

GRANTS DEVELOPMENT GUIDE



1. Get Your Organization Grant-Ready

- Clear mission & vision statements
- Updated programs with defined goals and target populations
- Proof of impact (stories, data, outcomes)
- Accurate financials (budgets, 990s)
- Leadership stability & compliance

2. Build a Grant Strategy

- Identify programs or needs requiring funding
- Determine funding amount and use
- Create a 12-month grants calendar
- Prioritize 2-3 programs

3. Find the Right Funders

- Community foundations, corporate giving, local/state/federal portals
- Funding databases: Candid, GrantWatch, Instrument1
- Research funders supporting your mission and region

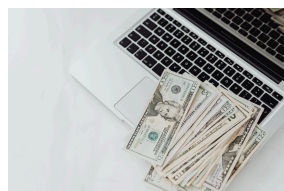
4. Write a Strong Proposal

- Executive Summary
- Needs Statement
- Program Description
- Budget & Narrative
- Organizational Capacity
- Evaluation Plan
- Sustainability Plan



5. Strengthen Your Proposal

- Use local statistics
- Include stories or testimonials
- Share previous success
- Provide letters of support



6. Submit and Follow-up

- Proofread and submit early
- Send thank-you email
- Request feedback if declined

7. Cultivate Funder Relationships

Strong funder relationships grow from consistent, genuine engagement—not just during grant cycles. Regular updates that highlight milestones, impact, and even challenges help keep funders connected to your work. Inviting them to events or site visits deepens their understanding and strengthens mission alignment. Personal thank-yous and public recognition build trust and show appreciation. When nonprofits communicate openly and often, they cultivate long-term partnerships that extend far beyond a single grant.

8. Track and Manage Grants

Effective grant management is essential for sustaining nonprofit impact. By maintaining a clear, up-to-date tracking system for deadlines, reporting requirements, award amounts, and program outcomes, organizations can stay organized, strengthen funder relationships, and increase their chances of renewal. A well-managed grants calendar ensures that nothing falls through the cracks and that each opportunity is maximized to support long-term mission success.

