

**HOW TO**

# A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO GRANT WRITING

KENTUCKY LEAGUE OF CITIES **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES**

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### Why do cities need to know how to write a grant?

Every city is required to have a budget and keep it balanced. When tax dollars have been collected they are allocated to specific line items. Often there are many other initiatives that elected officials and citizens would like to see funded. Money has to come from somewhere. Outside funding sources such as grants are a logical next step. If you are someone who has not delved into grants before, it can be a daunting experience. Yet, grant writing can be learned, and if we are diligent, funding sources can be identified and money can be obtained.

### What is a grant proposal and how do I find funders?

A grant proposal is a request from an outside source for financial assistance to create, develop or implement a project or specific initiative. Grant funds come from several sources including state or federal funds, private foundations, public grants and corporate foundations. Locating funding sources is commonly achieved by Internet and library research.

We recommend that you research several options for potential funders. If you only have one grantor or revenue source, you may become dependent upon that one source. It is also helpful to have seed money or some percentage of funds set aside as a potential match for grantors to see the local commitment to the initiative.

There are many ways to go about searching for potential funding. One is by writing a proposal then looking for potential funding sources. Another approach is to

Research Tips	Importance
Make contact by phone	Find out immediately if your project is of interest to the funding source.
Research using websites	Easy access and tons of information. You will have to look carefully to find appropriate matches.
Research using the public library	Librarians are terrific resources in locating foundation directories and Internet databases to assist you in your search.
Seek out proposal guidelines	Be sure to investigate thoroughly the guidelines of each funding source to make sure you are matching their interests.
Follow up on funding sources you may be aware of in your own community	Local philanthropic funding sources may be available in your own community.

locate a funding source that shares an interest in your initiative or project, build a relationship with the funder and then develop a proposal. In some cases the grant funder may offer an application process which you must follow. This workbook will serve as a general step-by-step guide to grant proposal writing and locating potential funding sources.

### How will I know if my project is eligible for grant funding?

As you locate potential funding sources they will provide information about their particular interests. Agencies are looking for ways to supplement or expand existing activities in which they are already invested. They are also

interested in how your proposal may help them address problems they have already identified. Most government agencies and private foundations have a proposal format you will need to follow. In some cases you may have to be pre-approved to apply for funds. Instructions of how to apply, details about any approval processes, the proposal format or application guidelines are typically found on the funder's website.

*Every good grant begins with a phone call to the potential funder.* The call is not used to promote your organization, but to find out if your initiative will be a good fit for their interests. You may also use this point of contact to request proposal guidelines if you have not found them on their website.

Questions to Consider as You Seek Potential Funders:	Yes	No	Not Certain
Does my project align with their mission or stated area of giving?			
Is my project and/or organization eligible to apply for their funds?			
Has the granting agency funded projects similar to mine in the past?			
Will they provide enough funding to fully accommodate my project?			
Can I fulfill all their requirements based upon my initial review of the criteria?			
Do they expect last year's average grant amount to change?			
Does the program provide one-time-only support, or does it offer other funding opportunities in the future?			

It is important that your proposal convey in some detail exactly what you want to do with the funding. To attract a potential funder your narrative will need to align with the funder's particular mission and/or interest. Articulating your project in detail will assist you as you begin looking for potential donors. Carefully expressing the need for the project and providing information that shows the project is worthwhile will increase your chance of funding, particularly as your proposal will likely be one of many the funder will be considering.

If you are uncertain about any of these questions, contact the funding source before you begin your proposal. It is relatively easy to obtain early feedback about how your project fits their particular organization. It is also helpful for them to know that you are considering submitting a proposal, and you may gain additional information that will strengthen your proposal.

By calling the funding source you can make certain the contact person listed on the website still holds that

position. You may also identify the person to whom you should send a direct letter of inquiry regarding your particular proposal.

### How are grants funded?

The funding of grants takes on an almost mysterious aura for most people. You write a little story about your project, make a best-guess about a budget, beg a few people to write letters of support (or you write them and ask a community leader to sign them), and "voila" - the money appears! There's a little more to it than that.

When you get right down to it, grants are, by and large, funded in one of two ways.

**Public/Private/Corporate Foundations:** Foundation grants typically start with an individual or corporation who wants to set aside a sum of money for a particular cause, for example, skate board parks (The Tony Hawke Foundation) or public art youth education (Burlington Northern Sante Fe Foundation). The amount of the corpus - or principal

amount designated for giving - is typically invested in some manner. Every so often - monthly, quarterly, or annually - the interest and a portion of the corpus are distributed to "worthy" organizations and designated for very specific projects. If your project happens to fit the criteria that the foundation has established, you might be considered for funding. Understanding that the mission of the grant seeker (you) and that of the grant maker (the foundation) must align is a critical step in creating a successful grant proposal. Typically, the grant funder will purposefully make the process very specific or difficult because the competition for these funds far exceeds the available funds. Grant makers only want to fund a project that they believe has a reasonable chance of succeeding and becoming self-sustaining. In other words, they want their **LEGACY** to live on through the projects that they fund.

**Tip:** Don't waste your time or that of a funder by submitting an application for funding when your missions do not align.

### Government Grants:

Government grants are very similar to those given by foundations, but with one very big difference - government grants are funded by the taxpayers. Why does your government give away money based on a grant application? Lawmakers recognized, long ago, that the most effective way to implement public policy was to empower local citizens and organizations through grant funding. The federal government provides funding to a recipient to carry out a public purpose that is authorized by law. It is not an entitlement or loan. Similarly, local and state governments may provide funding to local agencies, charities or nonprofits. As an example, suppose a city wants to spruce up its downtown or a business area. The city may partner with a local paint store to provide small grants for local property owners to purchase paint at a discount price as an enticement to beautify their properties. The public purpose in this case is to encourage foot traffic, improve the quality of life, enhance property values for taxation purposes and promote economic activity.

Every grant seeker should understand some harsh truths when it comes to submitting a proposal. Even though you may think that your project is the most important project in the world, you will find that thousands of other communities and organizations believe the same thing about their own proposal. This reality makes it very difficult for funders to choose whom to fund. For example, the National Science Foundation receives about 40,000 applications for funding each grant cycle. They are only able to fund around 10,000 projects. This is a typical ratio for most funders.

**Tip:** Be sure that your grant application meets each and every criterion that is required by the funder. Funders have neither the time nor inclination to call you for clarification if there is a question. Too many great applications are waiting for their attention. Make the most of your opportunity!

**One Last Word:** Grants are created to carry out a specific purpose by a funder. Don't confuse your desire to get money with their desire to give it away. It's always about the **FUNDER!**

### What qualifies as a "good" grant application?

Typically projects or initiatives that have local community support, other benefactors or dedicated funding sources such as matching funds or seed money make a good showing of your commitment to the project. Additionally, good planning that reflects potential strategies for development and implementation, details of how the project will be monitored, who will benefit, transparent accounting principles, budget and fiduciary details, benchmarks of success as well as a proposed timeline for development, implementation or completion, are all hallmarks of a good proposal and enhance your credibility.

Many funding sources want to know that their money is used in ways that will have a long lasting impact. If your proposal offers the opportunity to expand and improve upon work the funder has a history of supporting, this may improve your chance of funding. Most all funding sources like to see that a project, initiative, program, etc., will be sustainable without their ongoing support. Make sure your proposal matches the funding cycle of the grant source and describes

### Questions to Consider:

	Yes	No	Not Certain
Is my proposal well thought out, compelling in expressing the need and does it meet the intended need?			
Do I have buy-in and participation from appropriate parties?			
Have I identified who will execute, monitor and manage each part of the project?			
Have I fleshed out a concise and detailed budget?			
Does the proposal need to be written for technical or non-technical backgrounds?			
Is my proposal sustainable after the funding ends? If not, have I included a strategy of how to keep it moving forward?			

how your work will move on after funding from the grant source has ended.

### How are grants judged?

While each funding source will have their own criteria, there are some general ways in which grants are awarded. For local, state, and federal grants that are competitive, there are typically points applied to each guideline section. A reviewer is given guidelines to follow, and provided a "grade" (points) for each section. As you may have surmised, there are times that even if the proposal scores high points, it is simply a matter of politics based on geographic location, congressional area, etc.

In the case of private or corporate foundations, the director or some level of staff reviews the grant proposal based on the foundation's interests. At annual, quarterly or monthly meetings, the board

...half of all grant applications are poorly written, which may be an underestimate. And to be honest, almost all applications make for tedious reading for reviewers who are rarely more than temporarily and peripherally involved in the subject. First, to help ensure that a proposal ends up in the fundable range, which will generally be well above 90 points on a scale to 100, present a great, new, idea.

An excerpt from "Tracks to Success Notes from a Federal Reviewer" - an article posted on GrantStation.com.

### What is the difference between "Public Funding" and "Private Funding"?

Source: Adapted from "Getting Funded: A Complete Guide to Proposal Writing" by Mary Hall

Public	Private
Focus on functions usually impacting significant groups in society.	More likely to focus on emerging issues, new needs, populations not yet recognized as "special interests."
Have the most money and more likely to award large grants/contracts.	Often willing to pool resources with other funders.
More likely to pay all project cost and/or cover indirect costs.	Wide range in size of available grants - some can make very large awards, others are strictly for small local projects.
Application processes and deadlines are public information and very firm.	Full length, complex proposals not always necessary.
Accountable to elected officials if administrative staff don't follow the rules.	Can generally be much more informal and willing to help with the proposal process.
Typically have lengthy proposal requirements and complex application, administration and compliance procedures.	Average grant size usually much smaller and priorities can change very rapidly, continuation support can be difficult to predict.

members approve the grant proposals based upon the allotted amount of money they have to give.

### How do I construct a budget?

The budget proposal for any grant is important and must reflect the costs to be covered by the funding source as well as the applicant. The budget should tell the same story as the proposal narrative in terms of dollars.

Budgets line items will include personnel, operating costs and

travel. Always check the funding source for what they will and won't allow for grant funding. For example some grants may allow for per diem costs (typically meals, hotels and travel expenses), but may not allow for food expenditures.

It is best not to include a "miscellaneous" budget category. That being said, there are times where you may need to include a line item for contingencies. Particularly if the grant may not be awarded for up to a year after your

initial proposal is submitted. For example, items involving technology may change dramatically over the course of time and costs could vary substantially. In either case of miscellaneous or contingency, be certain that you clarify the purpose for the request. Small expenses should properly be allocated for supplies, transportation, photocopying, or a similarly appropriate category. Be sure to explain any line items that may need clarification and make sure you allow enough money in the budget to complete the project.

Some grant experts recommend that budgets aim for no more than 40% personnel costs, with 60% for direct program support. Of course, this guideline does not always apply to every grant opportunity. (Source: <https://www.grantproposal.info/>)

Indirect costs, matching funds, volunteer hours, and in-kind contributions are all elements that you will want to include in the overall proposal. Be specific about what you anticipate. If you are going to use other sources of funding for the project, describe the nature of the partnership. Include any itemized budget items that will be covered by other funding sources.

As you begin putting your proposal together, begin a list of potential expenses. You may not think of everything the first time. Continue to refer back to your list as you move through the proposal. Remember to include costs for the evaluation component as well.

Refrain from presenting an inflated budget in anticipation of having to negotiate. Provide enough detail to justify each budget item and justify the expense. When you are researching grant funders you may

be able to investigate previously funded proposals to see what was acceptable in terms of budgeted items.

### **Online Applications**

Many funding sources will provide guidelines on their website as well as in hard copy. However, in some cases you may find the funding source requires you to submit your proposal electronically. The funding source may also have very specific spacing instructions, not just for the actual word count, but some may specify character spacing.

In this scenario we recommend you develop your entire proposal in full, as a word document, or in whatever format you are accustomed. By developing the proposal in its entirety you are able to make adjustments, check word and/or character spacing and edit accordingly before pasting into the final online application.

Once the entire application has been submitted electronically, if the application process will allow, save a PDF copy to retain for your files. Always document either by phone or dated email that you have successfully submitted your application. If you receive an automated email response, save this electronic message either in your electronic file or print it and save it with a hard copy file of your entire submittal.

### **Meeting Deadlines**

All grants will have some type of funding cycle. There will be a stated time of when the application is due. You must submit your proposal before the deadline or it will not be considered. Make certain that you have enough time to complete the application thoroughly. Find out how you will

be notified that the proposal has been received. If this information is not provided, ask for a receipt, noting the hour and day at which the proposal was received.

Once your proposal is submitted, you may not be finished. Grant review procedures vary widely and the time between submittal and review can be as short as a few weeks and as long as several months. The funding source may approach you for additional information during this time.

### **Authorized Signatures and Proposal Specifications**

Each funding source will have its own specific requirements that you must follow. Details such as page numbers, font size, staples or paper clips may be noted in the guidelines, and you must follow the requirements to the letter.

An authorized signature will be required to submit most all proposals. Please make certain you have allowed adequate time to obtain the signature(s) you need. This would also apply if you are submitting letters of support.

### **Useful information before you submit your application**

- ♦ Have someone else review your application. Fresh eyes may catch typos and perhaps strengthen your narrative.
- ♦ Make sure you have left yourself plenty of time for the submittal deadline. Watch for things such as midday or close of business time constraints.
- ♦ Be mindful of all directions. Details such as page numbers, placements for headings, what is allowed as appendices, all those special instructions that can cause your proposal to get

scrapped because you did not carefully read the directions.

### **Useful information once you receive funding**

Once you have obtained the grant, there are several things you can do throughout the entire process to keep your funding source enthusiastic and supportive of your project.

- ◆ Clarify your responsibilities about reporting procedures right away. Keep them apprised of any changes that occur along the way. Work with them to accommodate the changes as needed to remain in good relations.
- ◆ Provide all detailed reports to the funding source in a timely manner, particularly any that are specified within the grant application. If there are no reporting guidelines, establish your own on a quarterly basis, simply to keep them informed of your progress.
- ◆ Remember to submit funding requests at the appropriate times, if required.

While not mandatory steps, these additional gestures can keep funding sources interested and perhaps willing to work with you again in the future on another endeavor:

- ◆ Send a thank you letter or hand written note upon obtaining the grant.
- ◆ Provide some type of public recognition of their contribution. Ideas could be as simple as an engraved plaque or letter to the editor or as elaborate as a luncheon or reception.

- ◆ Invite the staff of the funding organization to witness or participate in your project if possible.
- ◆ Provide the funding organization a scrapbook or photo album if appropriate.
- ◆ Create a website about the project and provide a link to the funder's website.

### **What if you don't get funded?**

Don't throw in the towel. Remember that most all grant proposals are competing in a large pool of applicants for a small pond of funds. Follow up with the funding source to find out about the evaluation of your proposal. It is perfectly acceptable to request feedback about the strengths and weaknesses of the proposal.

Depending upon what you learn, you may wish to resubmit to the same funding source at a later date, or the funding source may have references that would enable you to find another potential funding source elsewhere. The value of the feedback enables you to retool your proposal if needed for submitting elsewhere.

### **Why is KLC interested in helping cities write grants?**

For many years KLC has heard from elected officials that outside funding sources are needed in order to accomplish many projects or events that would otherwise go unfunded. Often the difficulty for the officials is that there is no one on the city's staff that has the training or capacity to locate grant sources or write the application. A survey of member cities conducted in 2010 revealed that grant writing training was a priority, and KLC has now made basic grant writing

### **Grant Writing Resources Online**

<http://grantstation.com>  
<https://www.grantproposal.info/>  
<https://candid.org/>  
<http://www.npguides.org/index.html>  
<https://www.grantwatch.com/>  
<http://www.grantfinder.com>

training and this workbook available as a resource to the members.

**Glossary of Terms****Audit**

An examination of an agency's accounting documents by an outside expert, generally after the end of the fiscal year. Upon review, the expert prepares an opinion as to the consistency and conformity with Generally Accepted Accounting Principals.

**Contracts**

A legal tool used by government agencies and other organizations for the procurement of goods or services.

**Direct and Indirect Costs**

Direct costs are those costs necessary to meet a project's specific programmatic or technical requirements.

Indirect costs are those costs incurred for common or joint activities. Indirect costs are either facilities related such as library, maintenance, utilities, depreciation, etc., or administratively related such as executive, finance, personnel, departmental, etc.

**Fiscal Year (FY)**

A 12-month accounting period. For some organizations the fiscal year begins July 1 and ends June 30. For federal government agencies, the fiscal year begins October 1 and ends September 30.

**Grantee**

The recipient of grant funds.

**Grantor**

The agency, foundation or governmental unit that awards grants.

**Grant Officer/Administrator**

The person employed by the funding source, who is responsible for monitoring expenditures and ensuring that grantor regulations are being followed. The grant officer handles the distribution of funds for the grantor, approves changes during the project, and potentially takes action on audit findings upon completion of the project.

**In-Kind**

A non-cash donation of equipment, labor, facilities or volunteer time contributed to the project.

**Lead Agency**

The applicant or organization with the primary responsibility of allocating and approving funding and who will ultimately be responsible for oversight of the grant.

**Matching Funds**

Funds contributed by outside entities to supplement the funding a grantor provides. Many funding agencies stipulate that part of the funding for the project must come from other sources or matching funds.

**Not-For-Profit**

An incorporated organization whereby none of the earnings are distributed to the stockholders, trustees or individuals. The 501(c) (3) is an incorporated not-for-profit with tax exempt status. Additionally, it may not actively influence legislation or participate in campaign activity for or against political candidates. A 501(c) (3) designation is eligible to receive tax deductible contributions.

**Project Director or Coordinator**

The person designated to initiate, plan, and carry out the project. This individual is responsible for submitting all documents and materials for the project and to ensure compliance with financial and administrative guidelines of the grant.

**Site Visit**

In some cases, prior to making an award, a funding source may visit a prospective grantee. The agency may want to obtain fiscal information, inspect facilities and equipment, and meet with representatives from the institution.

### Pre-Grant Preparation Checklist

If you can begin to answer the following questions about your project, it will make the grant writing process much easier.

- Summary:** Describe in some detail what the total project concept is. Explain the need. Discuss why it is important for your organization to have the project.
- Cost:** What do you see as potential cost factors? What portion do you see coming from the local area and what portion from outside funding sources? How will the project be managed over the long haul?
- Market:** Who is your market for the project, and how do you plan to market to them? Be sure your answers are reflected in the cost analysis.
- Readiness:** If you found the money, how soon could you start? What is your time line for completion? Is the project to be done in phases?
- Capacity:** How efficient will the organization be if you found the money? What have you done before that will convince the giver that you can follow through with your plans?
- Resumes:** Demonstrate the expertise of your organization to implement and administer the project and grant funds.
- Effectiveness:** Since you don't have this project now, how are you being effective in addressing the current need? What would be better if you received funding?
- Support:** Who else in the community is supportive of this project? How do you know? You will need some type of documentation to justify the project.
- Ongoing Support:** Articulate how your organization will sustain this project beyond the scope of the grant.
- Photos and Related Information:** If appropriate, include photos of any supporting documentation for this grant proposal.

This is a simple guide to help you see what will be expected when approaching funding sources, whether they are state or federal government or private foundations.

## Common Elements of a Grant Application

1. **Cover Letter:** A brief introduction of who is making the application, location of the project, reason for making the proposal, and how it may fit with broader objectives. *Example shown in Appendix A.*
2. **Executive Summary or Abstract:** Tell me a story! In short simple language, engage the reviewer in what the goal of the project is, why it is relevant and what outcomes to anticipate. *Example shown in Appendix B.*
3. **Introduction:** This section should explain who is making the application, what the project is for, who will benefit from the activities, and when the money will be needed. *Example shown in Appendix C.*
4. **Needs Statement:** Why is this project necessary? Clearly, concisely and specifically tell the funder why there is a need and who will benefit. *Example shown in Appendix D.*
5. **Objectives, Goals, Outcomes:** Goals focus on outcomes, not activities. Objectives are measurable and directly related to achieving your goals. Outcomes should be tangible. *Example shown in Appendix E.*
6. **Methods and Deliverables:** Give a clear description of what will take place in terms of strategies and activities that will accomplish desired results. If there are to be deliverables such as products, or elements such as presentations at conferences based upon the outcomes of the project, make note of what is anticipated. *Example shown in Appendix F.*
7. **Key Personnel:** Provide short biographic information about persons who will be working with the grant. Realize that administering a grant is time consuming and detailed records must be kept as the project is implemented, managed, closed and a final report submitted to the funding source. *Example shown in Appendix G.*
8. **Future Funding:** What are your strategies for continuing the project after the grant funding is complete? *Example shown in Appendix H.*
9. **Support:** Who else in the community is supportive of this project? How do you know? You will need some type of documentation to justify the project. *Example shown in Appendix I.*
10. **Evaluation:** How will you know the project was successful? Having built in benchmarks for success is generally helpful in evaluating at the end of the project. *Example shown in Appendix J.*
11. **Budget:** Provide a detailed line item summary of potential costs related to the project. *Example shown in Appendix K.*
12. **Appendices:** Many grants will require additional data about your organization and they will specify what is needed within their guidelines. This data could be anything from a list of your organization's board members, a financial statement, an indication of nonprofit corporate status, an organizational budget or an annual report. *Examples shown in Appendix L.*





### Exercises to Develop Your Proposal

- 3.** Briefly describe your project by developing a set of goals. Make a bullet point list of the key things that you want to accomplish with the grant funds. Use this exercise to pinpoint the constituencies that you want to reach. The more people that you are able to assist, the more points your application will score. Think outside the box.

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Questions to Consider:	Yes	No	Not Certain
Is there at least one objective or desired outcome for each stated need?			
Can each objective be measured?			
Is there a time frame noted for development, implementation and/or completion?			
Who will benefit from each objective?			
Is your narrative easy to follow?			
Are your objectives realistic for the amount you are requesting and the time you have stated you'll need to accomplish them?			









**Grant Cover Letter**

October 10, 2020

Accent on Architecture Grant  
Review Committee  
The American Architectural Foundation  
1799 New York Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20006-5292

Dear Grant Review Committee:

**Name of Your City or Organization** is pleased to submit an application for the 2021 American Architectural Foundation (AAF) Accent on Architecture grant program. The focal points of this proposal, the historic YMCA building, highlight collaboration between public and private organizations. The diverse partnerships utilized in this endeavor enabled the city to maintain and preserve the historic significance and visual impact of these structures while bringing market rate housing to our city.

**The Name of Your City or Organization** was created to **insert mission and/or purpose** and is committed to supporting our neighborhoods by highlighting their achievements and working to create "The Rise of The New City."

Thank you for your consideration of our application. We believe that this program can be replicated in many other urban settings across the country. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Authorized Signature  
Title

## Executive Summary

In 20\_\_ the **Name of Organization** renovated three historic properties in three separate cities in Kentucky. Today, **Name of Organization** requests funds for the amount of \$1,000,000.00. These funds will be used to assist 10 cities in the Commonwealth of Kentucky with building renovation projects that are associated with historic properties conducive to economic development. To this end, the **Name of Organization** is serving as the conduit as grant maker in an effort to save historic properties and bolster the economic well-being of our state.

The 10 cities have been identified as: (names have been removed)

The 10 building renovation projects have been identified as: (projects have been removed)

The **Name of Organization** is an innovative organization that has set key goals of building prosperity, helping organize community revitalization and taking real action in achieving a high quality of life and work in our cities and towns. Established as an economic development corporation, the mission of the **Name of Organization** rests on three tenets, the one pertaining to the needs expressed in this application is as follows:

- ◆ *That economic prosperity and wealth within our communities will have to be created. Economic prosperity will be clearly distinguished from the dated definition of economic development that focused on creating "jobs" instead of on building livable communities. Wealth created within communities consists not only of meaningful work but also of characteristics that add quality to our lives.*

The **Name of Organization** Board of Directors have expressed a strong desire to see the projects outlined above come to fruition because of their historical and architectural value as well as the enormous economic impact their restoration can have on the cities involved.

In each of these projects, the following elements exist:

- ◆ Complete and detailed plans of action;
- ◆ Feasibility issues have been addressed;
- ◆ Implementation plans are in place;
- ◆ Time lines established;
- ◆ Preliminary budgets have been determined; and
- ◆ Additional financial resources have been identified and in some cases obtained.

The enthusiasm of each community for their project is reflected in their offering to contribute more than 10 percent of the costs for their individual plans. In each city, the projects that have been submitted have determined completion dates of fall 2020, therefore, we at the **Name of Organization** will be prepared to grant funds by Spring \_\_\_\_.

## Introduction

**Name of Organization** is eagerly pursuing opportunities to assist cities in economic development projects throughout the state of Kentucky. The mission of **Name of Organization** is to support local governments in planning, funding and implementing economic development projects important to their vitality.

**Name of Organization** was established in 2010 with the intent to partner with nonprofit organizations, the government, corporations, leaders, educational institutions, the media, other foundations and, most importantly, citizens to achieve its goals.

The **Name of Organization** offers a three-pronged approach to helping cities.

- ◆ That economic prosperity and wealth within our communities will have to be created. Economic prosperity will be clearly distinguished from the dated definition of economic development that focused on creating "jobs" instead of on building livable communities. Wealth created within communities consists not only of meaningful work but also of characteristics that add quality to our lives.
- ◆ That the strong local leadership capacity that exists in our state must be expanded. We have for too long failed to recognize that statewide progress will rely on the efforts of local leaders. Leadership is being defined in new ways, and more citizens must be encouraged to meet the challenges of civic involvement.
- ◆ Citizens must have an opportunity to learn about the challenges and opportunities of governing to give them tools they can use to make their communities better places.

Nationwide, statistics show that shopping dollars spent downtown have a greater return on investment back into the community:

- ◆ 6 cents of every dollar spent with a "big box" retailer is retained/recirculated in a community (Source: Rocky Mountain Institute)
- ◆ 20 cents of every dollar spent with a chain store is retained/recirculated in a community (Source: Small Business Administration)
- ◆ 60 cents of every dollar spent with a sole proprietorship is retained/recirculated in a community (Source: Small Business Administration)
- ◆ In 2017, every \$1 of public money invested in Main Street communities leveraged over \$26 of private investment. (Source: National Main Street Center)

## Needs Assessment

**Name of Organization** is interested in offering grant resources to assist cities in their community development projects. We quickly realized by working closely with several cities that many cities have meager financial resources that are often spread thin to accomplish community development projects.

To help leverage their dollars, we at **Name of Organization** wish to offer grant funds to bridge financial gaps on some of these projects. Examples of possible projects might vary from utility and technological infrastructure, building rehabilitation or new construction projects to sidewalk development, senior housing developments or establishing financial loan pools. For this application, the Foundation has chosen to support 10 historic buildings as renovation projects for the purpose of economic development.

In surveying our Kentucky cities, we discovered that 94 percent of our cities are of populations under 5,000. This makes a very lean tax base from which to implement special development projects. For example, it was learned from the survey that over 60 percent of these cities have been unable to instigate much needed sidewalk renewal projects because they have not had adequate funding.

By the new fiscal year, **Name of Organization** will add an additional \$5 million to its grant fund for assisting 10 percent more of our member cities.

Currently, the **Name of Organization** has only been able to assist about 1 to 2 percent of our members due to our limited financial resources. By obtaining an additional \$5 million, more cities will be assisted in special project funding.

The **Name of Organization** program is dedicated to helping our cities help themselves. We support local governments in planning, funding and implementing economic development projects important to their vitality. By offering additional funds for their specific projects, we are benefiting at least 10 percent of our client base.

The additional funding made available from this request will be added to our grant funds at the **Name of Organization**. This grant fund has been established with specific guidelines and criteria, and each of our cities has been availed this material. There are application and funding deadlines and administrative obligations that each city will adhere to.

## Goals, Objectives and Outcomes

### Project Goals

1. To bring together representation of all segments of **Name of Community** to identify the strengths of the county/community.
2. Identify the weaknesses that need to be improved.
3. Develop consensus as to the direction for opportunities for the future.
4. Create a leadership team to sustain the initiative after the first phase is completed.
5. To build bridges through enhanced communication for the benefit of social, economic, educational, and political segments of the community.

### Project Objectives

The objectives of this project will be:

- ◆ Identification of the community's needs.
- ◆ Establish a community priorities list.
- ◆ Develop consensus.
- ◆ Cultivate a process of enhanced, effective communication.
- ◆ Develop an understanding of the community's big picture - a laundry list of initiatives and projects.

### Project Outcomes

1. Identify and organize a diverse representation of the community's leadership to develop a strategic plan for the community.
  - ◆ Involve 30 - 40 community/county citizens to come together to build consensus for the future of **Name of Community** and surrounding areas.
  - ◆ To engage this core group in the four community meetings as outlined in the project.
2. Engage young people in a discussion about the community and its future.
3. Cultivate a new pool of leadership that will become involved in this project and in the community.
4. Create an actionable and practical strategic plan to move the community forward.
5. Implement the plan through a specific set of action steps.

## Methods and Deliverables

Step 1. Host a leadership gathering of the **Name of Organization** and the major employers within the community. During this session conduct a needs analysis of what the employers are going to need in the next three to five years, such as:

- ◆ Determine job viability - will they be maintaining the jobs they currently have?
- ◆ What can the city, county and schools do to help them keep and grow jobs?
- ◆ What are the skills their employees need to be successful?
- ◆ Approximately how many employees will they need in the coming years? What other companies would be an asset for them in terms of recruitment?
- ◆ What should the community leaders know to help their businesses do well and continue providing jobs within the community?
- ◆ What is their economic outlook for the next three to five years?

Step 2. In 2019, over 20 percent of high school students dropped out of **Name of County** schools. In addition, 25 percent of third graders are working below grade level in mathematics while 68 percent of seventh graders are below grade level in math. This is a concern if the community is to be attractive to potential employers in the future. Please contact \_\_\_\_\_ ask her to visit your community leaders and introduce this program to your community.

Step 3. In the attached report of reading and math achievement of students in **Name of County**, test scores revealed that 81 third graders and over 70 percent of seventh graders in the County are not reading at grade level. To help your community with this concern, please contact \_\_\_\_\_. Ask her to work with local leadership to identify and train local reading coaches for the students that need remedial assistance in reading.

## Key Personnel

Name:

Title:

Bio: The **Name of Organization's** Project Manager is professionally trained and nationally certified. Based on the training provided by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, **Name of Organization's** Project Manager is a Certified Main Street Manager. The Project Manager is also certified by the Grantsmanship Training Center, an internationally recognized training program. Other staff members of the organization's program are specialists in their fields of history and preservation, economic development, real estate development and related fields that specialize in downtown services.

Name

Title:

Bio: The **Name of Organization's** Accountant is professionally trained and certified by the Kentucky Board of Accountancy. With more than 35 years of experience in corporate as well as nonprofit accounting standards, the Accountant is prepared to manage the day-to-day documentation necessary for this grant application.

### Future Funding

<b>Pro-forma Budget (2003-2007)</b>					
Projected Revenues	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Cash Forward	0	76,341	18,614	9,142	5,210
RUS Grant	230,000	0	0	0	0
In-kind Match	22,060	22,060	0	20,000	20,000
Training			8,000	8,000	8,000
Cash from Other Sources			19,560	25,640	26,135
Potential Online Procurement Savings	3,000	3,360	3,763	4,214	4,721
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>255,060</b>	<b>85,955</b>	<b>49,937</b>	<b>66,996</b>	<b>66,066</b>
Projected Expenses	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Equipment & Installation	76,000	0	0	0	0
ISP Fees	0	0	2,520	2,520	2,700
Computers & Printers	24,000	0	0	20,000	15,000
Wiring & Hookup	10,000	0	0	0	0
Tables	3,780	0	0	0	1,000
Chairs	1,764	0	500	500	500
Paper	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,400	1,500
Ink/Toner	1,575	1,575	1,575	1,700	1,700
Staff	15,000	15,000	17,000	17,000	20,000
Training	10,000	10,000	0	0	0
Maintenance	10,000	10,000	10,000	12,000	12,000
KLC Admin Fee	6,000	6,000	0	0	0
Contingencies (5%)	11,500	11,500	0	0	0
Depreciation on Computers	8,000	8,000	8,000	6,666	6,666
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>\$178,819</b>	<b>\$67,341</b>	<b>\$40,795</b>	<b>\$61,786</b>	<b>\$66,066</b>

**Letter of Support**

November 5, 2022

Roberta D. Purcell, Assistant Administrator  
Telecommunications Program  
Rural Utilities Service  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
STOP 1590, Room 4056-S  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20250-1590

Re: City of \_\_\_\_\_, Kentucky Broadband IT Pilot Grant

Dear Mrs. Purcell:

The **Name of Organization** is pleased to endorse the city of \_\_\_\_\_'s application to participate in the RUS Broadband IT Pilot Grant Program. **Name of Organization** has invested a considerable amount of resources in bringing 21st Century technology to the organization's 360+ members.

It is with pleasure, therefore, that the **Name of Organization** agrees to act as guarantor to secure the local match for the city of \_\_\_\_\_, Kentucky. We believe that it is important to emphasize our commitment to our small rural cities by giving them the full support of the **Name of Organization**.

The RUS Program will give the citizens of \_\_\_\_\_ an opportunity that would not have been possible otherwise. Please accept this letter as our endorsement and guarantee for their application.

Thank you for your consideration of this application. We hope that soon every resident of the city of \_\_\_\_\_ will have access to broadband Internet service.

Sincerely,

Authorized Signature  
Title

## Evaluation

The success of our project will be reflected in the completed projects by Fall 2025. The rehabilitation of the structures and their ongoing economic development efforts will be our unit of measuring.

Within 30 days of obtaining grant funds from our sources, the **Name of Organization** will submit written grant approval forms to the 10 pre-selected cities. Upon their returned signed agreements, confirmation will be mailed to the Grant Provider Foundation with all necessary reports.

Likewise, within a week of obtaining the final documentation that funds have been expended, the **Name of Organization** will submit a written report to the Grant Provider Foundation acknowledging the completion of the project.

In the event there are any unforeseen delays or any significant unexpected difficulties, the **Name of Organization** will inform the Grant Provider Foundation in writing.

Further, for two consecutive years at the end of each calendar year beginning in January of 2022, each project from the 10 cities will submit to the Grant Provider Foundation a report describing how the property is being utilized and how the phased developments are progressing.

**Budget Example**

	<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>
1. Engineering, base station, installation, activation 12 wireless modems (1 fire station/police state, 1 city hall and 10 at community center service (12 total) for 24 months	\$ 76,000.00	\$ 76,000.00	\$ -
2. Computers & printers - 12 x \$2,000	\$ 24,000.00	\$ 24,000.00	\$ -
3. Wiring & hookup	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 10,000.00	\$ -
4. Tables 12 x \$180	\$ 3,780.00	\$ 3,780.00	\$ -
5. Chairs 12 x \$84	\$ 1,764.00	\$ 1,764.00	\$ -
6. Paper & supplies \$50 per month x 12 comput- ers x 2 years	\$ 2,400.00	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,200.00
7. Ink/toner \$75/mo x 12 computers x 2 years	\$ 3,150.00	\$ 1,575.00	\$ 1,575.00
8. Staff (after hours & Saturday) 1 person x 24/week x \$12/hr x 2 years	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 15,000.00
9. Training provided by NewCities Leadership Center 5 days per year x 2 year x \$2,000 per day	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 10,000.00
10. Maintenance contract \$2,500 per quarter x 2 years	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00
12. Contingencies	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 10,000.00
13. Administrative fee \$500 per month x 24 month	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 6,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 213,094.00</b>	<b>\$ 164,319.00</b>	<b>\$ 48,775.00</b>

**Appendices**

- ◆ **Name of Organization** 501(c)(3) Designation
- ◆ 990/Audit Statement/Operational Budget
- ◆ Board of Directors List/Dossier
- ◆ **Name of Organization** Grant Agreement Document
- ◆ Project Overview/Fact Sheet
- ◆ Photographs
- ◆ Any Written/Photographic Documentation of Each Project
- ◆ Dossier of Development Team Members

Sherman Bowman, City Councilman and Chairman of the Bonnieville Opportunity Advancement Zone



*Sherman Bowman said Bonnieville came into grant writing out of a sense of "desperation." He, along with five others, became council members when the Governor's Office called and asked them to fill positions since not enough people ran for council. Once in office, they decided if they were going to be on council, they were going to make a difference. One of the great challenges was resources to take on some city issues. They got to work.*

**Q. How did you find out about the grants(s)?**

We called a lot of people. We worked with the Kentucky League of Cities and learned about the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) and the Brushy Fork Institute. We wanted to involve the community in planning our strategy so that became the focus of our first grants.

**Q. What types of grants have you applied for?**

We've gotten four grants in the last three years.

Brushy Fork Institute: \$10,000 Strategic Planning

Brushy Fork Institute: \$10,000 Image Committee Funds for Beautification and Signage

Brushy Fork Institute: \$10,000 Feasibility Study

KY Heritage Commission - Frenchman's Knob Development: \$342,000 (Grant writing assistance was provided by the Resource Conservation and Development)

An additional \$89,000 that the county applied for to get a parking lot and road.

**Q. How did the application process work for you?**

There were so many things we wanted and needed to do; yet we knew we had to be realistic about what we could actually accomplish. We also wanted to make sure that our application came through as credible, that we could really do what we set out to do.

**Q. Why do you think you were successful?**

Nothing breeds success like success. We really wanted our citizens to be involved in all the work we were doing. On the front end, we worked with the KLC staff and hosted a public meeting where we asked our residents to tell us what was important to them. We were shocked when we had about a third of our population turn out for that meeting. I think this happened because we kept inviting them to participate. People will come if you give them a personal invitation.

Secondly, I think we were successful because our people could see the change taking place. The grant reviewers could see the people involved with our work. They could also see the need - the pictures told the story of how we needed to improve our situation.

**Q. What were some of the lessons learned that you would like to share with other cities that are learning how to write grants?**

- ◆ Ask your local and state agencies what is available, and what funds would your city be eligible to receive.
- ◆ Go to foundations and nonprofits after you have something to build on.
- ◆ Don't be afraid to ask questions.
- ◆ Go to other organizational meetings within your community, find out who else is applying for money. See if you can locate partners and/or supporters for your project.
- ◆ Go to or at least call Frankfort, talk with your representatives, let them know what you're trying to accomplish and ask them for support. Better yet, get them to come and see what you're trying to do.
- ◆ Invite people in to see what you're doing, not just your local residents. Invite the state representatives and cabinet officials; you might be surprised who will find your project of interest.
- ◆ Match people up to their particular interest and remember to not overwork your volunteers.
- ◆ Celebrate your successes and say "thank you" often.

**Q. How has grant writing helped your city?**

Working with grants has built capacity in our city, and by that I mean that we now have people that will step up and take a leadership role. Before, we couldn't even get people to run for city council, let alone show up for a clean up day in the city. I continue to be amazed at the dedication of our volunteers. Our people see that they can make a difference and particularly when they see grant funds coming our way, they're willing to keep the momentum going.



**Q. What types of grants has the city of Greenville applied for?**

Most of our grant applications have been for state and federal dollars.

We were fortunate to receive a Transportation Enhancement grant (TE-21) for a much needed streetscape project and a Safe Routes to School grant (SRTS) to repair and construct new sidewalks near our elementary and middle school. Once we completed those projects we reapplied for "phase II" for each project and, again, were successful on both attempts.

We also applied to the federal government for Economic Development Administration (EDA) funds totaling a little over a million dollars. This grant funded three different water projects:

1. Dredge the city's primary water reservoir to increase capacity by 50 percent;
2. Lay a 6" water line from a recently drilled well some 3.5

miles from town, thereby, supplying our reservoir with quality well water in times of drought; and

3. Replace an old 1940s WPA waterline from the center of town to our hospital, significantly improving the water pressure along that street and the hospital.

The city applied for and was awarded an efficiency grant for \$125,000 to rewire our water treatment plant, which has 1930s wiring.

We've also received some smaller grants for land, water, recreation, hazard mitigation and homeland security.

**Q. How did you find out about the grants(s)?**

We learned about each of these grants through our friends at our Pennyriple Area Development District (PADD) office. They've been a great help in not only alerting us about them, but also in helping us write them. I have to say it has been a good "team effort" with the mayor providing the leadership and everyone sharing a progressive spirit and a desire to make a change in our community and downtown.

Previously, I had never worked in government, nor had I ever written or even seen a grant.

**Q. How did the application process work for you?**

I realized early on that if you don't get past "the first review," you're not going to be successful.

I knew the only chance we had in this initial step was to capture their interest right off the bat

Though it wasn't asked for, I added an index so the reviewers could easily

find things within the application. I tried to make everything about the grant "reviewer friendly" and developed a city logo. Small details in a presentation make a big difference.

When describing your project you need to have someone on your staff that is skilled in telling the story.

Not only must you "sell" your project... you need a voice at the state level that will "go to bat" for your project. Your state representative or senator can make all the difference in getting the attention of those who administer the grants. But keep in mind they cannot help you if your grant does not score well with the grant reviews. Once it has scored well and is "on the front page" of their list, it often is a political decision and goes beyond a simple letter of support within the application. Your job is to make sure it gets to that point and then ask for help from those with influence!

**Q. How much success have you had in obtaining grants?**

Humbly, I would say we have probably gotten 75 percent of the grants of which we have applied. Keep in mind that tenacity can make a difference. I do everything I can to make it successful especially in the grant writing stage. And then, once you are awarded a grant, you must do your level best to make sure

*(continued next page)*



# GRANT Q&A

everything complies with the grant requirements and the contract you sign with the state or federal government.

**Q. What were some of the lessons learned that you would like to share with other cities that are learning how to write grants?**

Don't sell your city short because of your population; it won't be just "big cities" that get the grants but those who effectively demonstrate a need.

Do your best to sell your project! On any grant that is written, stand back and look at it again, have someone else take a look, be willing to spend the time and effort to keep improving upon it. After a few days away from it, I would come back and look at it and think: "I can make this sound better." And I would do it.

First impressions are important... because they might be your last! Of

course, your "first impression" is the first page of your grant. I asked a local printing company to help me with the cover layout and paper quality so that it felt and looked more professional. I think that made a good impression.

Lesson learned - your hard work can pay off and make a tremendous impact on your city!

We felt so strongly about the importance of grants that we also sent two staff members to a grant writing course at Western Kentucky University. Subsequently, they have been very successful in getting grants for our Arts and Cultural Center.

**Q. How has grant writing helped your city?**

It has been an amazing adventure, and created a tremendous physiologically impact! We are no longer "a city on the decline" but

rather "a city on the move." It has resulted in, not only compliments for the mayor and the city, but a lot of volunteerism has evolved from the community.

We have seen, not only a sense of willingness among our citizens, but also a spirit of cooperation among property owners and business leaders. We've seen painting of storefronts in the downtown, creation of a concert series in our downtown and the renovation of our court house which has contributed to more businesses locating downtown and existing businesses improving financially in spite of the economy.

The grants have provided us the opportunity to make historic improvements to our city and rediscover a sense of community pride and optimism.









**Kentucky League of Cities**

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