
Certified Professional in Grant Management in Nonprofit Organizations

Grant Application Review Process

Applicant: An organization or individual that submits a grant proposal to a funding source.

Budget: A detailed financial plan that outlines how grant funds will be used to support the proposed project or activity. Related terms include budget justification, which explains the need for each budget item, and budget narrative, which provides an overview of the budget and its relationship to the project goals.

Certified Professional in Grant Management (CPGM): A credential offered by the Grant Professionals Certification Institute (GPCI) that demonstrates an individual's knowledge and expertise in grant management.

Conflict of interest: A situation in which a grant reviewer has a personal or financial stake in the outcome of the grant decision. Conflicts of interest must be disclosed and managed to ensure the integrity of the grant review process.

Eligibility: The criteria that an applicant must meet in order to be considered for a grant. Eligibility may be based on factors such as the applicant's mission, location, or track record.

Evaluation: The process of assessing the effectiveness and impact of a grant-funded project or activity. Evaluation may include both formative evaluation, which is conducted during the project to improve its implementation, and summative evaluation, which is conducted at the end of the project to assess its overall impact.

Federal Register: The official journal of the U.S. government that publishes notices, rules, and regulations related to federal grant programs.

Full proposal: A complete grant application that includes all required elements, such as a project description, budget, and evaluation plan.

Grant application review process: The series of steps that a grant proposal goes through in order to be considered for funding. The review process may include a technical review, a peer review, and a final review by a funding decision-making body.

Grant management: The process of administering and overseeing a grant once it has been awarded, including tasks such as tracking expenses, reporting on progress, and ensuring compliance with grant terms and conditions.

Grant proposal: A written document that outlines a proposed project or activity and requests funding from a grant maker. Related terms include grant application, which refers to the complete package of materials submitted to a grant maker, and grant request, which is the specific amount of funding being sought.

Grant reviewer: An individual who is responsible for evaluating and scoring grant proposals. Grant reviewers may include subject matter experts, program staff, and community representatives.

Grant writer: An individual who is responsible for preparing and submitting grant proposals on behalf of an organization.

Indirect costs: Costs that are incurred by an organization in the course of carrying out a grant-funded project, but that cannot be directly attributed to the project. Indirect costs may include overhead expenses such as rent, utilities, and administrative salaries.

Letter of intent (LOI): A brief document that an applicant submits to a grant maker to express interest in a grant opportunity and provide basic information about the proposed project.

Logic model: A visual representation of the theory of change behind a grant-funded project, showing the relationship between inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes.

Matching requirement: A condition of some grants that requires the grantee to provide a certain amount of funding or in-kind resources to match the grant funds.

Peer review: The process of having grant proposals evaluated by a panel of experts in the field. Peer review is often used to ensure the objectivity and fairness of the grant review process.

Proposal summary: A brief overview of the grant proposal, typically one to two pages in length, that provides a summary of the proposed project, its goals and objectives, and its budget.

Request for proposals (RFP): A document issued by a grant maker that outlines the grant opportunity, including the project goals, eligibility criteria, and application instructions.

Site visit: A visit to the applicant's organization or project site by grant reviewers or program staff to gather additional information about the proposed project and assess its feasibility.

Sustainability: The ability of a grant-funded project to continue operating after the grant funds have been expended. Sustainability may be achieved through strategies such as building partnerships, developing revenue streams, and training staff.

Technical review: The initial stage of the grant review process, in which grant proposals are evaluated for completeness, clarity, and adherence to the grant guidelines.

Theory of change: A conceptual framework that outlines the assumptions and expectations underlying a grant-funded project, including the expected outcomes and the strategies for achieving them.

Track record: The history of an organization's past performance in carrying out grant-funded projects, including its success in achieving project goals and managing grant funds.

Twenty percent rule: A requirement of some federal grants that limits the amount of indirect costs that can be charged to the grant. The rule states that indirect costs cannot exceed 20% of the total grant amount.

Unsolicited proposal: A grant proposal that is submitted to a grant maker without a specific grant opportunity being advertised.

In the grant application review process, these terms and concepts play a critical role in ensuring that grant proposals are evaluated fairly and objectively, and that grant funds are awarded to the most deserving and qualified applicants. By understanding these terms and how they are used in the grant review process, grant writers and managers can increase their chances of success in securing funding for their organizations.

One challenge in the grant application review process is managing conflicts of interest. It is important for grant reviewers to disclose any potential conflicts of interest and for grant making organizations to have policies in place to manage these conflicts. For example, a grant reviewer who has a personal or financial relationship with an applicant may be recused from reviewing that applicant's proposal.

Another challenge is ensuring the objectivity and fairness of the review process. This can be achieved through the use of peer review, in which grant proposals are evaluated by a panel of experts in the field. Peer review can help to ensure that grant decisions are based on the merits of the proposals, rather than on personal biases or preconceptions.

In addition to these challenges, the grant application review process can also be time-consuming and resource-intensive. It is important for grant making organizations to have clear and efficient processes in place to manage the review process, from the initial technical review to the final funding decision. This can help to ensure that grant funds are awarded in a timely and transparent manner, and that grantees have the support they need to successfully carry out their grant-funded projects.

In conclusion, the grant application review process is a critical component of the grant making process, and it involves a variety of terms and concepts that are essential to understanding how grant proposals are evaluated and funded. By familiarizing themselves with these terms and concepts, grant writers and managers can increase their chances of success in securing funding for their organizations. At the same time, grant making organizations can ensure the objectivity, fairness, and efficiency of the review process by implementing clear policies and procedures, managing conflicts of interest, and utilizing peer review.