments for town existence; Governor's declarations; formal resolution from town council establishing office, if it contains the date your entity began 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Screenshot/PDF file of your business profile* in your country's official online business registry (must be current registration and must include the registry URL). <i>Do not submit screens from U.S. federal websites.</i> • Government-issued proof of tax identification number, employer identification number, or other identifier issued by your government. • Government-issued tax receipt/return • Passport (for sole proprietor or individuals doing-business-as only; must be non-expired and have your exact name and address) <p><i>All international documents must have a satisfactory English language translation attached.</i></p>

Your documents must show your entity information exactly as you entered it in the Enter-Entity Information screen on SAM.gov. Documents in List A and List B with an asterisk(*) must be 5 years old or less.

Additional Resources

Videos

[Grants.gov Ultimate Guide: Your Key to Funding Success – YouTube](#)

[Grant Writing for Beginners \(youtube.com\)](#)

[How to write a foundation grant proposal: a step-by-step guide – YouTube](#)

[Tutorial: How to Write a Grant Budget – YouTube](#)

Websites

[Federal Grant Checklist to Help You Win Funds – Nonprofit Hub](#)

[Grants for Nonprofits | Instrumentl](#)

[Grants for Nonprofits, Businesses and Individuals – GrantWatch](#)

[United States Funding Sources Map](#)

Articles

[Grant Proposals \(or Give Me the Money!\) \(UNC’s Writing Center\)](#)

[Guide for Writing a Funding Proposal \(S.J. Levine, MSU\)](#)

[A Proposal Writer’s Guide \(D. Thackrey, UMich\)](#)

[Nonprofit Grant Management: Learning the Essentials – Nonprofit Financial Commons \(nonprofitfinancials.org\)](#)

Common Acronyms and Definitions

There are many acronyms and definitions used in grant writing. Some of the most common include:

CAGE Code

A five-character code which identifies companies doing, or planning to do business with the federal government and is assigned through SAM.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA)

The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) has been replaced by the Annual Publication of Assistance Listings.

Close Date

The deadline designated by the grant-making agency for submission of a particular grant application.

Federal Award Date

The date when the Federal award is signed by the authorized official of the Federal awarding agency.

Federal Award Identification Number (FAIN)

The unique ID within the Federal agency for each financial assistance award.

Non-Federal Entities

A state, local government, Indian tribe, institution of higher education (IHE), or nonprofit organization that carries out a federal award as a recipient or subrecipient.

Nonprofit Organization

Any corporation, trust, association, cooperative, or other organization, not including IHEs, that: (a) Is operated primarily for scientific, educational, service, charitable, or similar purposes in the public interest; (b) Is not organized primarily for profit; and (c) Uses net proceeds to maintain, improve, or expand the operations of the organization.

System for Award Management (SAM)

SAM validates applicant information and electronically shares the secure and encrypted data with the federal agencies' finance offices to facilitate paperless payments through Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). SAM stores your organizational information, allowing Grants.gov to verify your identity and to pre-fill organizational information on your grant applications.

Unique Entity Identifier (UEI)

A non-federal entity is required to have a UEI in order to apply for, receive, and report on a federal award. A UEI may be obtained from www.sam.gov.

A full list of grant terms and acronyms can be found at [Grant Terminology | Grants.gov](#)



District 1199C Training & Upgrading Fund
1 South Broad Street, 6th Floor, Philadelphia, PA 19107
Tel: 215-568-2220
www.1199ctraining.org



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