

Grant Checklist for Music Professionals – Just the Basics

- I. Once you have designed your project, begin your online search for the right funding sources. You will apply to many. Connect with an institutional research librarian or your local college/university development office (you have resources as an alum!). They can assist you in your grant search. Be sure to have in hand your “mission/artist statement,” “project title and summary,” and a detailed budget before you begin the search. This will clarify your goals, your financial picture, and your project plan. You will need these items for most proposals.
- II. Have additional support in place before you begin grant writing. If you have support in place, it is easier to get more support. In-kind contributions, cash donations, other grants, sponsors, underwriters, volunteers, and consortia: these are all sources that will enhance your grant proposal. It is crucial to build a consortium of support.
- III. A good grant has:
 - A. An altruistic mission – making the world a better place. What is original and inspiring about your research or artistic project? How does it contribute to the mission of a foundation or funding agency?
 - B. Concrete evidence as to how *you* are the only one to make this happen
 1. List your qualifications
 2. Provide a résumé written with an eye for the project and your target foundation
 3. Offer professional media/publicity materials
 4. Demonstrate quality professional recordings, DVDs, etc.
 5. Make available excellent references, letters of support, legal agreements or contracts, reviews, media coverage, accolades, etc.
 6. Present a professional persona in correspondence, voice mail, email address, website, photos, stationery, interviews
 7. Convey that the foundation/agency you are applying to is the tipping point for your project to happen. Co-opt the grantor into your project. Show that you already have evidence of other support.

8. Provide excellent writing skills. Familiarize yourself with the specifics of grant language. This is persuasive writing!
9. Follow two paths in seeking funding:
 - a. As a non-profit (you will need a 501c3 of your own) or you will need to write the grant under the umbrella of another non-profit.
 - b. As an individual for-profit organization (sometimes this may include an LLC). The NEA, state arts commissions, regional arts councils and the like often give under this umbrella.
10. Budget preparation – it must be realistic, clear, attainable, accountable, and fair. No charades. You may be audited.
11. Describe how this project will have lasting impact and for whom. Be clear about whom do you serve.
12. In some cases, demonstrate how this project will continue to pay for itself. This is essential for any pilot program.
13. Write a superb grant report once you have completed your funded project. You may want to be funded again by that grantor.

Remember: Fill out the grant application exactly as it says. Provide all supporting materials exactly as requested. Submit the grant on time and with return receipt mailing (if hard copies are used). Keep a hard copy of everything. Be meticulously neat, and proof your work carefully.