# Tips for Writing Great Grant Proposals

1. Start with a good idea! Identify the problem you are trying to solve and a potential solution that grant funding would support.

2. Remember that competitive programs are often VERY competitive.

3. Contact the program officer to find out if your idea matches the goals of the program.

4. Read the program guidelines carefully and note all instructions and deadlines.

5. Assemble your project team. Meet to discuss all aspects of the project and all of the program evaluation criteria—identify assets, weaknesses, and potential allies.

6. Develop a draft proposal—follow the recommended format and all instructions, and address all of the evaluation criteria in the order prescribed.

7. Contact your program officer for clarification of questions.

8. Ask others who have not been involved in the project to read your draft—they may notice an important omission or weakness.

9. Revise your proposal and submit it on time.

10. If your proposal is not successful, don't be discouraged.


*Adapted from a Presentation by Elaina Norlin, IMLS:*
*www.ala.org/acrl/aboutacrl/directoryofleadership/sections/ebss/ebsswebsite/ebssconferenceinfo/grantwriting*

# Key Points from Chapter 10 of *Winning Grants*
## by MacKellar and Gerding

1. **People:** "Grants are not about getting money or items on a wishlist. Funders want to make a difference in the lives of people."
2. **Planning:** "An effective proposal describes a program for change, not a list of wants. You must have a detailed plan that describes exactly where you are going and how you will get there."
3. **Priorities:** "If a library is willing to dedicate a portion of … funds and staff hours to the proposed project, this signals a legitimate priority, rather than chasing grant dollars."
4. **Purpose:** "Your project should not just be a good idea, but meet a true need in your community. This grant should make a difference and you need to demonstrate how it will in your proposal."
5. **Pursuit:** "Do your research and don't forget to look locally for grant funding. Get out of the library."
6. **Partnerships:** "Community partners, such as public agencies, businesses, or service groups, can help add validity to your proposal." Many grants require partnerships, get a letter of support even if it is not explicitly required. "Frequent communications, establishing personal connections, and finding creative ways to reach out to donors are all ways to build real relationships."
7. **Passion, Positivity, & Persuasion:** "Provide fact-based, verifiable statements, but include the passion you feel for the people you serve. A good attitude will go a long way."
8. **Precision:** "Follow the guidelines explicitly and answer all questions."
9. **Pitch:** "Let everyone know that you are looking for funding and pitch your grant projects."
10. **Perseverance:** "Keep trying; it is all a learning process. No one is ever 100% successful, but libraries have a lot of advantages in the grant world, so keep writing."

Webinar by Stephanie Gerding:
http://learn.webjunction.org/course/index.php?categoryid=28