

PARK COUNTY NONPROFIT NETWORK

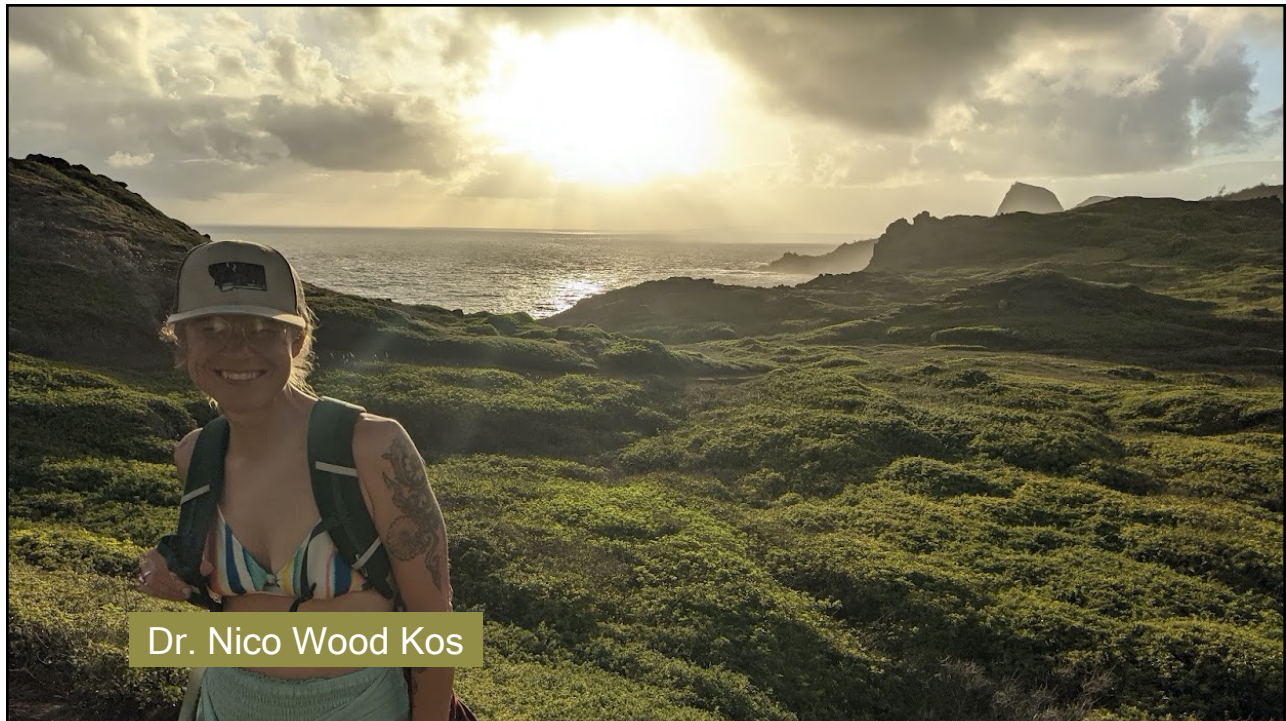


A Birds Eye View of Successful Grant Writing

with Nico Wood Kos

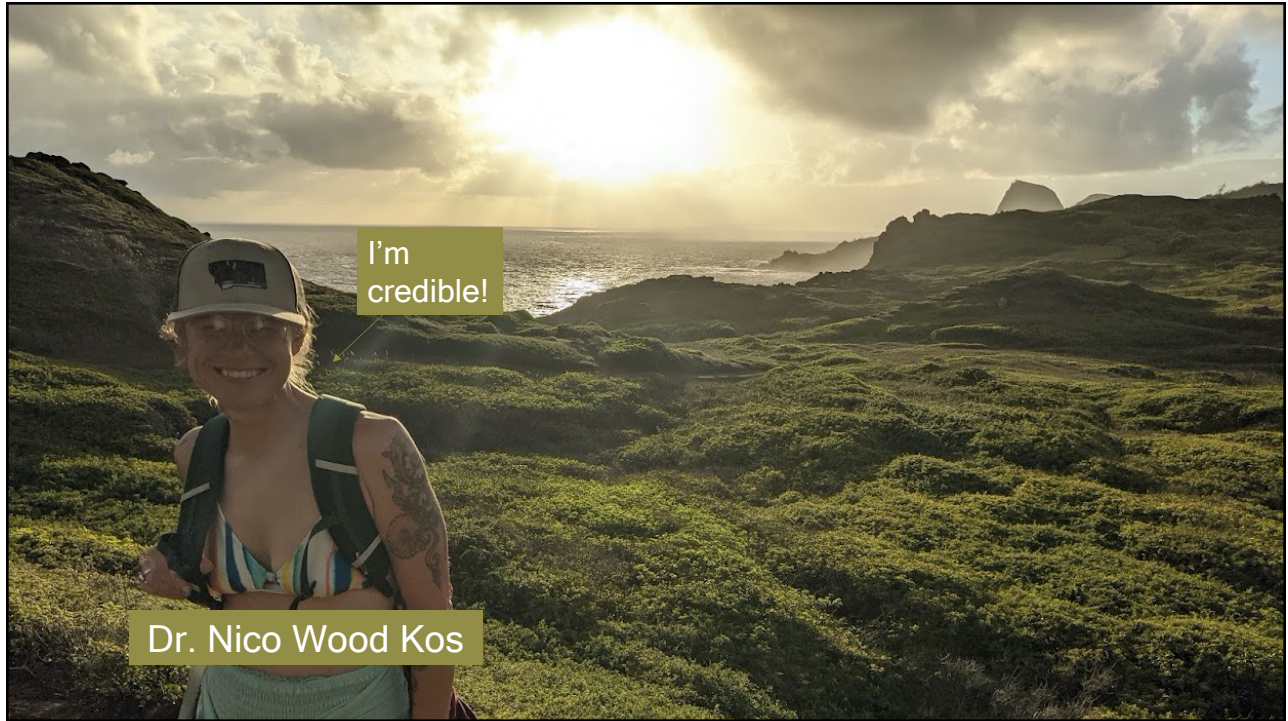
TUESDAY, DEC 7
NOON - 1:00 PM
-- offered via Zoom --

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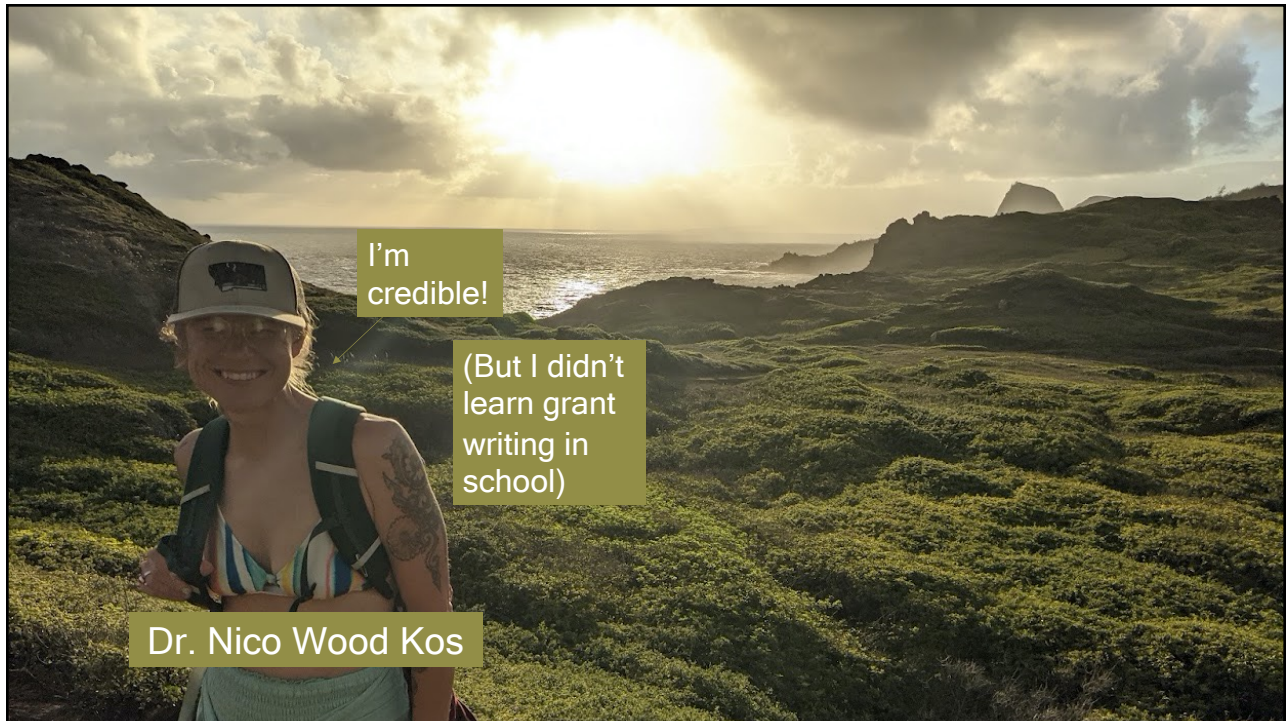


Dr. Nico Wood Kos

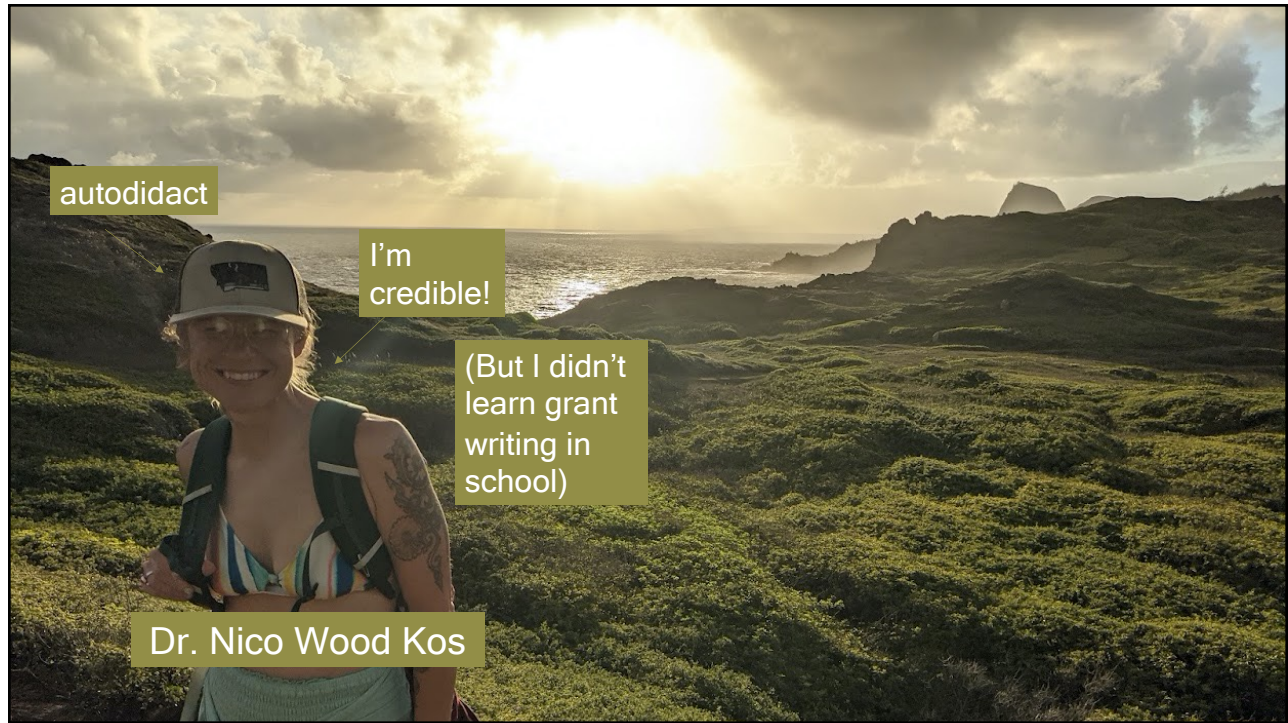
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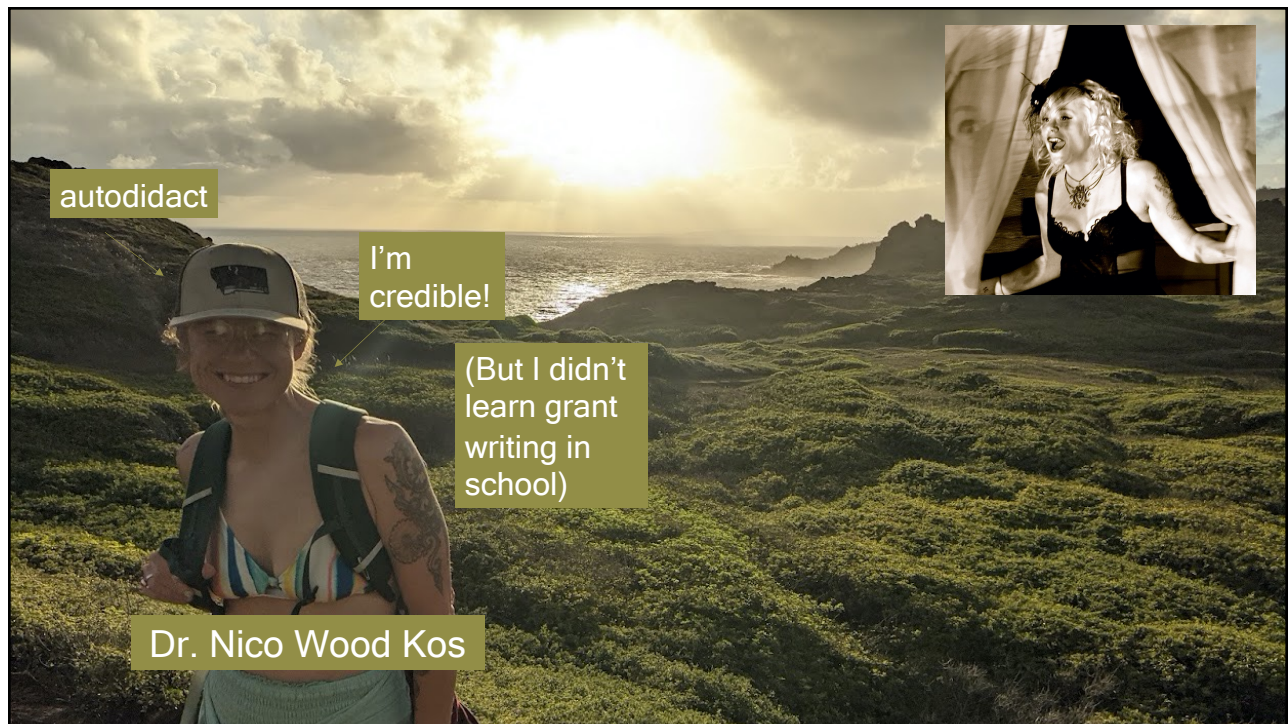
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autodidact

I'm credible!

(But I didn't learn grant writing in school)

Dr. Nico Wood Kos

Grant writing involves:

- Analysis
- Storytelling
- Persuasion

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Electric Peak Arts Council

autodidact

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“Funding a Future”

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Dr. Nico Wood Kos

North Yellowstone Education Foundation

THE artist’s GUIDE TO GRANT WRITING

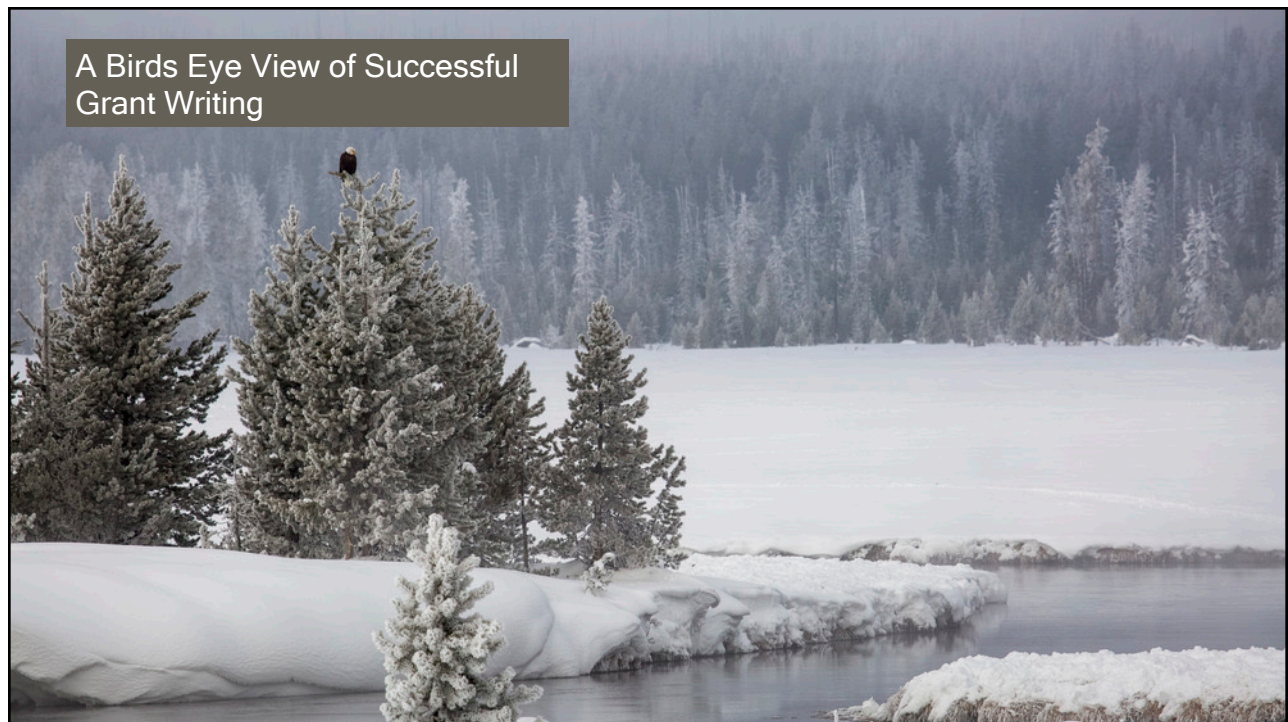
How to Find Grants and Write Successful Proposals for the Visual, Literary, and Performance Arts

Gigi Rosenberg

Grant writing involves:

- Analysis
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- Persuasion

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A Birds Eye View of Successful Grant Writing

What's in this presentation?
A broad overview of grant writing

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The primary goal?
To demystify the grant writing process & empower you to write grants

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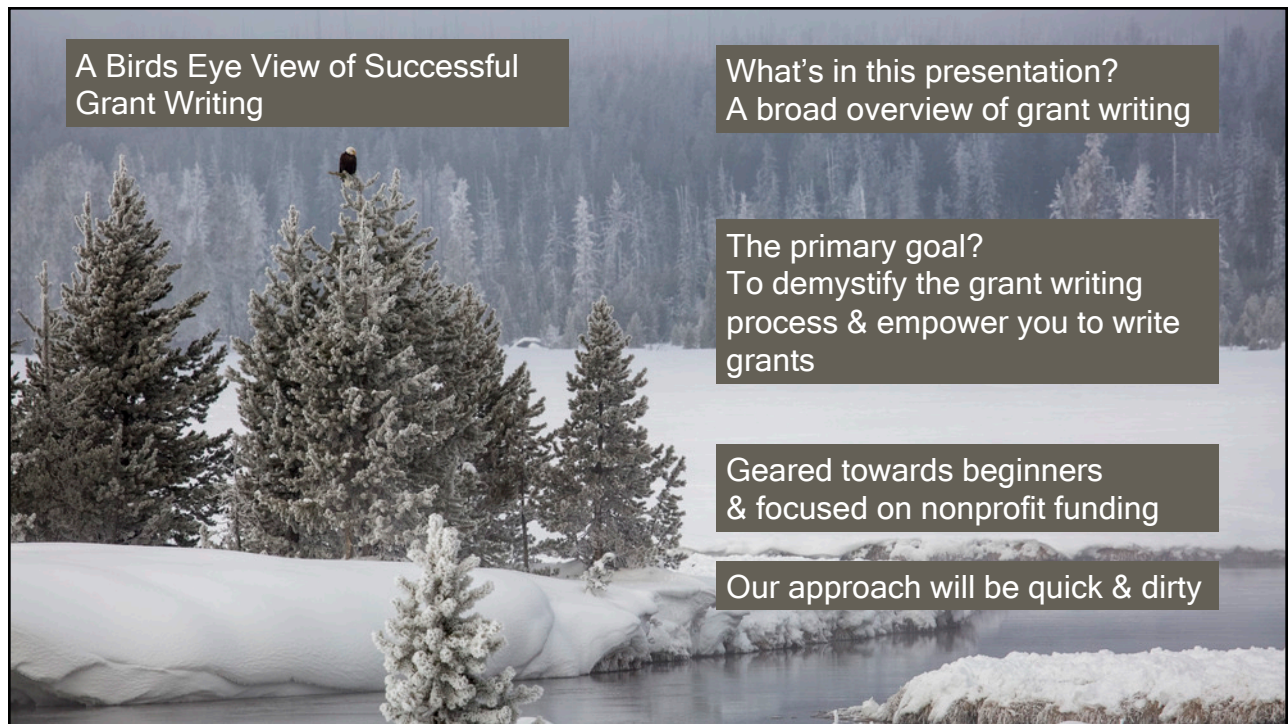
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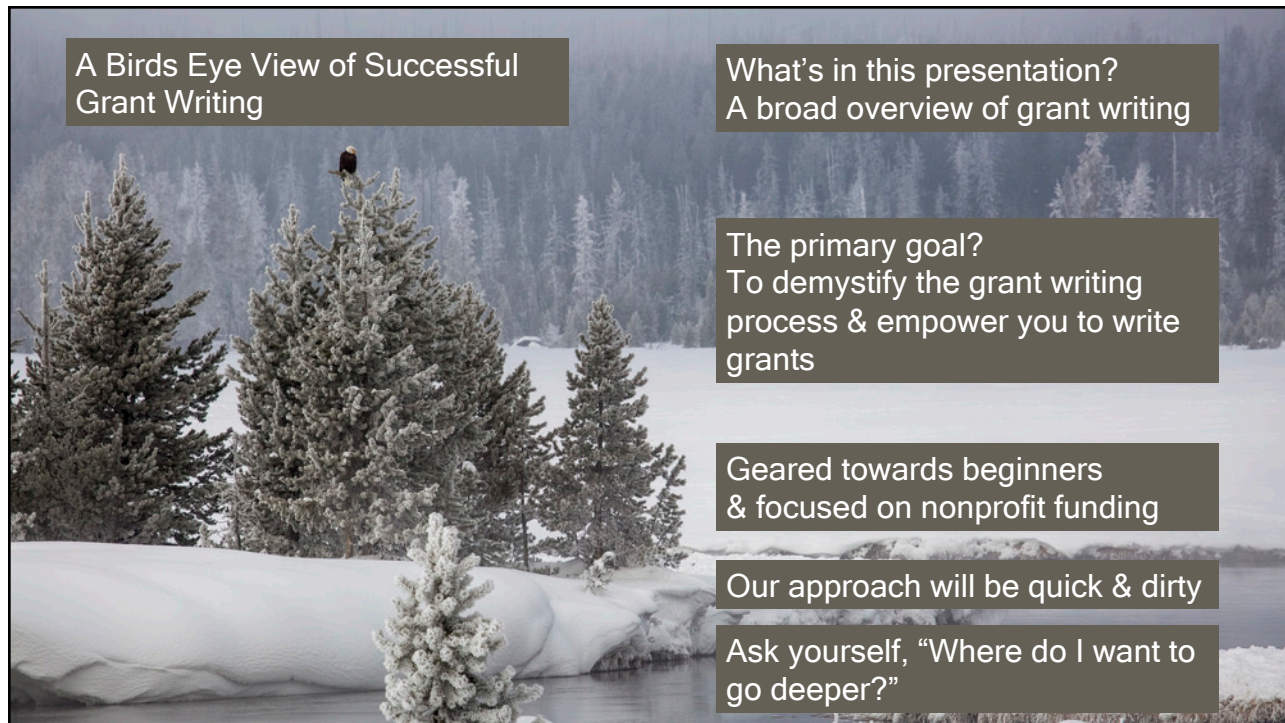
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Our approach will be quick & dirty

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A broad overview of grant writing

The primary goal?
To demystify the grant writing process & empower you to write grants

Geared towards beginners & focused on nonprofit funding

Our approach will be quick & dirty

Ask yourself, "Where do I want to go deeper?"

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What is a grant?

"A grant is an award of money that allows you to do very specific things, usually according to very specific guidelines that are spelled out in painstaking detail and to which to must respond very clearly in your grant proposal."

-- Ellen Karsh & Arlen Sue Fox
The Only Grant-Writing Book You'll Ever Need

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“Free Money”

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“Free Money”

- Create a proposal
- Carry out a proposed project
- Document the project
- Submit a final report

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- Create a proposal
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Everyone wants free money.

Not everyone actually wants to carry out a project.

No one ever wants to submit a final report.



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Who are the funders?

Anyone who has money that they want to give away.

- Federal government
- State governments
- Local governments
- Community foundations
- Corporate foundations
- Resort tax areas
- Small businesses
- Private parties

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Granting is a mutually beneficial process

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Granting is a mutually beneficial process

- Funders have given a lot of thought to their goals
- They need projects to fulfill their mission
- They need to be accountable to their supporters
- You are playing a crucial role in the philanthropic cycle
- Let go of any guilt
- “Grow your grant writing ego” - Julia Cwikla

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Figuring Out Your Project

Find grant opportunities that fit your projects rather than dreaming up projects to fit opportunities.

Is your project fundable?

- Is it feasible?
- Is it something your community needs?
- Will it have “measurable impacts” that you can track?
- Is it “photogenic”?
- Does it have a clear beginning and end?
- Will this project be sustainable?

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What about General Operating Support?

Think about all the work your organization does as one big “project.”

Is your organization fundable?

- Are your programs feasible?
- Are you responding to community needs?
- Will your programs have “measurable impacts” that you can track?
- Are your programs “photogenic”?
- Do they have clear beginnings and endings?
- Will this project be sustainable?

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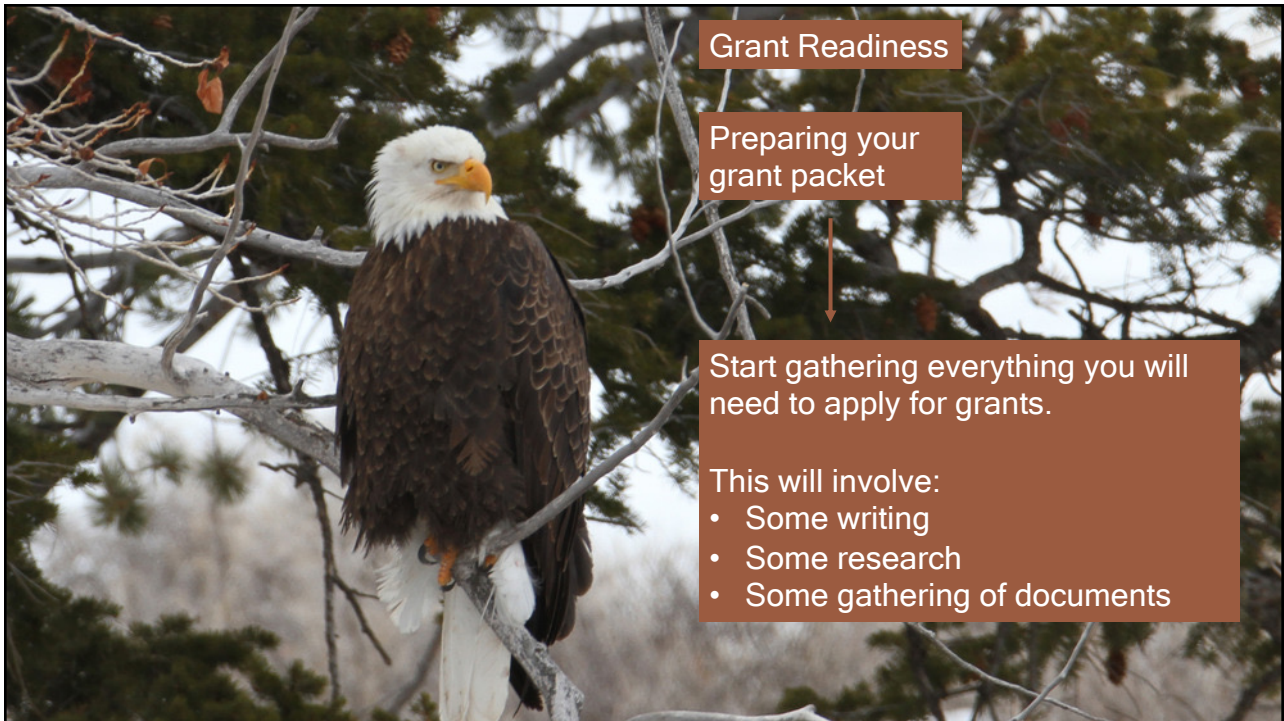
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Grant Readiness

Preparing your grant packet

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Grant Readiness

Preparing your grant packet



Start gathering everything you will need to apply for grants.

- This will involve:
- Some writing
 - Some research
 - Some gathering of documents

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The Writing Part

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The Writing Part

Brainstorm the following:

Project Description

A simple, concise explanation of your project

Goals & Objectives

What your project will accomplish in broad ways (goals) and specific ways (objectives)

Statement of Need

What problem is your project addressing?

Statement of Impact

What influence will this have on your community?

34

A photograph of a small brown bird perched on a branch, holding a piece of twigs in its beak. The background is a dense thicket of green pine needles. Overlaid on the right side of the image is a green text box with white text. At the bottom left of the image is another green text box with white text.

The Writing Part

Brainstorm the following:

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What your project will accomplish in broad ways (goals) and specific ways (objectives)

Statement of Need
What problem is your project addressing?

Statement of Impact
What influence will this have on your community?

Don't worry! We will dig deeper into these writing areas later

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The Research Part

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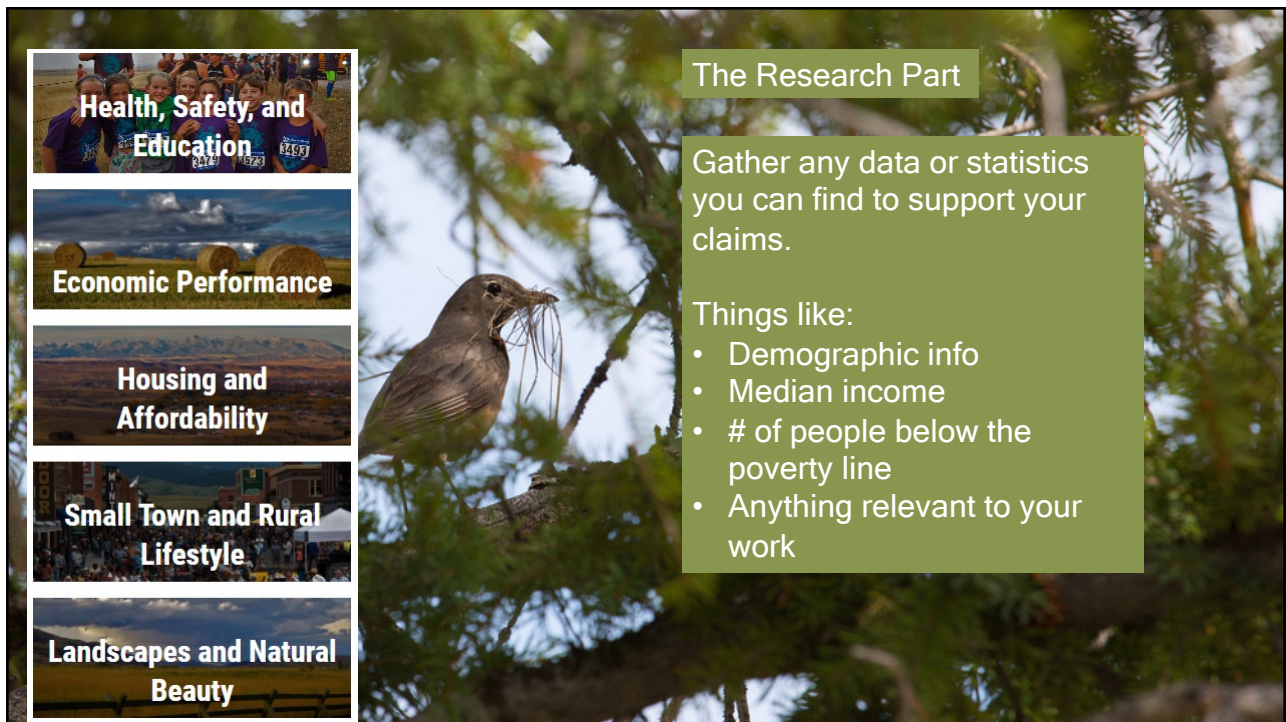
The Research Part

Gather any data or statistics you can find to support your claims.

Things like:

- Demographic info
- Median income
- # of people below the poverty line
- Anything relevant to your work

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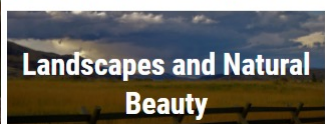


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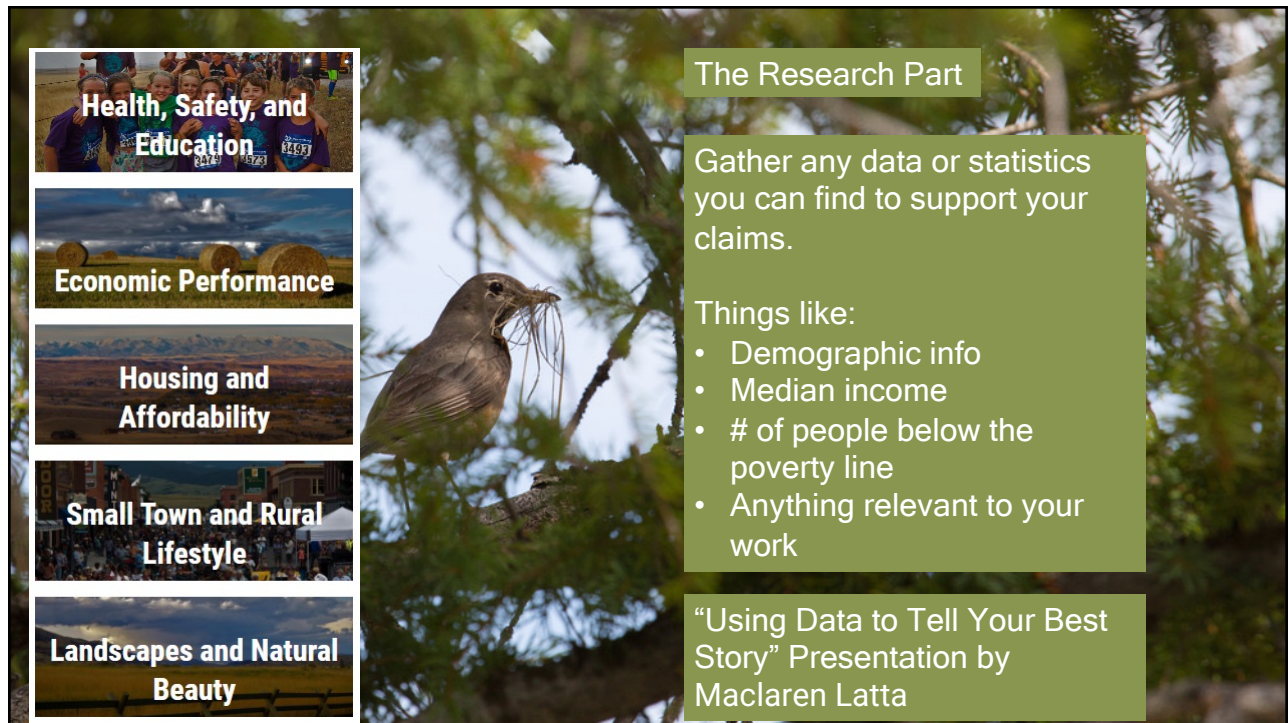
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Health, Safety, and Education

Economic Performance

Housing and Affordability

Small Town and Rural Lifestyle

Landscapes and Natural Beauty

The Research Part

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Things like:

- Demographic info
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“Using Data to Tell Your Best Story” Presentation by Maclaren Latta

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The Gathering Documents Part

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The Gathering Documents Part

Every grant application will ask for a list of attachments.

Gathering these can take a long time.

Start gathering relevant documents right away.

Learn how to edit, combine, and compress PDF documents. (PDF Sam is a free program)

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“Grant Readiness for Funding Success” by The Dotted-I

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Grant Readiness Checklist

This list is intended to guide you in gathering all of the information that is most commonly asked for by grant funders. Having these items organized in one safe place online will save you time and energy in the future when you are applying for grants.

Must Have ✓

- Tax Status Letter (501c3)** - dated letter from the government that proves you have nonprofit status
- 990's** - almost every grant is going to ask for a copy of the past two years
- Profit and Loss Statements** - past two years
- Balance Sheet** - current year
- Annual Operating Budget** - Covers all actual income and expenses for the previous year as well as the projections for the up-coming year
- Special Project Budget(s)** - Total from this budget should be a line item in your annual budget. A project budget is helpful to have when you are applying for a grant that will specifically fund a particular area of a project/program.
- Timeline for your project** - Detailing what milestones you will reach and when. Larger projects can be broken down into phases.
- List of Board of Directors and Staff** - Make sure that you have a list of board members that includes their name, profession, board title, term limit, and contact information.
- Evaluation Plan** - It is important to have measurable outcomes for your project to show funders the impact your project will have within the community.
- List of other funding sources** - If you're working with The Dotted i, this is tracked in your *Funding Matrix* and should be easily accessible for each grant. Having this information is a great way to prove to funders that you have additional financial support for your project/organization.

Additional Notes:

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Occasionally Requested ✓

- Budget Narrative** - This is a "must have" in our book, but it's only occasionally requested from funders. It is a great way to clearly articulate what each of your budget line items are intended for.
- By-Laws**
- Board Meeting Agendas and Minutes**
- Articles of Incorporation**
- Proof of Matching Donor Funds** - Award letter or written agreement that proves matching funds are available for your organization.
- Resumes of Board and Staff Members** - We mentioned in the "must have" section that you'll need a list and basic information and this takes it a step further by having resumes for each key team member. Many grant funders request resumes or qualifications for the individuals who will be leading projects.
- Preliminary Architecture or Preliminary Engineering Reports** - Typically for large scale projects that include infrastructure improvements and are usually required by federal funders.
- Grants.gov, SAM's and DUNS number** - This is required if you are applying to any federal or large state grant. The process is free, but can be time consuming so we recommend getting it handled beforehand.

Extra Credit ✓

- Cost Estimates for Upcoming Work or Equipment** - Shows donors that you actually crunched the numbers and are spending their money wisely.
- Business and/or Strategic Plan** - This is not your fundraising plan, this is the foundation of your internal operating structure and is very important in setting up the foundation of your organization.
- Letters of Support for your Project** - Demonstrates community buy-in; funders like to see proof that other people also believe in your mission and goals.
- Newsletters** - Having samples of your newsletters helps show how you are communicating with your supporters and community.
- Recent Audits** - Not every nonprofit will be required to conduct an audit, but if you have one it is good to keep on file.
- Organizational Chart** - This shows the internal structure of your organization and the reporting/relationship hierarchy.
- Logic Model** - excellent way to impress your funders; it's a visual representation of your program design and function which can help you prioritize your funding goals.

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Identifying Grant Opportunities - In Four Easy Steps

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Identifying Grant Opportunities - In Four Easy Steps

- 1. Start with Google**
 - Make a list of 10 key words or phrases that describe your project and/or organization.
 - Plug these words into the search bar with the words “funding” or “grants”
 - Try limiting it by geography. Add the word Montana or Wyoming or the name of your city or county.
 - Quickly scan each organization or opportunity, and if it seems viable at first glance, put it on a list to come back to later.

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Identifying Grant Opportunities - In Four Easy Steps

- 2. Research Similar Organizations**
 - Come up with a list of organizations that have similar missions or goals
 - See if you can find their Annual Reports or dig through their website
 - It can be helpful to reach out to these organizations and inquire about their funding sources.
 - Add any potential funders to your ongoing list

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Identifying Grant Opportunities - In Four Easy Steps

3. Use Grant Databases

- Examples include GrantStation, Grant Watch, Instrumentl (these often require a fee)
- The truth is that I often find grant databases cumbersome and not intuitive to use
- Grants.gov (which is free) requires a lot of patience
- There are really two tricks to use databases in an effective way:
 - Using really specific search terms
 - Understanding that the process involves a lot of combing through opportunities that are not a good fit

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Identifying Grant Opportunities - In Four Easy Steps

4. Research specific opportunities

- Read over the list you have generated
- Spend some time looking deeply at each one
- Study mission statements
 - What types of project do they typically fund?
 - What geographical region?
 - What size grants?
 - Look them up on Candid to view 990.
 - Reach out with a question.

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Reading Requests for Proposals (RFPs)

- Reconnaissance work
- Sometimes spelled out very clearly, other times you have to dig
- Read with a highlighter and hunt for “buzzwords”
- Save this in a document for later

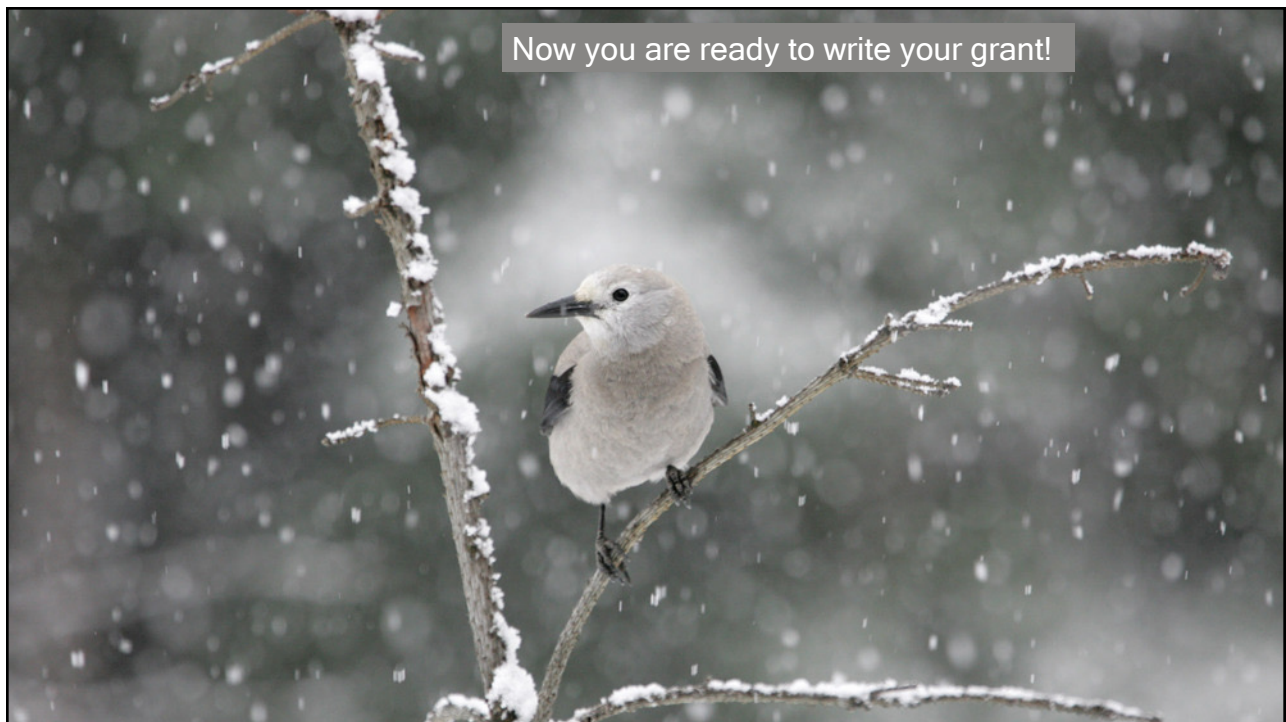
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Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA's) focus on enhancing the safety of the public and firefighters with respect to fire and fire-related hazards. The AFG Program provides financial assistance directly to eligible fire departments, nonaffiliated emergency medical service (EMS) organizations, and State Fire Training Academies (SFTAs) for critical training and equipment. The AFG Program has awarded approximately \$7.7 billion in grant funding to provide critically needed resources that equip and train emergency personnel to recognized standards, enhance operational efficiencies, foster interoperability, and support community resilience.

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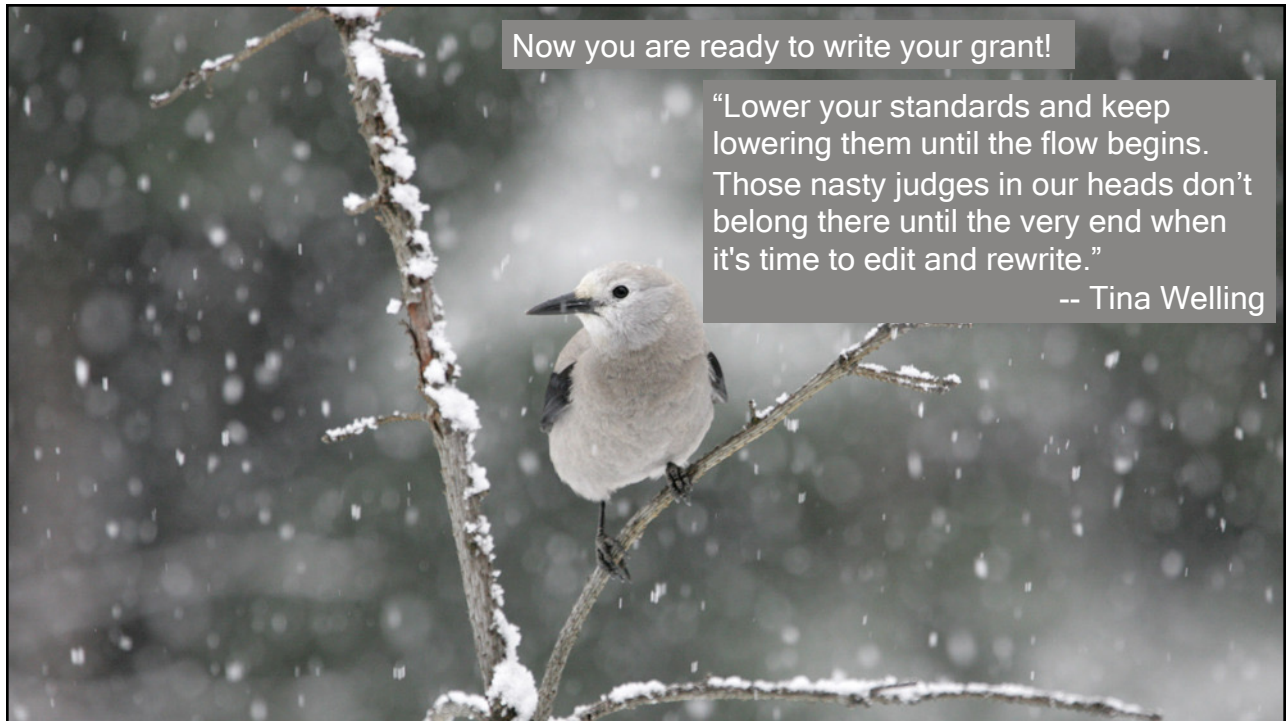
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Now you are ready to write your grant!

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“Lower your standards and keep lowering them until the flow begins. Those nasty judges in our heads don’t belong there until the very end when it’s time to edit and rewrite.”

-- Tina Welling

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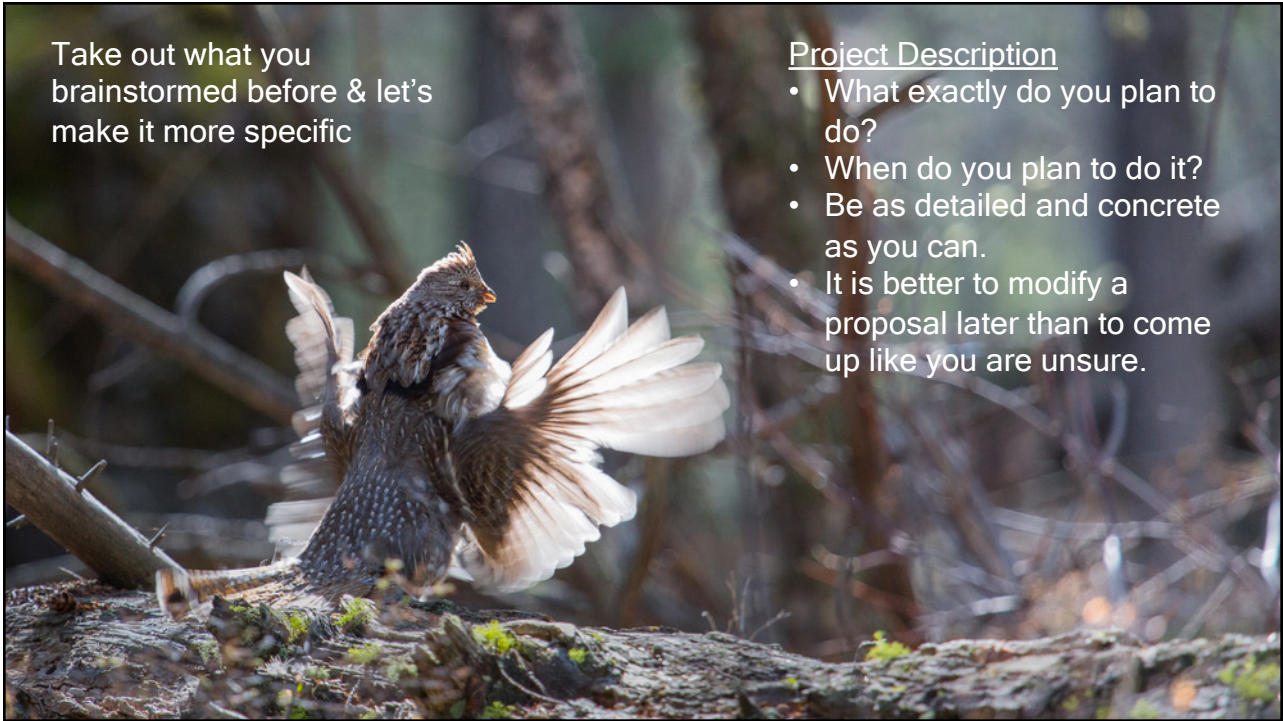
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- Assume your audience knows nothing
- Be specific and concrete
- Write so your mother can understand it

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Take out what you brainstormed before & let's make it more specific

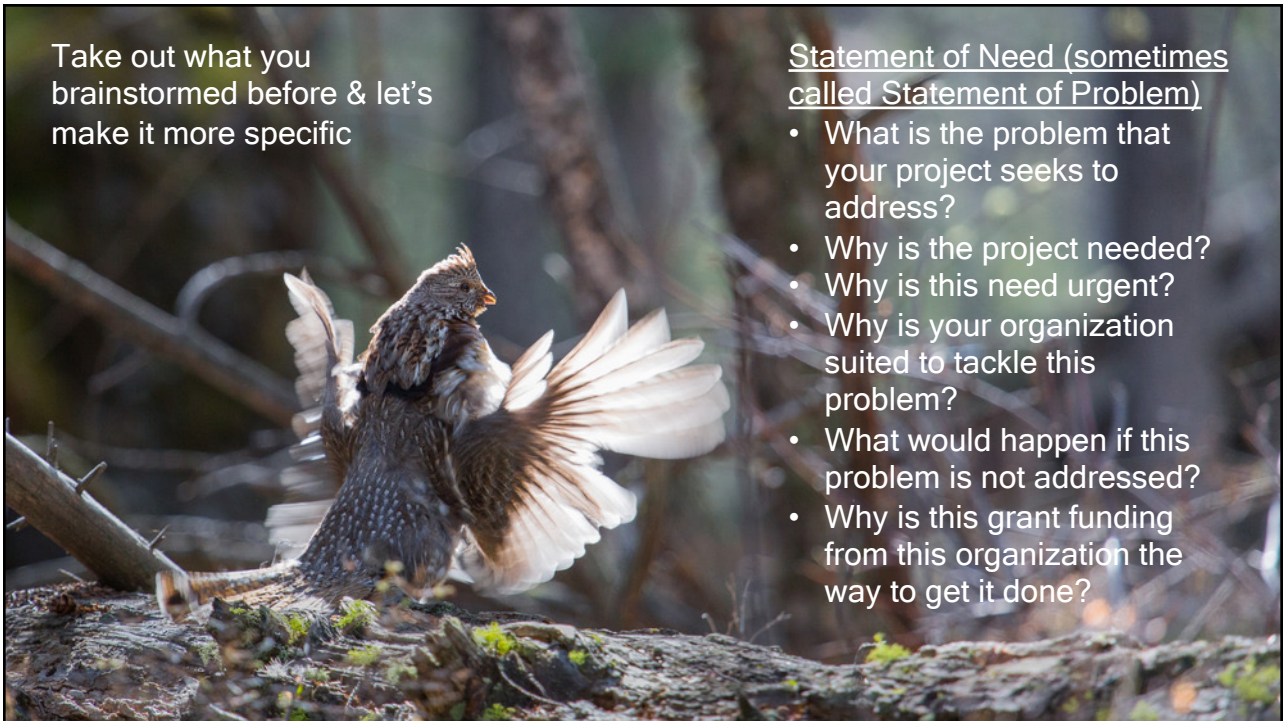


Project Description

- What exactly do you plan to do?
- When do you plan to do it?
- Be as detailed and concrete as you can.
- It is better to modify a proposal later than to come up like you are unsure.

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Take out what you brainstormed before & let's make it more specific



Statement of Need (sometimes called Statement of Problem)

- What is the problem that your project seeks to address?
- Why is the project needed?
- Why is this need urgent?
- Why is your organization suited to tackle this problem?
- What would happen if this problem is not addressed?
- Why is this grant funding from this organization the way to get it done?

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Determining Your Goals & Objectives



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Determining Your Goals & Objectives

Goals are:

- General intentions
- Intangible
- Abstract
- Cannot necessarily be validated
- Define the ultimate purpose of the project
- Words associated with goals include:
 - To know
 - To understand
 - To gain
 - To appreciate
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- Precise intentions
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- Can be evaluated or measured
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- Words associated with objectives include:
 - Define
 - Recognize
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 - Illustrate
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*Each goal should have a corresponding objective



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Goals & Objectives Example

This comes from an application I wrote last year for General Operating Support for North Yellowstone Education Foundation and submitted to the PCCF grant cycle for 2021.



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GOALS

- (1) To solidify Connect! Grants as a community driven, community funded, and community evaluated program.
- (2) To make affordable teacher housing a reality in Gardiner.
- (3) To expand the reach of behavioral health services in rural Park County Schools.

OBJECTIVES

- (1) To provide \$20,000 in Connect! Grant funding, supporting 6-10 diverse projects.
- (2) To facilitate the renovation of our property, crystalize all administrative details (such as rental agreements), and move two teachers into housing units by August 2021.
- (3) To establish a cohort of community therapists on retainer for referrals via PCRS360.



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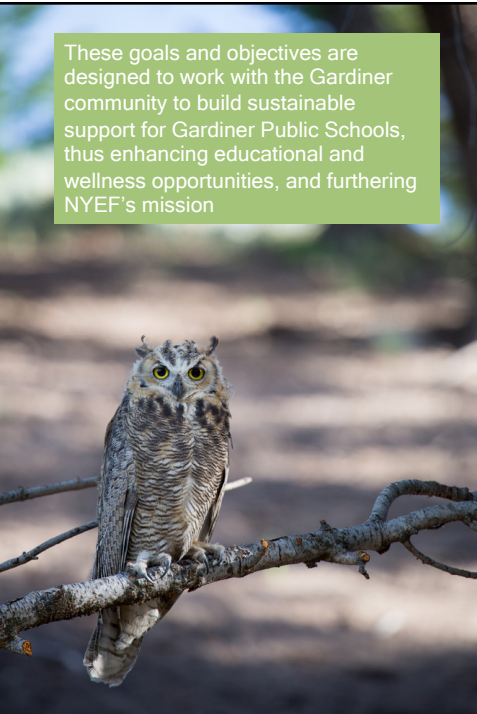
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You can see how each Goal had a corresponding Objective.

These goals and objectives are designed to work with the Gardiner community to build sustainable support for Gardiner Public Schools, thus enhancing educational and wellness opportunities, and furthering NYEF's mission



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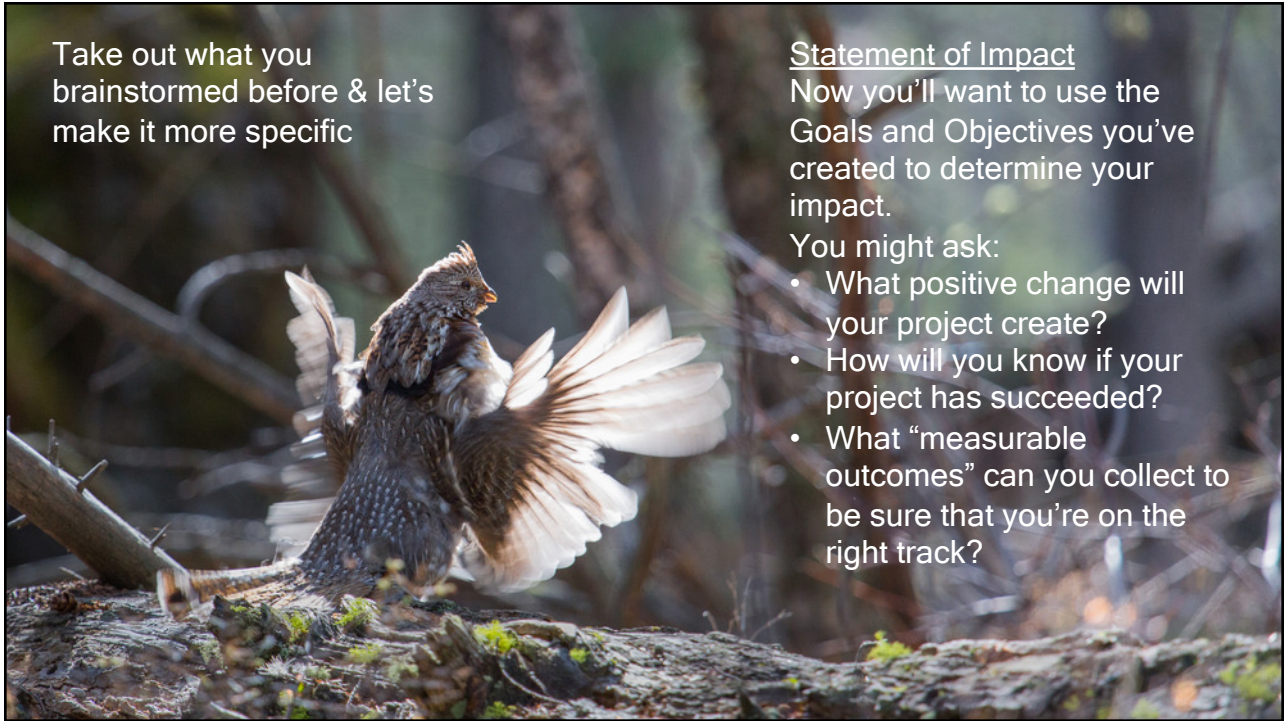
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make it more specific

Statement of Impact

Now you'll want to use the
Goals and Objectives you've
created to determine your
impact.

You might ask:

- What positive change will your project create?
- How will you know if your project has succeeded?
- What "measurable outcomes" can you collect to be sure that you're on the right track?



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Infuse your writing with buzzwords



66



Infuse your writing with buzzwords

- Pull out your list of buzzwords
- Review the Request for Proposals and the organization's website if you want to find more
- Find ways to insert the buzzwords into what you have written

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"Equipment" appears 15 times

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"Interoperability" appears twice

72

Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA's) focus on enhancing the safety of the public and firefighters with respect to fire and fire-related hazards. The AFG Program provides financial assistance directly to eligible fire departments, nonaffiliated emergency medical service (EMS) organizations, and State Fire Training Academies (SFTAs) for critical training and equipment. The AFG Program has awarded approximately \$7.7 billion in grant funding to provide critically needed resources that equip and train emergency personnel to recognized standards, enhance operational efficiencies, foster interoperability, and support community resilience.

The word "safety" appears 17 times in the application

"Train" appears 5 times.
"Equipment" appears 15 times

"Interoperability" appears twice

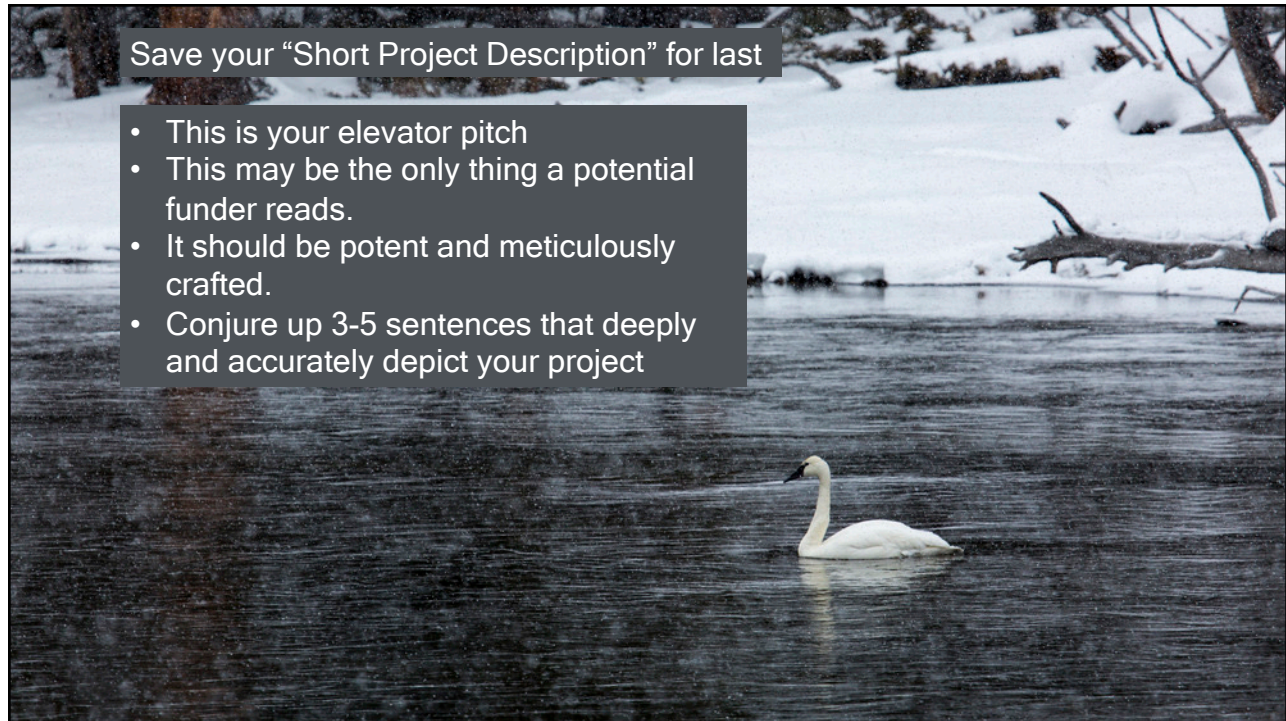
"Community" appears 19 times

Phrases like "operational efficiencies" and "operational performance" appear 3 times

73




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Save your "Short Project Description" for last

- This is your elevator pitch
- This may be the only thing a potential funder reads.
- It should be potent and meticulously crafted.
- Conjure up 3-5 sentences that deeply and accurately depict your project

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Project Budget - Think Big Picture

Expenses

- Everything it will cost to make your project happen
- Be sure to consider the administrative costs of your program

Income

- All sources of income related to the project
- This could be grants, donations, event revenue, etc.
- Consider what in-kind donations you may be receiving
- Include other pending sources of funding

You want your budget to be:

- Realistic
- Reasonable
- Within the appropriate range for the grantor
- Organized

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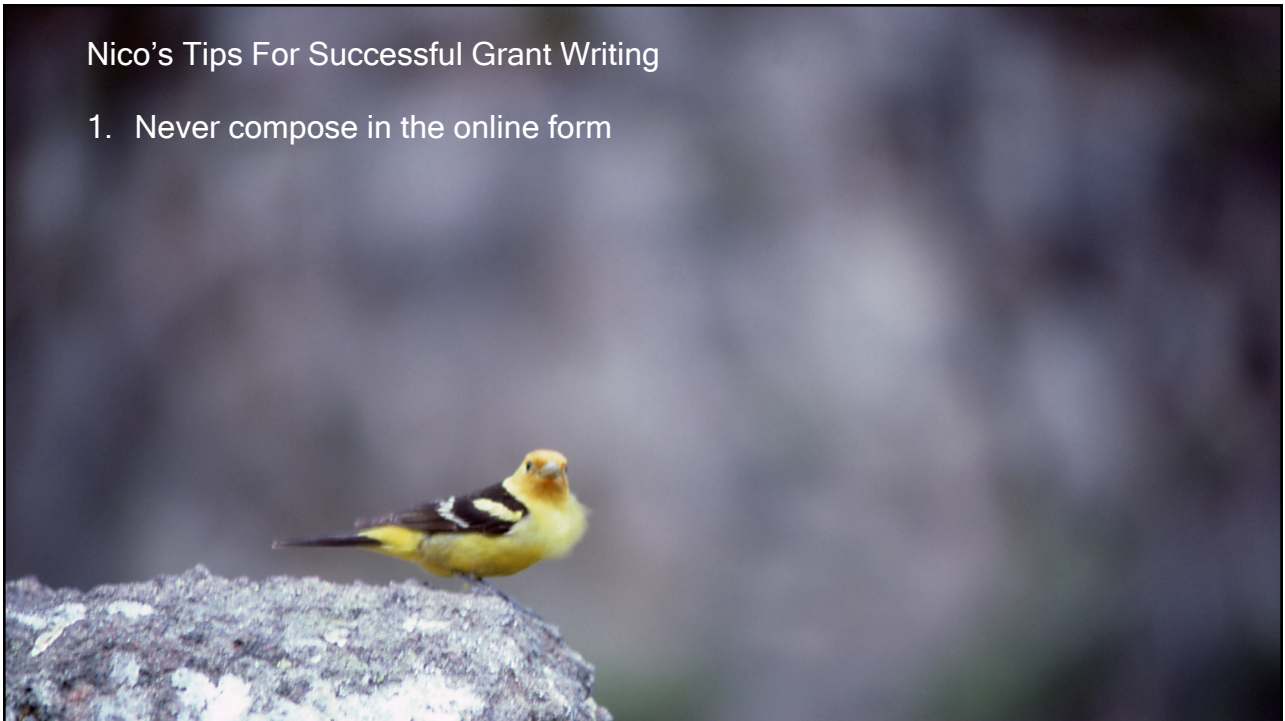
Nico's Tips For Successful Grant Writing



77

Nico's Tips For Successful Grant Writing

1. Never compose in the online form




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Nico's Tips For Successful Grant Writing

1. Never compose in the online form

Do not write your grant directly into the portal!


Access the grant questions and copy and paste them into a Google Doc or Word document.



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Nico's Tips For Successful Grant Writing

1. Never compose in the online form
2. Break questions down into sub-questions



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Nico's Tips For Successful Grant Writing

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2. Break questions down into sub-questions

In the application, the question appeared like this:

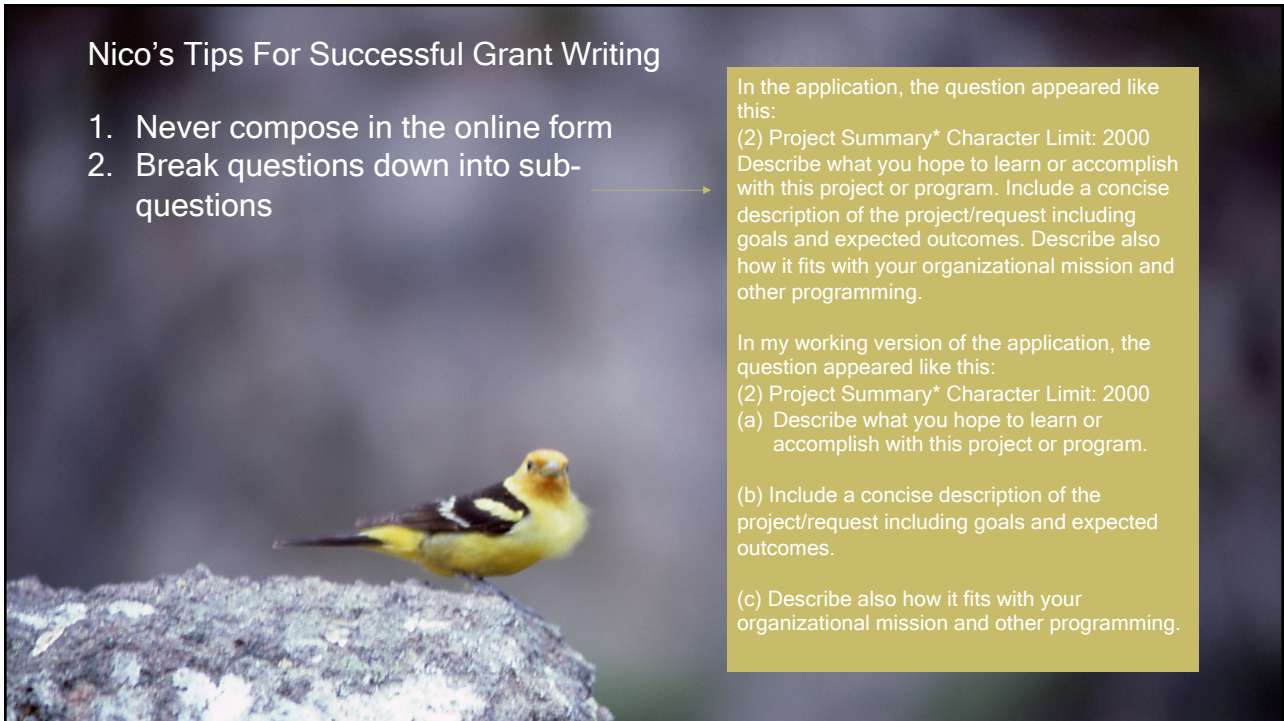
(2) Project Summary* Character Limit: 2000
Describe what you hope to learn or accomplish with this project or program. Include a concise description of the project/request including goals and expected outcomes. Describe also how it fits with your organizational mission and other programming.

In my working version of the application, the question appeared like this:

(2) Project Summary* Character Limit: 2000
(a) Describe what you hope to learn or accomplish with this project or program.

(b) Include a concise description of the project/request including goals and expected outcomes.

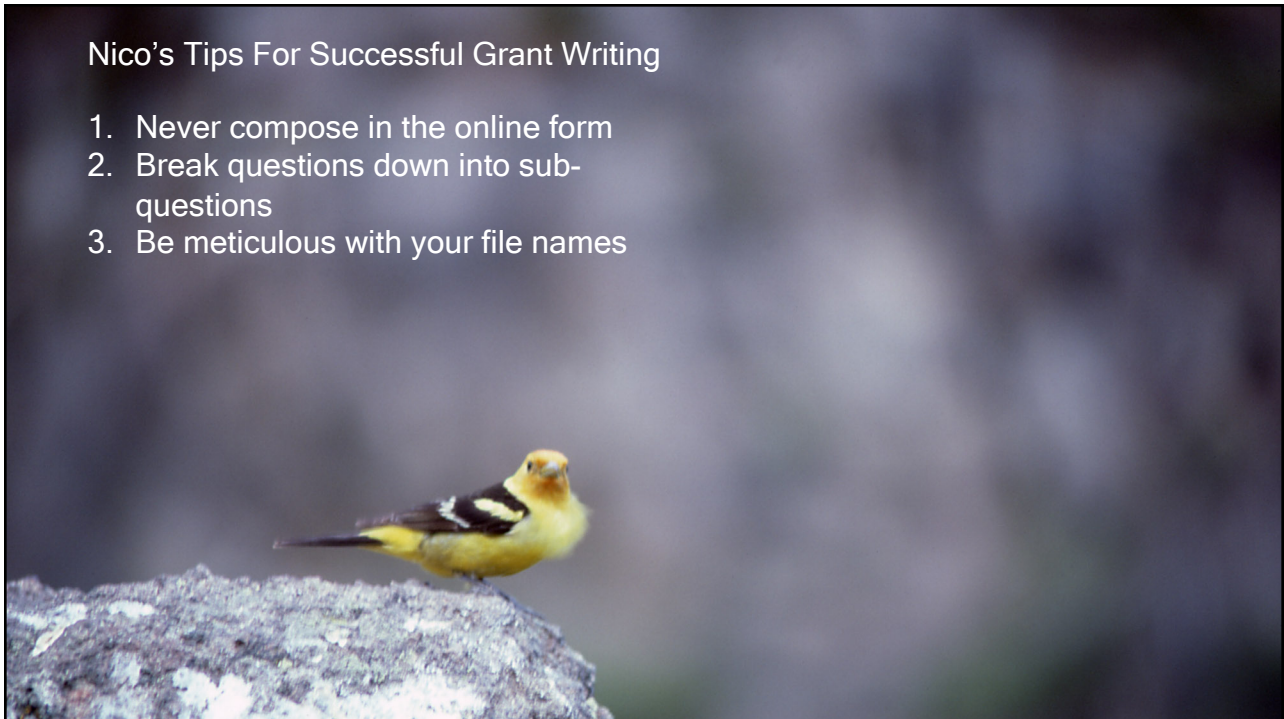
(c) Describe also how it fits with your organizational mission and other programming.



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Nico's Tips For Successful Grant Writing

1. Never compose in the online form
2. Break questions down into sub-questions
3. Be meticulous with your file names



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Put your name first!


NWK_ProjectBudget.pdf.
EPAC_ProjectBudget.pdf

Keep everything the same!

NWK_WorkSample.pdf
NWK_Resume2020.pdf

Know the correct name of your project and always use it the same way!


Projector for Theatrical Performance



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Nico's Tips For Successful Grant Writing

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2. Break questions down into sub-questions
3. Be meticulous with your file names
4. Use a thesaurus



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4. Use a thesaurus →

Avoid using the same words over and over. It's boring to read.

Use a thesaurus to make your writing sound more interesting. I love thesaurus.com

Instead of saying "support" repeatedly, try using:
 Bolster
 Reinforce
 Uphold
 Be a foundation for



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Nico's Tips For Successful Grant Writing

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3. Be meticulous with your file names
4. Use a thesaurus
5. Lie about deadlines



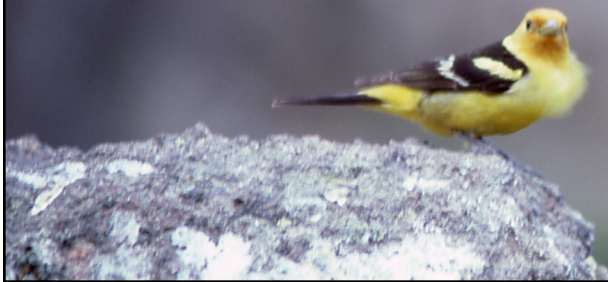
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Nico's Tips For Successful Grant Writing

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Never wait until the last minute to submit because something always goes wrong!

Push the deadline back on your own calendar and push it back even further for anyone sending you materials.



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6. Save "easy" tasks for when you don't have the brain power to write



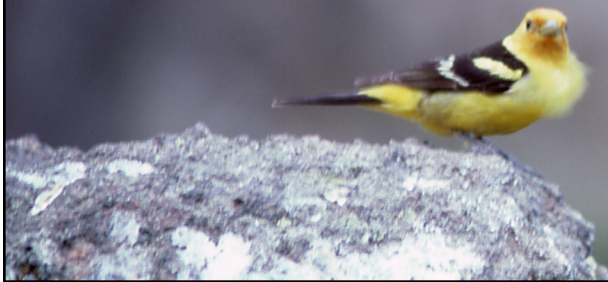
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Writing takes a certain level of mental energy.

Formatting PDFs does not.



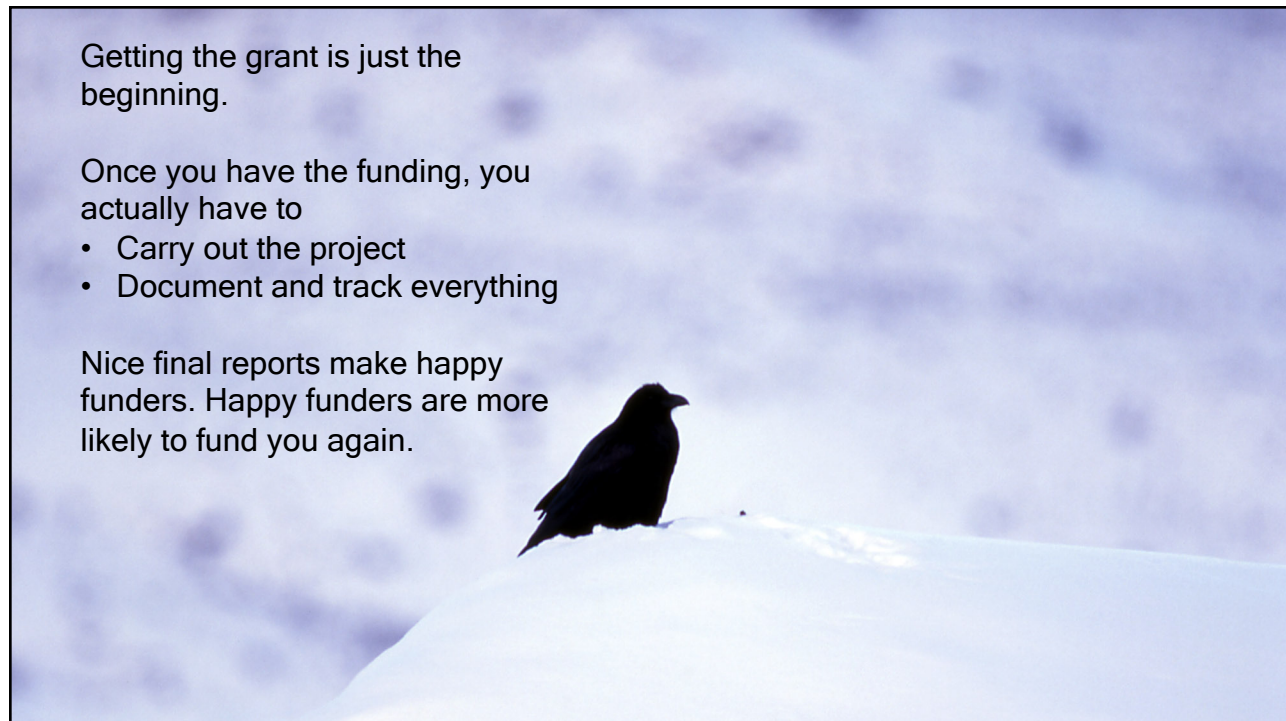
89

Nico's Tips For Successful Grant Writing

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4. Use a thesaurus
5. Lie about deadlines
6. Save "easy" tasks for when you don't have the brain power to write
7. Start your Final Report on Day 1



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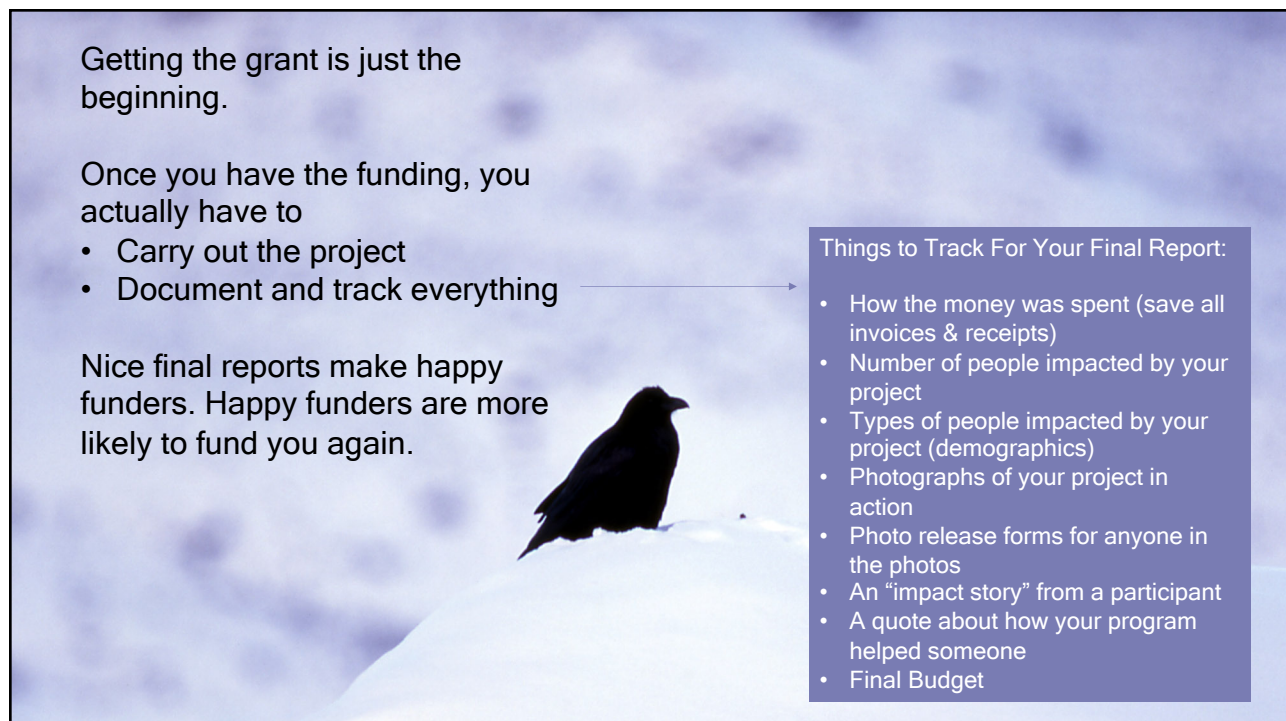
Getting the grant is just the beginning.

Once you have the funding, you actually have to

- Carry out the project
- Document and track everything

Nice final reports make happy funders. Happy funders are more likely to fund you again.

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- Carry out the project
- Document and track everything

Nice final reports make happy funders. Happy funders are more likely to fund you again.

Things to Track For Your Final Report:

- How the money was spent (save all invoices & receipts)
- Number of people impacted by your project
- Types of people impacted by your project (demographics)
- Photographs of your project in action
- Photo release forms for anyone in the photos
- An "impact story" from a participant
- A quote about how your program helped someone
- Final Budget

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In Conclusion ...

Grant writing is a mutually beneficial process where grant-seekers help funders fulfill their missions.

Grant writing involves reading very closely and choosing your words carefully.

If you are passionate, patient, and fastidious: grant writing might be for you.

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Dr. Nico Wood Kos

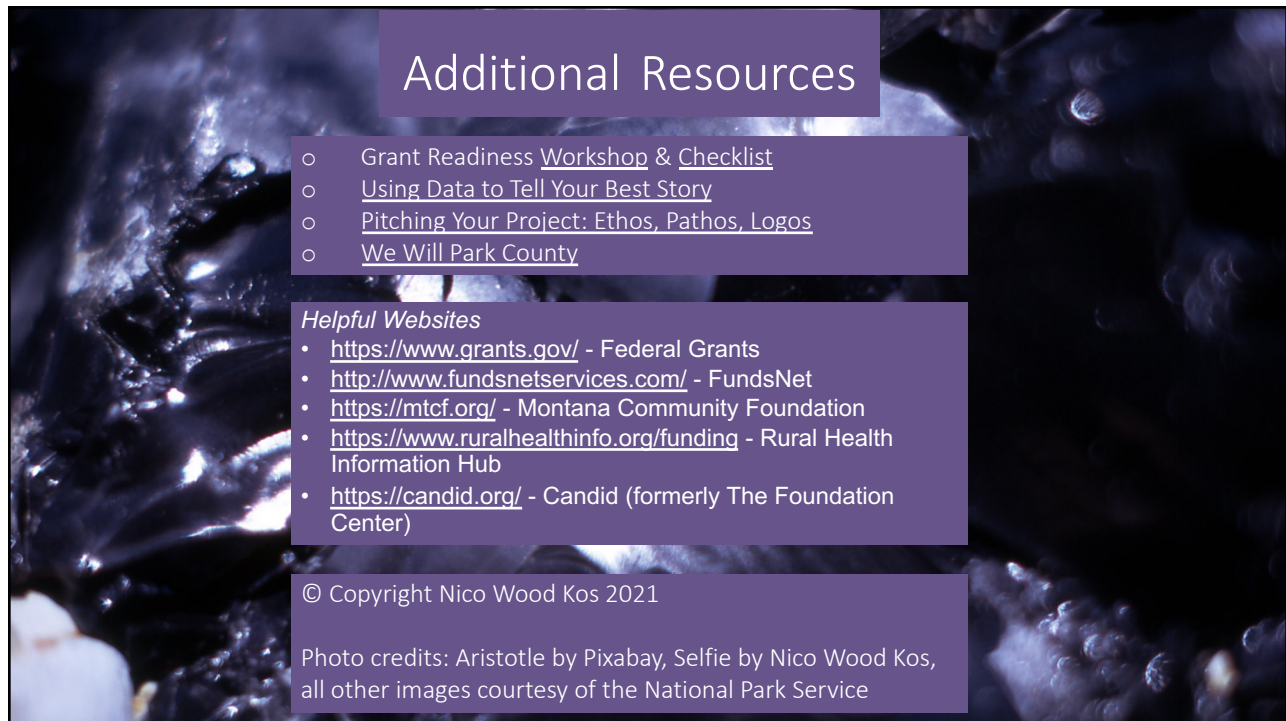
Professional grant writer
and non-profit consultant

nicowoodkos@gmail.com

406-529-9414



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Additional Resources

- [Grant Readiness Workshop & Checklist](#)
- [Using Data to Tell Your Best Story](#)
- [Pitching Your Project: Ethos, Pathos, Logos](#)
- [We Will Park County](#)

Helpful Websites

- <https://www.grants.gov/> - Federal Grants
- <http://www.fundsnet.com/> - FundsNet
- <https://mtcf.org/> - Montana Community Foundation
- <https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/funding> - Rural Health Information Hub
- <https://candid.org/> - Candid (formerly The Foundation Center)

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Works Cited

The Only Grant Writing Book You'll Ever Need by Ellen Karsh & Arlen Sue Fox

Good to Great Grant Writing: Secrets to Success by Julie Cwikla

"Finding Great Grants Checklist" by The Dotted-I (free when you subscribe via email)

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