

# Best Practices in Grant Writing

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# Be prepared with multiple project ideas

\$5,000?  
\$50,000?  
\$150,000?  
\$250,000?

- What keeps you up at night?
- What makes you frustrated or angry?
- Is there something that you have always wanted to study?
- What do you feel strongly about, or believe in?
- What in your community would you like to change, if you could?
- A child starting kindergarten this year graduates in the year 2037. What changes will happen over the next 18 years?

# Institute of Museum & Library Services

<https://imls-spr.imls.gov/Public/Projects>

## Search State Program Report (SPR) Projects

The State Program Report (SPR) is a reporting tool used by the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. territories for the [IMLS Grants to States program](#). This program supports the U.S. Using a population based formula, funds are distributed among the State Library Administrative Agencies (SLAAs) every year and ultimately support around 1,500 projects. SLAAs may also distribute the funds through competitive subawards to, or cooperative agreements with, public, academic, research, school, or special libraries or consortia (for-profit or not-for-profit).

The tools available here will allow you to search or browse these annual IMLS Grants to States projects, which describe how the funds were spent and what kinds of library services were provided. You can filter search results by fields such as who the grant served, partners, and type of library involved. Please note that these are two-year awards that are reported after the project period. Data for projects were not reported until the end of calendar year 2015. See the [IMLS Grants to States program overview](#) for more information.

**Search All Fields**

# Webjunction

<https://www.webjunction.org/explore-topics.html>

## Library Service

[Access & Equity](#)

[Children](#)

[Collections Management](#)

[Customer Service](#)

[Health Happens in Libraries](#)

[Marketing](#)

[Older Adults & Seniors](#)

[Outreach](#)

[Programming](#)

[Readers' Advisory](#)

[Reference](#)

[Social Library](#)

[Spanish Speakers](#)

[Teaching Patrons](#)

[Workforce Services](#)

[Young Adults & Teens](#)

## Technology

[eBooks & Devices](#)

[Digital Inclusion](#)

[Managing Public Computers](#)

[Social Media](#)

[Technology Planning](#)

[Website Design](#)

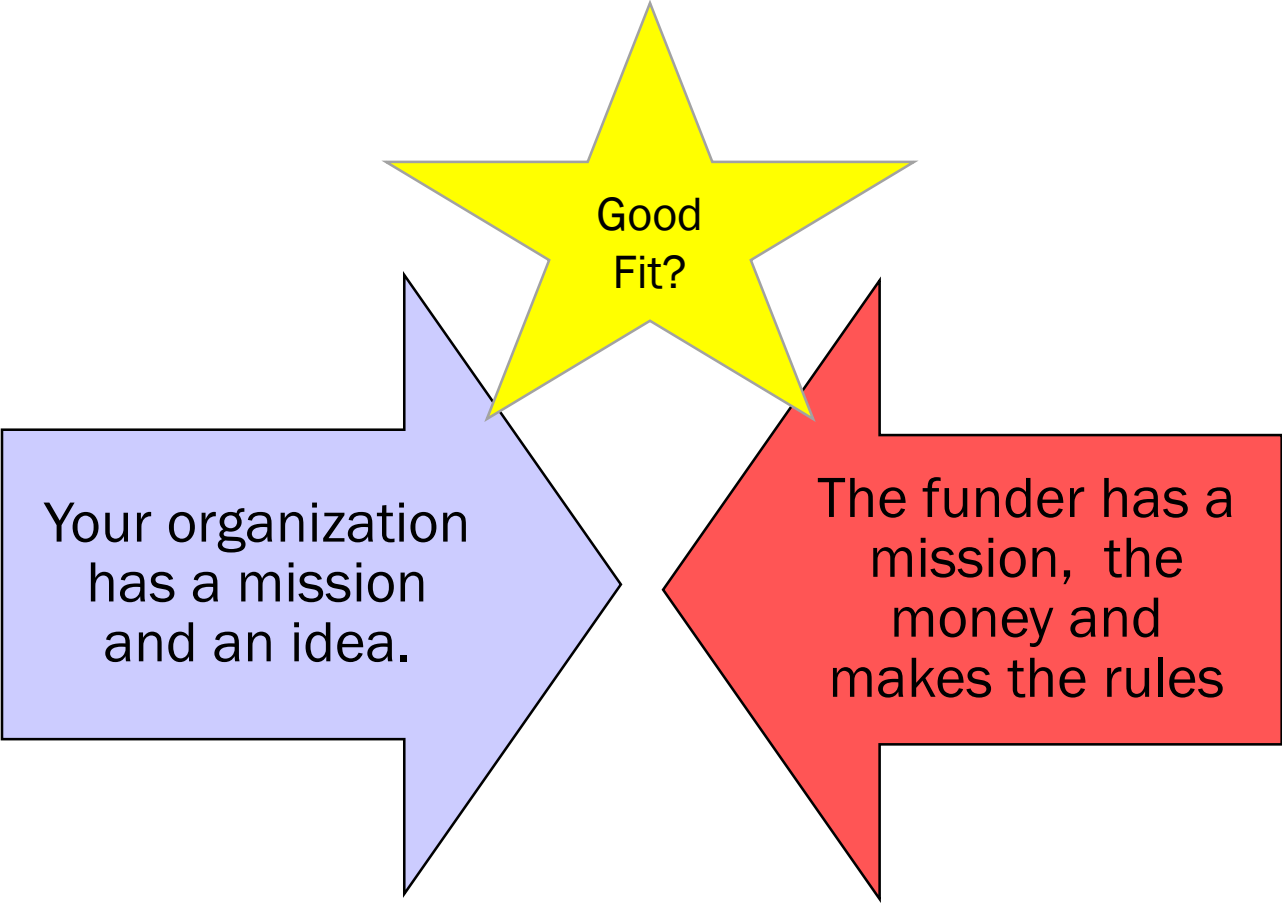
# Grant Writing Resources



Read the entire offering *at least two times*

Attend the pre-application webinar, if offered by the funder

- Is your organization eligible?
- Does your idea fit the offering?
- Many grants will require matching funds or cost share. Can your library afford it?
- Who will do your work if you work on the grant project?
- If this is a reoccurring offering, is better to wait for another round?



# Basic project management

Create an outline of the major phases of the project

- Divide the work into phases
- Determine dependencies and work flow
- Draft a schedule
- Assign tasks
- Ask for letters of support (if required) far in advance of the deadline.





# Next write the budget

Budget requests must be:

1. Allowable.
  2. Necessary.
  3. Reasonable.
- Research actual costs.
  - Get nonbinding quotes from vendors.
  - Expenses must be directly associated with a project element.
  - Your total must align within the range of funding per the offering.
  - Be realistic.
- 
- Digital Cost Calculator <http://dashboard.diglib.org/>

# Be clear, persuasive and compelling

- Prioritize
- The project design must be clear.
- Explain the project. Be excited.
- **MAKE OTHERS SEE THE NEED!**
- Show how activities proposed will achieve the outcomes expected.
- Focus, focus, focus and do not stray.



# Write strategically

- The library is the applicant not you.
- Action versus passive verbs

I **hope** that a number of these events will be interactive...

The five sessions **require** participants to use their new computer skills to create projects ....

- Avoid acronyms.
- Do not assume



- Follow **all** the requirements
- Use the grant maker's language, especially related to their organizational mission and goals.
- Include milestones set by the grant maker, such as submission of interim or final reports.
- Include recruitment, marketing the project and/or public relations activities.
- Give yourself wiggle room:
  - Or someone with similar skills or expertise ...
  - Approximately 150 participants are expected.



# Who will benefit?

Clearly define the targeted population you are seeking to reach.



# Include data

Illinois Department of Public Health – Data & Statistics <http://www.dph.illinois.gov/>

Illinois Public Library Annual Report (IPLAR)

[https://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/library/libraries/IPLAR/iplar\\_data.html](https://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/library/libraries/IPLAR/iplar_data.html)

Illinois State Board of Education <https://www.isbe.net/Pages/Data-Analysis.aspx>

National Center for Education Statistics <https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/libraries/>

Pew Research Center Internet & Technology

<https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/category/publications/>

US Census <https://www.census.gov/>

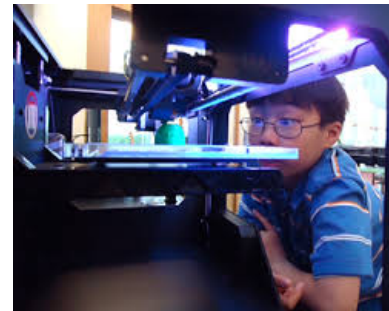
USA Live Stats <http://www.usalivestats.com/>

# Know where you are going

Articulate the results expected. Focus on people, not the library!

Outcomes describe the intended gain or change in an individual's...

- **Knowledge**
- **Skills**
- **Attitudes**
- **Behaviors**
- **Status or life condition**



...as a result of participating in the library's activities.

# How will you measure the difference the project makes?

Design evaluation(s) to determine levels of success in achieving the proposed outcomes.

- Survey
- Tests or Quizzes
- Data
- Observation
- Other?



# Common components

1. Budget

2. Narrative

- Library's Profile
- Target Audience
- Timeline
- Results Expected (Outcomes)
- Evaluation

3. Abstract

# Reflections

1. Be ready. Gather ideas now.
2. Contact the Grant Program Officer.
3. Create a project outline.
4. Write strategically.
5. Be sure all sections tie together.
6. Ask for what is necessary for the project to be successful.
7. If you are applying for second year funding, modify the activities based on what you learned during year one.