



Grant Writing

WRITING BOX

What is a grant?

A grant is a financial award given to a qualified recipient for a specific purpose. There are a variety of grants available to organizations, researchers, students, and other individuals. Anyone can apply for a grant so long as they meet the eligibility requirements—although getting grants usually requires strong writing skills. Grant funds do not need to be paid back as long as the grant requirements are met.

What is grant writing?

Grant writing refers to completing an application for a financial grant, also known as a grant proposal or submission. Usually it is done in response to a Request for Proposals or RFP.

Why write a grant?

Grants provide funding to help organizations with projects or services that they otherwise wouldn't be able to do or provide. Grants can also help fund things like college costs or scientific research.

Who can apply for a grant?

There are many types of grants, each with its own requirements. Again, these are usually provided in a Request for Proposals (RFP). Check the eligibility requirements for every grant carefully to make sure you or your organization qualify to apply. For example, applications may be restricted to non-profits, new businesses, or to specific types of programs or individuals.

Types of Grants and Where to Find Them

The following list is a sampling of the types of grants that may be available to you and where to find further information. There are many other grants you can find with some web searches. Try searching for broad terms (federal education grants) as well as local and specific ones (Washtenaw education grants for non-traditional students).

Federal Grants

- The federal government offers grants to nonprofits, educational institutions, and state and local governments as well as grants for students, scientific research, and small businesses.
- A searchable list of federal grants and tips for writing them can be found here: <https://www.grants.gov>
- Grants available through the Small Business Association are listed here: <https://www.sba.gov/funding-programs/grants/grants-programs-eligibility>
- Information about federal educational grants such as Pell Grants is contained on this site: <https://studentaid.gov/understand-aid/types/grants>

Foundation or Business Grants

- These are usually focused on awarding grants to nonprofits to support an organization's general operations or for program development. The latter can include money for equipment and technical assistance as well as start-up money for new organizations.
- Information on foundation and business grants in Michigan can be found here: <https://www.michiganfoundations.org/resources/information-seeking-foundation-corporate-grants>
- A subscription service that provides a directory of over 18 million corporate and foundation grants is located here: <https://fconline.foundationcenter.org>
- Sample documents and other resources for finding and writing grants are contained on this site: <https://grantspace.org>
- A sample form for a foundation grant application is contained here: <https://www.michiganfoundations.org/resources/common-grant-application-form>
- You can also check individual companies for grant opportunities, such as: <https://empoweringmichigan.com/foundation/grants/>

State Grants

- States also have grant programs, offering grants to nonprofits, educational institutions and teachers, local governments and

municipalities, as grants for students, scientific research, and small businesses.

- Grants available through the Michigan Department of Education are listed here:

<https://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,4615,7-140-5236---,00.html>

- Department of Agriculture grants, including food safety and craft beverages are found here:

https://www.michigan.gov/mdard/0,4610,7-125-1570_51684---,00.html

- Michigan Council for Arts and Culture offers numerous grants from arts in education to emergency relief, listed here:

<https://www.michiganbusiness.org/industries/mcaca/mcaca-grants/>

Local Grants

- Cities, townships, and local municipalities also offer grants to organizations and individuals.

- Fundraising and grant services information is contained on this site:

<http://www.fundsnet.com>

- Fundsnet Services lists grants in Michigan:

<http://www.fundsnet.com/searchresult/65/Michigan-Grants/3.html>

- Community Foundation of Southeast Michigan offers grants in this geographical area: <https://cfsem.org/scholarships/>

- Ann Arbor Community Foundation is another source of local grants in the larger Ann Arbor area: <https://www.aaacf.org/>

- Michigan Grant Watch, <https://michigan.grantwatch.com>, a for fee service, includes examples and different categories of grants

- **Specific Grants**

- If you or your organization fall into a specific category, try searching for that type of grant. For example, here's a list of grants specifically for women in the arts:

<https://www.grantsforwomen.org/2018/12/best-grants-for-women-in-arts.html>

What are the components of a grant?

Each granting organization will have specific requirements, usually spelled out on their RFP, but these are some common components. Not all may be required. Use active, dynamic words throughout your grant application, such as *dedicated*, *educate*, *collaborate*, and *outreach* to show a commitment to your community. Terms like

maximize resources convey a willingness to spend funds wisely. ***See the attached sample grant for examples of these components.***

- a. **Cover Letter:** If possible, this should be written specifically to the appropriate contact person at the organization where you are applying. Give a brief outline of the needs addressed in the proposal and show that you are familiar with the organization's mission. Emphasize how this project contributes to these goals.
- b. **Abstract or Summary:** A brief description of the program you are requesting funds for and of the information that will follow. Also include the dollar amount you are requesting.
- c. **Introduction:** Introduces your organization and your mission. What makes you unique? What are your accomplishments? This section helps establish your credibility and gives the reader a clear picture of your mission.
- d. **Statement of Need:** Describe the opportunity you're presenting, or the problem you need to solve, and explain why you require a grant to achieve your goals.
- e. **Objectives:** These refine your idea and show exactly what you expect to accomplish in response to the need. If you have other funding sources for the project, you can mention them here. Include information about what communities or groups will be served by your program. For example, new moms, retirement home residents, or third graders.
- f. **Methods:** How the project will be conducted and what you will do to accomplish your objectives within a stated time frame. If some of your methods are currently unknown or are in a preliminary state, indicate this and indicate if possible how you are working to resolve these issues. Only promise what you know you can accomplish or deliver.
- g. **Evaluation / Outcomes:** Provide the ways you intend to measure your results and effectiveness. This should correspond to your objectives and could include things like audience numbers, literacy measurements, or seeds planted.
- h. **Future Funding:** If your project will run indefinitely, you may need to present feasible plans to sustain your project.
- i. **Budget:** This is an itemized list of income and expenses that shows precisely how much funding is needed and how it will be used to accomplish the objectives.

Some Tips to Help with Writing a Grant

As you write your grant proposal, make sure to keep the following in mind:

- Follow the application guidelines and requirements exactly and answer all questions completely. Again, refer to and follow the Request for Proposals (RFP) if one is provided.
- Be realistic and don't over promise. Make sure you can complete your objectives so you don't risk having to repay your grant.
- Research the organization thoroughly and make sure to notice the pictures, language, and tone—these reflect their values and image. Use similar (not exact) language, pictures, and tone in your application to mirror their own.
- The cover letter is your first opportunity to impress the grantor. Make it count.
- Use clear, concise, specific language and include explanations for any acronyms or unfamiliar terms.

Some Samples to Help You as You Write Your Own Grant

- Award winning grants:
<https://grantstation.com/writing-proposals/samples-of-award-winning-grant-proposals>
- Successful grant application:
<https://www2.ed.gov/programs/iegpslrc/lrc-sampleapp-gwu.pdf>
- Selection of different types of grant proposals:
<https://charity.lovetoknow.com>
- Numerous full grants (free but requires registration):
<https://grantspace.org/resources/sample-documents/>

In addition, see the grants on the next pages.

Other Sources and Resources

- What is a grant? <https://learn.g2.com/what-is-a-grant>
- Grant writing tips and flowchart: [Writingcenter.unc.edu](https://writingcenter.unc.edu)
- Parts of a grant: [GrantSpace.org](https://grantspace.org) <https://studentaid.gov>
- Federal grant resources: <https://www.grants.gov>
- Types of grants: <https://mcf.org/common-types-grants>

- Writing a Successful Grant Proposal:
<https://mcf.org/sites/default/files/files/pages/writingagrantproposal.pdf>
- Grant writing information: <https://grantspace.org>
- Examples of Successful Grant Proposals:
https://charity.lovetoknow.com/Examples_of_Successful_Grant_Proposals
- Other samples:
<https://learning.candid.org/resources/sample-documents/?tab=tab-full-proposals>

For additional help in grant writing, YpsiWrites offers one-to-one consulting. For more information, see ypsiwrites.com.

Grant Writing Example

Art Grant Application: The Shiny Seed

Project Name: The Shiny Seed

Amount Requested: \$4100

What is your mission / vision / communication / goal / inspiration with this project?

With The Shiny Seed, our goal is to inspire people. This inspiration may come from the joyfully sparkling leaves, the otherworldly fruit glowing from within, or something else entirely. We hope to create a chain reaction of inspiration. We plant seeds of inspiration in those who experience our tree. These seeds of inspiration grow and take root, encouraging people to create, build, and inspire each other, ultimately supporting the ideas and creativity of many.

Change begins with a single moment. We made that moment into this sculpture.

Please provide a 1 - 2 sentence concise description of your project describing in layman's terms what your project is or will look like.

- We will make updates and improvements to The Shiny Seed to make it even better.
- The electronics and fruits will be redesigned to improve performance and stability.
- We also plan to rework the root system and rewrap parts of the tree and create a space under the tree for interactive events.
- We will create wood benches with faux stained glass detail to create a seating area for relaxing and under-tree events like commitment ceremonies and storytelling.

These are all improvements on the existing 18-foot tall metal tree covered with metal leaves and LED-lit fruit. These fruit glow and change colors for an effect that can be joyful, ethereal, otherworldly, mesmerizing, spooky, or all of these, depending on the viewer.

The tree is built with a welded steel core, and meticulously covered with aluminum 8 gauge wire wrapping to create an effect that reflects nature and technology in

harmony.

The branches have lighted fruit that house a set of programmable LEDs inside that glow and change colors. The tree also has stainless steel leaves that have a mirror polish on one side that catch the light.

What experience does your team bring to this project to ensure its completion?

We created the sculpture in 2016, and have transported and erected it in downtown Grand Rapids for the Grand Rapids ArtPrize. The Shiny Seed was selected by popular vote as one of the top ten finalists out of hundreds of art pieces.

Please describe (in detail) what your project will look like, including materials, dimensions, sound components, interactivity, etc (we strongly encourage inclusion of any images, drawings or computer assisted drawings).

The Shiny Seed is in eight parts that come together to become the tree. Overall, the dimensions are 18' high x 16-18' wide in the branches and 4 ft at the base. The entire sculpture is encircled 8 gauge aluminum fencing wire.

The trunk is 8' tall and 3' in diameter on a 4' steel base. The base will be anchored to the ground in at least six places by at least 4 feet of rebar.

The branches range from 7' - 9' long, have a diameter of 8" at thickest, and taper to points. Because of the way the branches splay out they can be 5' - 7' wide.

The branches are decorated with 20 orbs- the fruit- that are filled with custom multi-colored LEDs. These illuminate the piece at night with a myriad of mesmerizing patterns. The tree also has several hundred stainless steel leaves with a mirror finish on one side. These move organically in the breeze and reflect the sunlight during the day and the lighted fruit at night.

There is a small, elaborately carved wooden fairy door nestled into the base of the tree.

Please detail your Project Timeline, including when construction stages are to be completed, materials to be purchased, etc.

February

- Take tree out of storage and acquire new workspace
- Design new jigs

- Remove existing lighting from the fruit orbs and begin new jiggling and light installation

March

- Purchase materials
- Begin updates on branches
- Rewiring & electrical updates
- Start installing lights into the fruits

April

- Finish any structural work
- Finish wrapping of tree
- Verify working order of all lights

May

- Inspect components and do last minute fixes
- Team training
- Dry run to fully assemble the tree with build personnel

June

- Install on site
- Take down following event

How many people are needed on site for initial build?

7-10

If partially funded, how do you plan to raise the rest of the funds?

We are self funding workspace and storage space, initial tree build. To bring this to Lakes of Fire we are planning to use fundraisers (GoFundMe, look for a benefactor, fundraising party/event, etc.) to supplement the funding we receive from GLEA.

What is your safety plan?

- We will have gloves, a fully stocked first aid kit, and other safety gear onsite with the tree for setup and teardown.
- The tree will be anchored with 4' rebar in at least 6 places.
- We will ground the tree in case of lightning strike.
- The fruits are solidly structured with copper ribbing and break without shattering. The fruit are over 8 feet off the ground. If any are broken, we will place pieces into a solid, lidded container.
- The tree will be fenced off and signed very well with warnings to prevent climbing.

What is your cleanup plan?

- Create grid under tree
- Inspect each section of the grid
 - Metal detector
 - Visual inspection of each section of the grid
- Remove all physical traces of the tree when we leave

Please outline your budget for this project. Be very specific on what your material needs are.

- \$1200 Transportation: 26 ft Truck rental, packing materials, gas
- \$600 Electrical: Lights, wiring, new powersource, new fruit
- \$1200 Installation: Cherry picker and scaffolding rental
- \$400 Materials for tree: Aluminum wire, rebar
- \$300 Benches: Materials, CNC machine usage (seating and for events)
- \$200 Signage: Safety, nighttime fencing
- \$200 Gas: To run the generator to light the fruit

Annotated Grant Writing Example

Art Grant Application: The Shiny Seed

B: Abstract

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C. Introduction

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