



Reading Grant Solicitations

Often, the reason a grant was not funded is because the proposal did not follow the guidelines or submission directions. Make sure your proposal is aligned with the sponsor’s objectives and goals for the funding mechanism.

Grant solicitations/guidelines for applying for a grant have many different names, including:

- RFP- Request for Proposals
- RFA-Request for Applications
- FOA- Funding Opportunity Announcement
- NOFA- Notice of Funding Availability

As you read the grant solicitation, fill in the chart below. Not all grants will include information on all of these areas. MSUE Grant Services will also carefully review the solicitation and any other guidance and provide you with a Proposal Checklist of needed materials and a timeline of due dates. Grant Services will also provide templates and documents as appropriate – financial documents, verification of tax exempt status, etc.

<p>Due Date(s) When is it due (submission date)? Do you need to first send out a letter of intent?</p>	
<p>Eligibility Who can apply for the grant? This will define any limits on which organizations can apply and who can be a Primary Investigator (PI). Will collaborating with another organization strengthen your proposal if you are not on their priority list?</p>	
<p>Contact information Who is your contact if you have questions? Many grants list a grant program officer.</p>	
<p>Solicitation/identification number This is common when the funder has multiple requests for proposals.</p>	
<p>Who? Who is funding the grant?</p>	
<p>Why? What specific problem do they want to solve? What is the broader mission of the funding organization?</p>	
<p>How? (Requirements) What are the proposal guidelines? This could be very detailed, or not. It requires you read carefully and tease out the different requirements.</p>	
<p>Administration Who is administering the grant? It could be the funders, or it could be another agency.</p>	
<p>Time frame When would the grant activities begin and end? Not always included.</p>	



Award amounts What is the maximum funding amount?	
Submission guidelines/Formatting and mechanics What format is required for your proposal and budget? (Required sections, font, margins, spacing, page limitations.)	
Budget restrictions What can NOT be included in the budget?	
IDC Do they have a required indirect cost or overhead rate?	
Budget funding cycle Is there an outlined funding cycle? What is it and what are the maximum amounts?	
Matching requirements Some grants require an institution to provide a certain amount of matching or cost sharing. What is the requirement?	
Review and evaluation How will your proposal be evaluated? What is the review and selection process? Are there funding priorities stated?	
Post award details What will be required in the post-award process, including reporting and performance measurements/evaluation?	
Required content Some solicitations will very clearly outline WHAT you need to cover in your proposal. List these required topics that you MUST cover in your grant.	
Appendices/Supporting documents What appendices will you need? Some examples may be: timelines, charts of objectives or key activities, verification of tax-exempt status, biosketches or resumes of key individuals, list of officers or board of directors, past financial statements, list of clients served, list of other current funding sources and uses, letters of support/endorsement, commitment letters from project/program consultants or subcontractors.	

After you read the solicitation carefully and fill out the above chart, read it again. Try and get an idea for what you think are the most important concepts and components of what they are asking for. Make sure that your project is clearly addressing these components. After you have written the first draft of your proposal, crosscheck that you covered all content that was required and that it aligns with the information you gathered in this chart from the solicitation.