Grant Application Tips

- Follow directions! Be aware of due dates – don't procrastinate. Only include attachments that are required. Make sure you attach all the parts needed. Pay attention to the format, including page and word limits, font size, etc.

- Make the grant easy to read. Eliminate jargon, acronyms, and internally used phrases. The best grant proposals are easy to read, concise and understandable.

- Is the grant a good fit for the program? Is the program a good fit for the grant? Understand what the grant is funding and ensure that the grant application conveys how the program will use the funding for these reasons.
  - Does it make sense to request funds for a specific program instead of general funds?
  - Keep the grant request on topic – if you are requesting funds for a specific program or activity, the application and budget should be related to that specific program or activity. You might mention how this program fits into the long-term plan or the bigger organization, but the majority of the grant application needs to address the specific program/ activity you are wanting to fund.

- Paint a picture! The grantor is reading many grant requests. Paint a picture of the program. What makes it unique? Make sure you share basic information about the program. Have someone read the application that is not familiar with the program, to find holes or missing information.

- Make sure your budget makes sense. Go back and look at the budget to ensure that it matches what is asked for in the grant application. Double check that the requested budget items are allowable costs that can be covered by the grant.

- Goals and Outcomes: most grants will ask for goals or outcomes. This typically refers directly to the funding impact. What is the impact of this funding? Make these measurable. How many clients are served, how many hours, how satisfied are clients, etc.

- Describe the need for the program. Grantors want to ensure that there is a need for a program prior to giving funds. What is the need in the community for this specific program? How was that information gathered?

- Communicate with the funder. Many funders will take questions regarding the application. If the request is denied, it is appropriate to follow up with the funder to ask about the denial and how to write a stronger application.

Program Budgeting Tips

- Program Budgets are an educated guess based on information that you know.
  - When a program has been operating for many years, it is easier to create an annual budget based on the previous years.
  - When a program is just starting, it is more challenging to create a budget. And remember the budget is just a guide.
- Building the Budget
  - Start with fixed costs (expenses): costs that don't change from month to month.
  - Income: Look at each month – what are expected client hours: consider holidays, school schedules, staff turnover, time to build your clients, etc.
  - Staff Salaries: What is the staff to client ratio? Does this include prep and clean up? How about cancelations? Salaried vs hourly employees.
  - Show the explanation! There might be a different sheet (tab) for each month.
- Modify the budget as the year progresses. Adjust for actual client numbers and change your projected budget.

INCOME: Source	Total	Explanation
		$__ rate X __client hours for year
EXPENSES: Category	**TOTAL**	**Explanation**
Salaries		
Benefits		
Payroll Taxes		
Taxes		
Licensing Fees		
Rent/ Mortgage		
Phone/Internet		
Building/ Maintenance		
Utilities		
Insurance		
Professional Fees		
Accounting		
Payroll		
Legal		
Office Equipment		
Furniture		
Supplies - Program		
Supplies - Office		
Marketing		