SO, YOU WANT TO WRITE A GRANT?

30 Tips and Tricks for Writing (and Winning!) Early Childhood Education Grants

Powered by hatch
The #1 Rule in Grant Writing:

YOU’LL NEVER GET AN AWARD IF YOU DON’T APPLY.

Applying for a grant is an exhilarating experience. It can also be stressful and nerve-wracking, especially when waiting on the results!

The good news is you can minimize your stress throughout the process by planning ahead and taking it one step at a time.

You can use the following guide to lead the way on your first application, or to double check your process as a veteran grant writer.

Whether you’re just writing your first application or are a grant writing pro, a quick refresher never hurts.

Best of luck on your application!
FINDING A GRANT

Maybe you have a specific grant in mind, or maybe you have a challenge that you think an award would help solve. No matter why you’re seeking funding, your first step is to find a grant!
The more you know:

Online resources like:
www.getedfunding.com
www.grantwatch.com
www.grants.gov

are all great places to find information about education grants.
FINDING A GRANT

Where Does it Hurt?
Identify areas of need at your school that may be helped by grant money. This pain point (or points) will be the foundation of your proposal.

Is it a Good Fit?
Top grant writers (and winners!) take the time to make sure that every grant they apply for is a great fit for their program. Only ‘sort of’ qualifying for a grant isn’t good enough.

Policy Police
Does your district have a grant application policy? Check on that before getting started.

Team Player
If it makes sense for you, assemble a grant writing team to share the load. This support group could come in handy later on.
GETTING STARTED

Congratulations! You found a grant that’s perfect for your program. Now what? Here are some tips to map out your proposal.
GETTING STARTED

Give Yourself Time
Make sure you’ve blocked off enough time to complete your application. The amount of time you’ll need will vary depending on the grant, but may range anywhere from 25-40 hours.

Dig for Gold
Read the entire application package thoroughly! Don’t just skim. You’d be surprised by the nuggets of information you may find buried in the application.

Double Check the Details
Some grants limit page length or award bonus points depending on your circumstances. Make sure you know all the details before you start outlining your proposal.

Ask Questions!
Grant applications can be confusing. If you absolutely can’t find an answer in the application package, try contacting the competition manager.
The more you know:

A competition manager is your key contact and is responsible for answering all questions regarding the application process, as well as overseeing the entire grant program.

Sometimes making a personal connection with the competition manager through a phone call or email can be just the advantage you need for a higher score.
PREP YOUR PROPOSAL
You’ve done your homework and mapped out your plan. Are you ready to write?
**Proposal Writing 101**
Follow any suggested formatting guidelines included in the application packet. If you are reusing any language from a previous grant proposal (i.e., cutting and pasting), make sure it flows correctly and matches your current formatting!

**Know Your Audience**
Structure your proposal narrative to the selection criteria. This will make it easier for peer reviewers to evaluate your work.

**Watch Your Language!**
It may be tempting to use hyperbole and exaggeration to demonstrate your need, but stick to clear, concise writing and specific examples. Avoid using acronyms. If you have to use one, make sure to define it immediately.
PREP YOUR PROPOSAL

Speaking of Need...
When justifying your funding request, make sure it aligns with proposed project activities. Also double-check all budget figures for accuracy.

Goal Oriented
Explicitly state any goals or objectives the grant may impact. Your goals should be concrete and measurable.

Last Check
Proofread your proposal! Have a colleague or team member proof your drafts as well. A fresh pair of eyes makes all the difference. Also check for any required forms or signatures you need for your application.
The more you know:

Your application is a great time to ask for funding for all the things that would make life in your classroom just a little bit easier—as long as you can justify that they are both reasonable and necessary. Provide a detailed list of materials and make sure you clearly tie them to actionable items and goals in your proposal.

At Hatch, we make it easy to justify your wish list with products and technology that align with National Early Childhood Education standards. Call a Hatch Consultant today to work on your list!

800.624.7968
SUBMITTING

You’ve proofread your proposal at least six times and you’re absolutely positive it’s ready for submission. Check these things off your list and get ready to hit send!
SUBMITTING

Check your Channels
Some grants have a preferred means of submission. Make sure you know well in advance whether you will be submitting electronically or through the mail.

Mark Your Calendar
Grants may have a different deadline for mailed proposals than proposals submitted online. Make sure you know when yours is due!

Plan B
If you plan on submitting electronically, it’s a good idea to have a print copy on hand and ready to mail in case something goes wrong.

No Procrastinating
This should go without saying, but we’ll say it anyway: do NOT wait until the last minute to submit your application. Assume that something will go wrong and give yourself plenty of time.
The more you know:

Ideally you won’t wait to electronically submit your grant until the last minute, but if you do... **know your zone.** Check to see if electronic submissions are time zone specific and get yours in on time!
TAKE THE PLUNGE!

The finish line is in sight! Once you’ve done these final steps, you can take a break and relax; you’ve earned it.

Good luck!
Proof Positive
Make sure you hang on to any proof of submission or mailing.

Follow Up
It’s never a bad idea to make sure your proposal arrived on time. Depending on the funding source, this is also a great time to send a “thank-you-for-letting-me-apply” letter.
The more you know:

Now comes the hard part: waiting to hear about your proposal. Depending on the type of grant you applied for, wait times will vary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grant Type</th>
<th>Wait Time Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Federal Grant</td>
<td>Average wait of 3-6 months, varies by agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Grant</td>
<td>Average wait of up to 6 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundation Grant</td>
<td>Up to 12 months but usually includes some kind of interim communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporate Grant</td>
<td>Up to 6 months, follow up after that is recommended</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“The key to everything is patience. You get the chicken by hatching the egg, not by smashing it.”
—Arnold H. Glasow
COMMON MISTAKES

Watch out! Don’t slip up on some of these common errors.
COMMON MISTAKES

Out of Time
Failing to give yourself enough time to submit via mail or electronically.

Reading is Fundamental
Not reading the application package in its entirety.

Formatting Failure
Not following the formatting guidelines.

John Hancock is Disappointed
Forgetting to obtain required signatures on required forms.

Watt due ewe meaN, “Proofread”?
Seriously, proofread your work. It’s easy to overlook something when you’ve been staring at it for days.
GO FORTH AND WIN!

Writing a grant application probably ranks somewhere between cleaning out the freezer and going to a Justin Bieber concert on most people’s “Favorite Things To Do” list, but it doesn’t have to be something you dread.

With patience, planning, and a little research, you’ll be off winning awards in no time! And remember: Hatch is always here to help.

For more resources or to contact a Classroom Consultant about how Hatch technology and materials may align to your grant visit:

HatchEarlyLearning.com
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Where Does it Hurt?
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Is it a Good Fit?
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Policy Police
Does your school district or program have a grant application policy? Make sure you know your facts before getting started.

Get Started

Give Yourself Time
Make sure to budget enough time to complete your application. Times will vary depending on the complexity of the grant.

Double Check the Details
Some grants have page limits or award bonus points. Read the entire application package before outlining a proposal!

Ask Questions
Grant applications can be confusing. If you get stuck, try contacting the competition manager—the key contact at the program sponsoring the grant.

Proposal Writing 101
Follow any suggested formatting guidelines in the application. Make sure formatting is consistent and proofread, proofread, proofread!

Goal Oriented
Explicitly state any goals or objectives the grant may impact. Goals should be concrete and measurable.

Watch Your Language
Stick to clear, concise writing and specific examples. Avoid using acronyms! If you must use one, define it immediately.

Submitting

Mark Your Calendar
Grants may have a different deadline for mailed applications than e-applications. Check on application preference and mark the date!

Plan B
If you plan on submitting electronically, it’s a good idea to have a print copy ready to mail in case something goes wrong.

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Hatch
The Early Learning Experts

Prep Time

Common Mistakes

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http://www.educationworld.com/a_admin/grants/peek/peek024.shtml
http://nonprofit.about.com/od/grantwritingfaqs/f/waitforgrant.htm
http://chronicle.com/article/How-to-Fail-in-Grant-Writing/125620/