

A Grant Writing Tutorial

Introduction

Grant writing is a process; not just a single document called a proposal. It is a process of planning, researching, networking, and cultivation of prospective individual, foundation and corporate donors.

This process involves a synergy between the nonprofit and the prospective donor. It is a match between those who are seeking money and those who are giving money away. This match requires a coincidence of interest, and that requires the requesting organization to plan, research and network to cultivate prospective donors.

You must see your relationship with a prospective donor as a budding partnership. You may have ideas and the ability to solve problems, but no dollars with which to implement them. Individual donors, foundations and corporations have the financial resources needed to underwrite projects/programs. Bring these two together effectively, and the result is a synergy. That is the business of grant writing.

Grant writing is a step-by-step process. It takes time and persistence to succeed. After you have written a proposal, it could take a year to receive the funds needed to implement your project or program. And, even a perfectly written proposal may be turned down, no matter the merits of its purpose.

Grant writing is an investment of time and energy leading to a future reward. Your goal should be to create a group of individual, foundation and corporate donors who give small gifts on a steady basis - and a few which give large, intermittent, grants. By tenaciously implementing grant writing process every year, you can hold on to most of your small donors and find a balance with the inconsistent giving of large donors.

The grant writing process is not a rigid formula, neither are the components that make up a proposal a closed system. Both require a knowledge of the prospective donor being addressed so that they can be adapted to fit the criteria of that donor - each must be adapted to fit the needs of each situation. Proposal components may be labeled differently by every fundraiser and/or organization. Grant Writer Pro™ presents components which reflect the needs of the broadest cross-section of potential grant seekers.

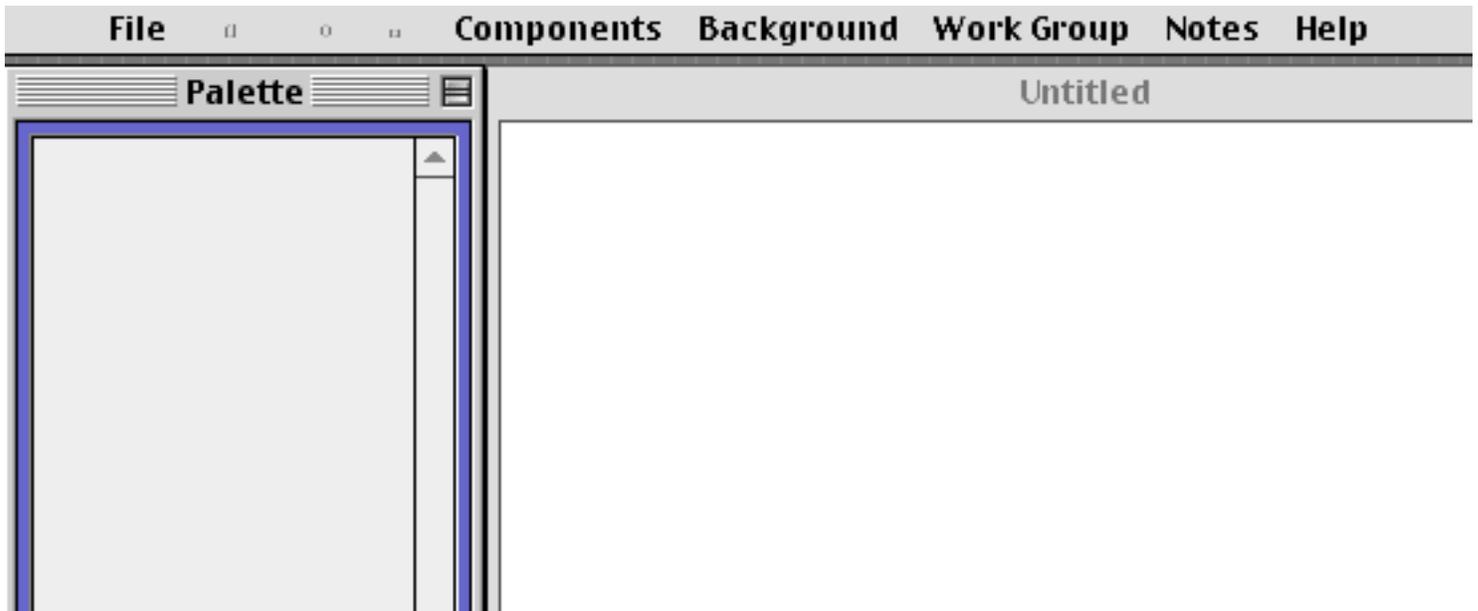
E-mail: <mailto:info@gwusa.net>
Web Site: <http://www.gwusa.net>

Grant Writer Pro™

Grant Writer Pro™ is a grant research, planning and writing tool designed to help you in the grant writing process. The following tutorial in the use of the software is also a useful short course in grant research, planning and writing.

Palette

The **Palette** allows you to save and store your components as you work on them in a desktop window for quick reference. Save them one at a time, either component by component, or as unitary document. Click on your stored document, and it opens in the text edit window ready for you to begin writing or editing.



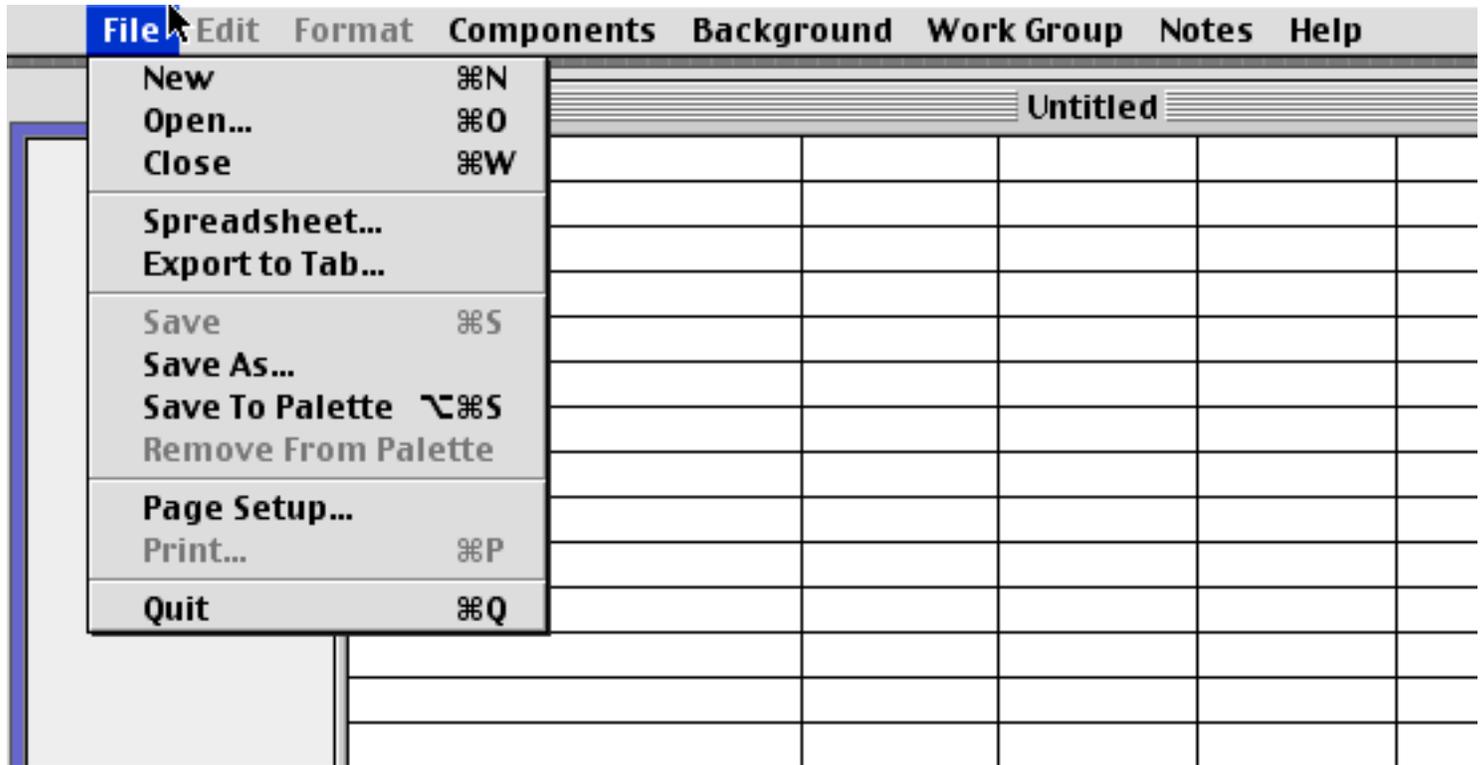
File, Edit and Format

The **File**, **Edit** and **Format** menu items allow you to create new files, edit, and format it using any font on your computer. Save your work to a file form and share it with staff, volunteers, and resource professionals others for revision and editing. Such collaboration will have a dramatic affect on the fund ability of your project/program.

You may "Save to" which allow you to choose where to put files anywhere on the disk or "Save to Palette" which saves in a file in the "Data Files" folder and updates the info appearing in the "Palette" window. The shortcut for this command is Command-Option-S. We recommend that you save to disk and to the Palette each time you modify your files so that you always have a backup of your work.

Spreadsheet

An internal spreadsheet allows you to work on your project/program's budget, and then exchange files with others for easy collaboration. You can enter and save to a text file for sharing with others, or to the Palette for storage. The Export command allows you to export the spreadsheet in a tab delimited text file for import into a spreadsheet program, such as Excel, for more complex processing.



The spreadsheet has columns labeled as A,B,C,D, etc... and the rows numbered 1,2,3, and so on.

A1 B1 C1
A2 B2 C2
A3 B3 C3

By entering equations in the following formats,

=B1+B2
=B1-B2
=B1*B2
=B2/B2

you will put the function B1 and B2 into the cell.

Components

The **Components** menu provides **Guidelines**, **Examples** and **Outlines** of standard proposal components to guide you in writing your proposal.

Cover Letter - a short introductory letter.

Title Page - page giving essential details for presentation.

Table of Contents - names and page numbers of each section/component of the proposal in a line item format.

Executive Summary - who, what, when, where and how much.

Needs Statement - a statement and documentation of the problem addressed by the project/program.

Goals & Objectives - anticipated outcomes and tasks to be undertaken.

Timetable - the timetable for the project - when do tasks begin and end?

Continuity - the plan for the project/program to continue in the future.

Project Management

Administration - financial management, project outcomes, reporting.

Staffing - qualifications, and specific assignments of relevant staff.

Budget - line item budget tied to each task of the project/program.

Evaluation Method - measurable results which can be reported to the donor. Report schedule.

Addenda

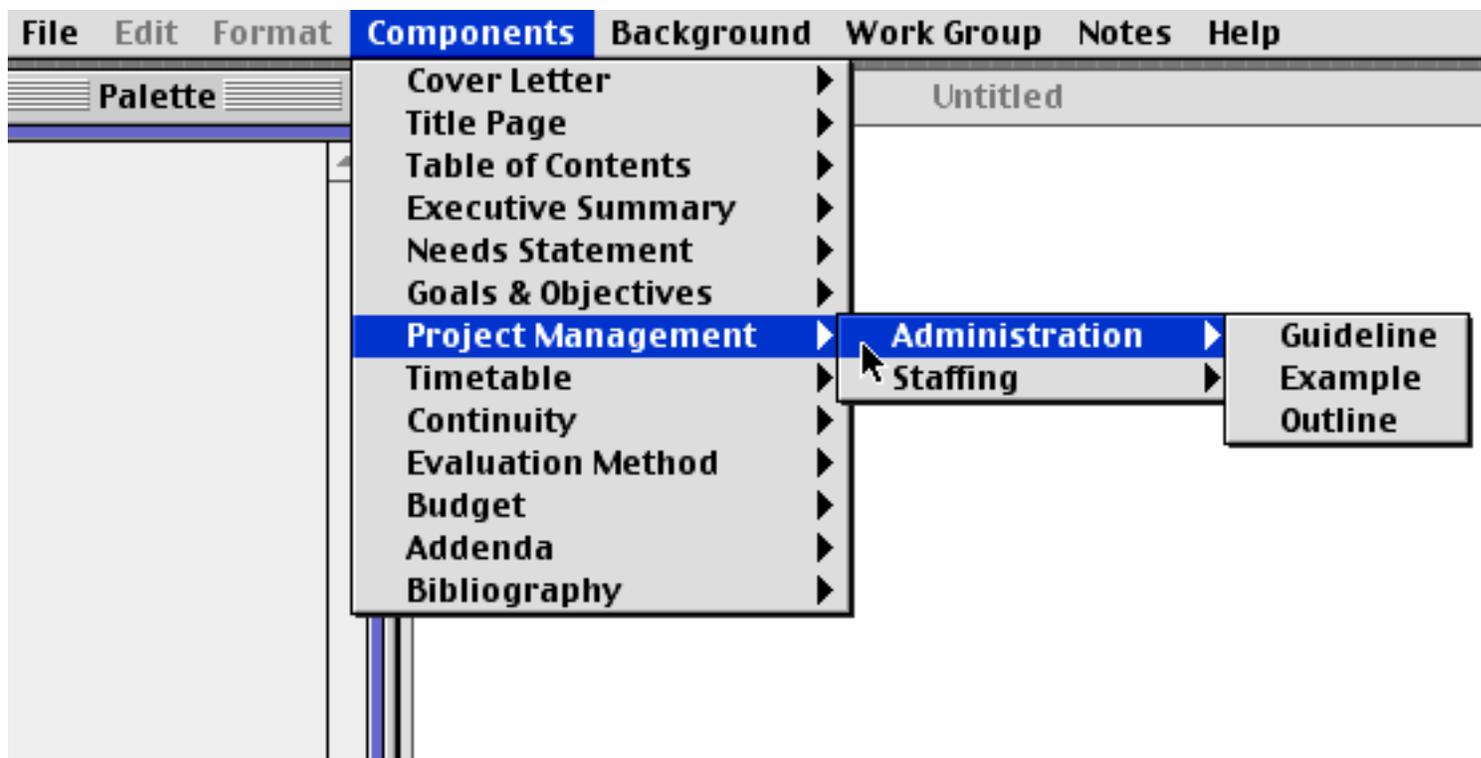
Resume's - resume's of key staff and volunteers.

Letters of Support - letters from community leaders and professionals endorsing the project/program.

Determination Letter - tax-exempt letter from the IRS

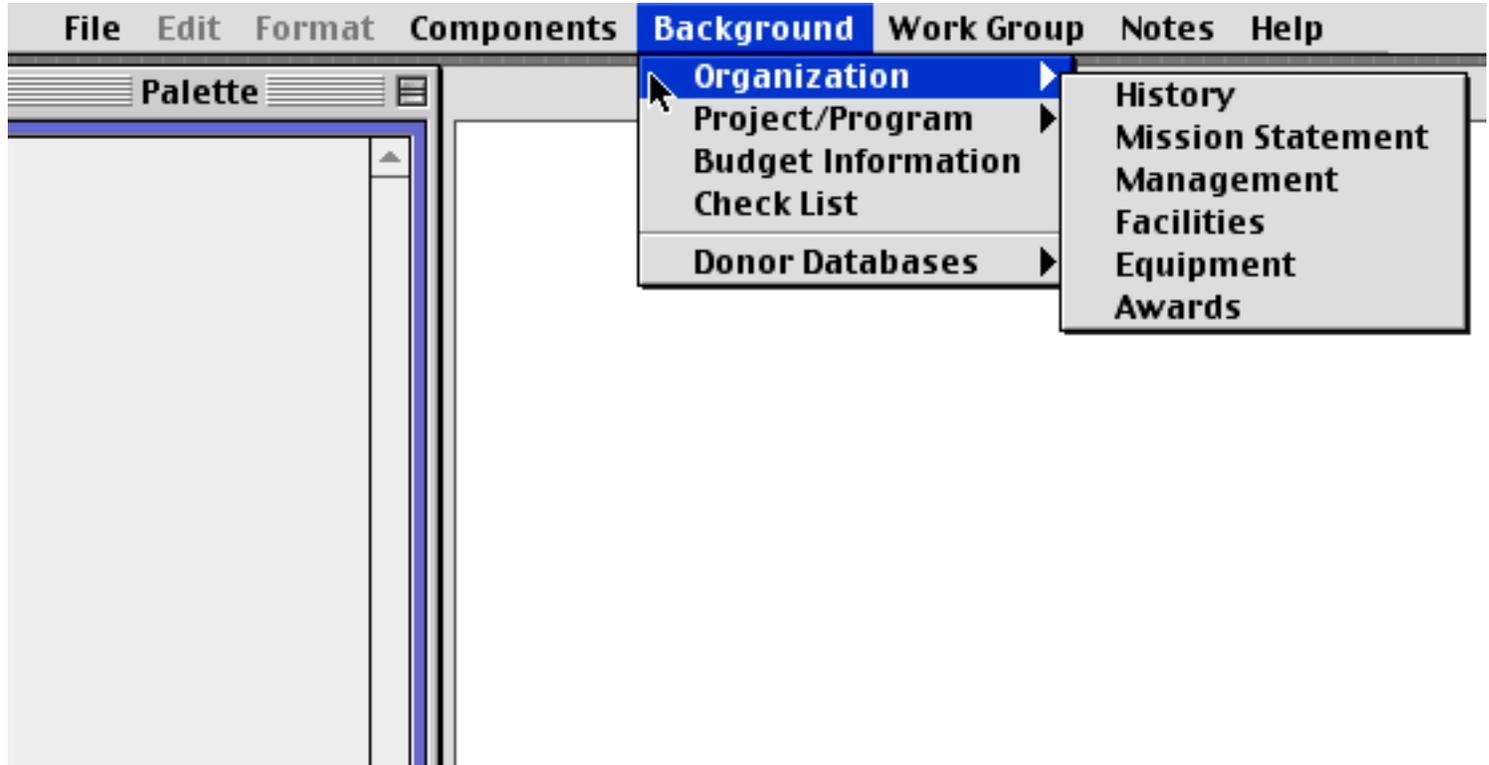
Bibliography - sources of information.

A unitary proposal and/or its components can be saved in text format for importation into a word processor such as MS Word™ or a page layout program such as Pagemaker™ or QuarkXpress™.



Background

The Background menu item allows you to gather the necessary background information to make the proposal conceptually sound. Grant Writer Pro™ organizes background information in the following way: **Organization, Project/Program** and **Budget Information and Donor Databases**.



While not all of this information may appear in the proposal itself, your having gathered and developed it will help you to write a proposal that is much more convincing.

If any of this information is not readily available, find out who can help you research and develop it. If you are with a small nonprofit with no staff, a knowledgeable board member might be of help. If you are in a larger agency, there should be program and financial support staff who can help.

Grant Writer Pro™ lets you gather information from the sources you need using a format that insures uniformity of input, revision, and editing. Background data-gathering by staff and volunteers is smoothed using Grant Writer Pro's common interface.

Organization

Background organizational information is categorized into, **History, Mission Statement, Management, Facilities, Equipment and Awards**. In the application each of these elements has guidelines and an edit able window where you can store the background information you have gathered.

History - a brief history of your organization.

Mission Statement - a statement of the philosophy and mission of the parent organization.

Management - an organizational chart - resumes' and job descriptions of key staff members.

Facilities - a description of your organization's facilities.

Equipment - a listing of relevant equipment.

Awards - a list of awards received by the parent organization.

Project/Program

Background project/program information is categorized into, **Rationale, Target Group, Support, Commitment, Credibility and Realism**. In the application each of these elements has guidelines and an edit able window where you can store the background information you have gathered.

Rationale - a description of the problem that the project/program is addressing.

Target Group - the group of people that project/program will be serving.

Support - what kind of support from your community does your project/program have? List of potential support letters.

Commitment - what demonstrates your organization's commitment to the project/program?

Credibility - list past project/program successes. What special skill do you bring to the project/program?

Realism - how many people will benefit and how? - does the project lend itself to statistical evaluation? - how will accurate records be maintained?

Guidelines help you research each element. The information gathered is stored in the application itself.

Budget Information

You will not be able to pin down a budget associated with the project or program until the programmatic details and timing have been worked out.

The main financial data gathering takes place after the narrative part of the proposal has been written. However, at this stage you do need to outline the broad aspects of your budget to be sure that the costs are in reasonable proportion to the outcomes you anticipate. If it appears that the costs will be prohibitive, even with a foundation grant, you should then scale back your plans or adjust them to remove the least cost-effective expenditures.

Donor Databases

Grant Writer Pro™ comes with an initial donor database of 10 donor entries (dBase Pro 10). Additional databases are available. Please check our web site: <http://www.gwusa.net> for details. The information you will need for each prospective donor includes:

Full legal name of foundation or corporation

Mailing address

Priorities and interests

Available money

Size of typical grants

Types of project funded in the past

Limitations

Procedures

Deadlines

Contact Person

Title

Officers and Trustees

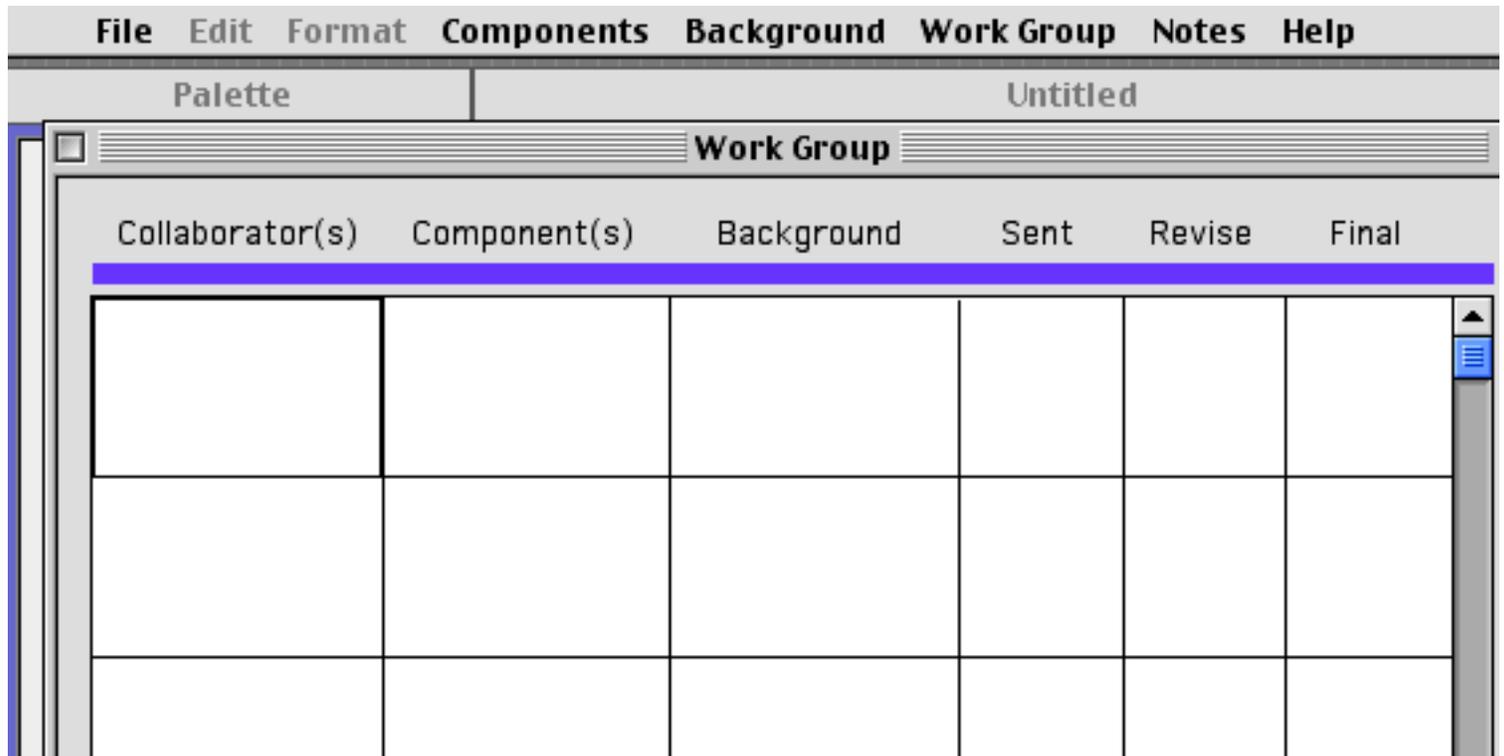
Renewal possibilities

Each of these elements is a line item entry in the database that can be dragged and dropped (Mac version only), or copied and pasted into the cover letter, or any edit able text window, or into a word processor to create an envelope.

Additional databases can be purchased separately depending on the availability of project/donor area of interest. Each database is researched from national sources at the time of purchase to insure that the information is current..

Work Group

Using the **Work Group** feature, you can keep track of where you have sent the proposal for **collaboration**; data includes **components** being developed, **background** information being researched, **date sent**, **revision dates**, and **final date**. This feature is especially useful for small nonprofits and schools where background information has to be collected from outside sources and volunteers play a large part in the grant writing process. For larger organizations, where internal collaboration is undertaken, it allows the user to keep track of assignments and work flow.



Notes

The notes window allows you to make notes while you are creating your documents. This information is saved automatically in the application, and can be copied and pasted into any component of the proposal or background element in the application.

Summary

Submitting your proposal is not the end of the process. Grant review procedures vary, and the decision-making process can take anywhere from a few weeks to six months. During the review process, the prospective donor may ask for additional information either directly from you, or from outside consultants or professional sources. This is a difficult period for the grant seeker. You need to be patient and persistent.

If your efforts result in a grant, acknowledge the donor's gift with a thank you letter. You also need to find out whether the donor requires specific forms, procedures, and deadlines for reporting the progress of your project. Clarifying your responsibilities as a grantee at the outset, particularly with respect to financial reporting, will prevent misunderstandings and more serious problems later.

Rejection is not the end of the process. If you are not clear why your proposal was rejected, ask. Did the prospective donor need additional information? Would they be interested in considering the proposal at a future date? This may be the time to begin cultivation of a prospective donor.