

PROJECT PROPOSAL WRITING

Cover Letter

Preamble

This cover letter template encloses a proposal for a project. The letter expresses a desire to present the proposal, which would complete the project within the designated time period and under budget. Although the guts of your grant proposal will take up most of your time and energy, don't short change your cover letter. Attention to the finer points of putting the proposal package together can make or break a funding request. Don't turn off your funder with a sloppy cover letter. Mim Carlson and Tori O'Neal-McElrath, authors of *Winning Grants, Step by Step*, point out that the cover letter should introduce your organization to the correct person; assure the funder that this project has the support of your board of directors; and specifically state what you are asking for...how much and for what.

Learning Objectives

1. To define a cover letter and state its importance in a proposal.
2. To identify and understand different tips to follow when writing a cover letter of a proposal.

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Learning Outcome

1. The student is expected to have an understanding of the importance of a cover letter in a any proposal.
2. By the end of this topic, the student should write a good cover letter.

The cover letter often is your proposal's first chance to connect your project with the reader's philanthropic mission. It goes on top of a proposal, but it is not the same as an executive summary which states your proposal's key points. The cover letter should contain a summary of your proposal, introduce your organization and summarize any recent communications you've had with the funding organization. Include the amount of funding that you are requesting, the population it will serve, and the need it will help

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solve. Try to bring your project to life in the cover letter and actively engage your reader.

At minimum, your cover letter should:

- Request your dollar amount and introduce your project in the first sentence
- Describe how your project and/or organization mission
- Reference your most recent contact with the foundation
- List the contents proposal's
- Give contact details in case the funder wants additional information
- Be signed by your organization's executive

Follow these handy tips when you write your cover letters:

- Use the same date that the complete grant application will be sent to the funding source. You want to create documents that are consistent, so the dates on cover letters and accompanying cover forms should be the same.
- Open with the contact person's title. Follow name and the contact information with the funding source name, address, city, state, and zip code.
Remember to double-check the contact information with a telephone call or e-mail to the funder.
- Greet the contact person (Mr with., Ms., Mrs Dear., and so on), followed by the last name. This is your first point of introduction to a potential funder, so a personal title must be used. Call ahead to make sure that the personal title is correct.
- Keep the first paragraph short and focused. Start by introducing your organization (use its legal name), and then introduce yourself and give your job title. Finally, get to the point. Tell the funder how much money is needed by your organization. Write a sentence or two about what your organization does. Validate your existence by adding at least one sentence that includes research-based evidence that there is a need for what your organization does.

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- Write a second paragraph that's brief an sentences stating your organization's corporate st founded. Then tell the funder your organ the funder's mission or funding priority.
- Wrap up your cover letter up with a final, summarizing paragraph. Share a closing thought or reflection about what this funding partnership can mean for the future of your project's target audience.
- Use a standard closing, such as —Sincere sound both thankful and optimistic when you close your request for funds.
- Sign your first name only. Doing so invites an informal, long-term relationship.
Type your first name, middle initial, last name, and job title below the space you leave for the signature.
- At the bottom of the letter, include the word ENCLOSURE (in all caps). This note indicates that a grant proposal is included in the same packet. The capital letters signal that the grant proposal is important.

Cover Letter

- The Cover Letter serves to introduce the applicant's proposal. It is a one-page letter written on the organization's stationery. The purpose of the Cover Letter is to present information about the organization and project, and to present it in a compelling fashion to get the interest, of the foundation. The Cover Letter is an important document, and in preparing it, the applicant should treat it as a one-page grant request.
- In addition to introducing the organization and summarizing the project, it is important to state the request (how much the applicant is asking from the foundation and how the grant will be used), and invite the foundation to conduct a site visit, it is not common for foundation representatives to make site visits, but it
is advisable to extend the invitation.
- Include contact information in the Cover Letter, including the name, email address, and telephone number of the per can answer the foundation's questions a

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Foundation representatives do not appreciate calling an applicant organization and being referred from one person to another to get information.

- Since many foundations are moving to the acceptance of online applications, it is often difficult to secure the name of the foundation representative to whom an applicant should address the Cover Letter. When possible, do use a foundation representative's name in the salutation.
- Lastly, the Cover Letter should be signed by preferably, the president of the board of directors or the highest ranking official in the agency (i.e., the superintendent of the school district)

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Template Proposal Cover Page and Title

A request to [PROSPECTIVE FUNDER] for a grant of [AMOUNT REQUESTED] to support

[NAME OF COALITION OR PROJECT]

Submitted by

[NAME OF COALITION OR ORGANIZATION]
[ADDRESS]

[PHONE NUMBER]

[NAME OF CONTACT]

[TITLE OF CONTACT]

When Writing a Proposal title, include key words and make most important words stand out (order!). Do not promise more than what is in the proposal and

cut unnecessary (e.g. —some notes on). Further, avoid abbreviations and jargon.

The first page of the proposal often serves as the cover of the document. It should include: date, project title, project location, name of the organization and any required information. An effective title not only pricks the reviewer 's interest. It also predisposes him/her favorably towards the proposal

- It should be concise and descriptive.
- It should clearly indicate the independent and dependent variables.

- In an experiment, the independent variable is the variable that is varied or manipulated by the researcher, and the dependent variable is the response that is measured.
- An independent variable is the presumed cause, whereas the dependent variable is the presumed effect.

Reflective question

1. Using relevant examples explain the term cover letter in a proposal and describe its importance.

Reference

Rasey, J. *Writing, Speaking, & Communication Skills for Health Professionals*