



GRANT FUNDING GUIDE

STARTING OFF...

After determining the need for grant funding, search for specific grant funding opportunities. Fire service specific grant funding, on a federal level, is available through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) website which is located at: <https://www.fema.gov/grants>. FEMA grant sources include, specifically, the Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) which funds, among other priorities, training and equipment.

Grant writing firms can offer additional assistance. For example, FireGrantsHelp.com, offers a searchable database by category (federal, state, or corporate). Search results provide a brief synopsis, application period dates, contact information, links to the grant home page and more.

RESEARCH, RESEARCH, RESEARCH

Fully understand the particular grant eligibility requirements, priorities of the funding entity and match requirements. A primary reason that grant applications are denied is failure to follow direction and applying for items that are not aligned with the priorities of the grant. Contact with representatives from the Grantor, early in the process, for clarification, guidance and assistance, allows for a professional relationship to be established. Close attention to program guidance is essential in constructing your application.

CONDUCT A NEEDS/RISK ASSESSMENT

Identify through a formalized process why what you are requesting is needed and vital to your service and your community. Quantified data can demonstrate to the Grantor the actual need and expected outcome, if the grant is funded.

PRE-PLAN THE WRITING OF YOUR NARRATIVE

Allow a significant period of advance time to write the narrative of why it is imperative to have your request funded. Successful applications clearly articulate that a formalized process was utilized in conducting a needs and/or community risk assessment which demonstrated there is a need for what you are requesting and the impact to your operations if the request is not funded, particularly as it may relate to safety, operational outcomes and service delivery expectations/standards. Most grant narratives have specific word count limits

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which require you to be concise in your writing – assuring your writing style utilizes the maximum word count to your benefit.

DEMONSTRATE FINANCIAL NEED

As part of your narrative, clearly articulate the fiscal challenges facing your community and organization that make grant funding a necessity. These justifications should be quantitative in nature utilizing examples of decrease revenues, uncontrollable expense increases (i.e. insurance and health premiums). Additional examples include other fiscal pressures which limit your organizations ability to fund internally - be as specific as possible.

Proofread your narrative several times. Leave enough time to ask colleagues who have been successful in grant awards to review your narrative and provide feedback prior to submitting. It may be beneficial to review other successful narratives that have been awarded funding by asking colleagues if they would be willing to share their grant submissions to benchmark from other peers as to writing style and justifications. Serving as a grant peer reviewer, if the opportunity allows, may also add experience to learn the elements of robust and well developed grant proposals. Your narrative should also articulate a clear cost benefit analysis for the amount of money you are requesting and what can be expected for a return on these monies, if awarded. An example may be the requested funding of a training facility/tower cost versus the estimated life expectancy and projected number of firefighters trained with that investment over the number of projected years of use.

CONSIDER PARTNERING WITH A GRANT WRITING SERVICE

Professional & seasoned grant writing services will work with you to collect necessary data and needs assessment(s) and work with you to craft your narrative and application on your behalf. WHP can assist you with identifying experts to facilitate your success.

- Once you are confident that you have reviewed and re-reviewed as well as had peer review, submit and confirm receipt.
- Obtain letters of support from members of your elected officials that underscore the need for and importance of your organization receiving funding. Additional letters of support from key stakeholders also demonstrates a coalition of support.
- Even if unsuccessful, being able to articulate your plans for the future, will further help you and your stakeholders know the importance of your grant needs.

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