INDIANA ARTS COMMISSION

GRANT WRITING TIPS

Whether you are new to grant writing or a seasoned veteran, please consider following a few basic grant-writing strategies that will help strengthen your application.

1. **Review the guidelines and application instructions carefully.**
   Make sure you understand the grant program's criteria so you can tailor your application to align with the IAC's priorities. Be sure to confirm your eligibility, and make sure your organization can fulfill the responsibilities of being a grantee.

2. **Submit your application before the deadline.**
   Applications received after the deadline cannot be accepted, so submit well in advance of the deadline to avoid last minute technical issues.

3. **Call or email us if you have any technical problems or application questions.**
   We welcome your questions. If you have questions about the application, contact the grant program's manager whose information is listed in the program guidelines. Check the program guidelines for draft application review availability and requirements. For technology questions or troubleshooting, email the IAC grants team at **grantsadmin@iac.in.gov**.

4. **Gather supporting documentation and materials**
   Your grant application is the first contact panelists will have with your organization. Allow yourself enough time to write, edit and assemble the necessary materials for your grant application. Before developing the first draft of the application, read it and gather the appropriate information:
   - Evaluation criteria
   - Organizational calendar/timeline (administrative and arts program activities, events, etc.)
   - Budget information
   - Financial documentation (if applicable)
   - Marketing, promotional, and artistic documentation
   - Strategic planning documents (if applicable)
   - Last year's application and panel review notes (if applicable)

5. **Be concise.**
   Longer does not necessarily mean stronger. Concentrate on the basics – who, what, when, where, why, and how. If you are having trouble staying within the character limit, you are not being concise enough.

6. **Be clear about your individual or organization's goals.**
   You are making a case for why your project or organization's operations are important and working toward fulfilling your mission and serving a community need. Think about how you are measuring, or will measure, your success. Use specific, measurable goals. Action phrases like "participants will demonstrate" or "they will create" are a great way to start a statement about your goals or objectives.

7. **Illustrate how your organization or project demonstrates community engagement.**
   Share how your organization's efforts or project reflect input from the community. How is their input gathered? Are they part of a committee, do you use surveys, focus groups, a task force, or have you formed a two-way, mutually beneficial partnership or collaboration?

8. **Double check your budget.**
   Make sure the narrative and budget are in alignment. The IAC requires your totals for income and expenses to match, so this is very important to a successful application.

9. **Always get a second set of eyes on your application before submitting.**
   We strongly recommend having someone else, ideally someone unfamiliar with your project or organization, to read your application prior to submission. Panelists will likely be unfamiliar with your organization and it's important for information to be clear and complete. An external reader can help identify areas where a question might not be fully answered, there's some missing information, and provide insight into how well the budget aligns with the project.