

Grant Writing Tips for Organizations

The narrative is one of the most important pieces of your application.

PREPARE

- **Start early.** Give yourself a month or more. Do not wait until the last week before the application is due. You may not be putting your best foot forward if you are rushed.
- **Do your homework.** Read the guidelines - especially the review criteria - before you begin work. Even if you are a returning applicant, changes to the guidelines may be introduced each year.
- **Call or Email.** If you have questions, contact the appropriate program staff member (see page 2).

WRITE

- **Organize your thoughts.** Create an outline to help you address all of the narrative questions and the review criteria within the allotted number of pages.
- **Write clearly.** Address the questions/criteria in a clear, straightforward manner. Writing should be concise - eliminate wordiness and avoid repetition...less really can be more!
- **Be honest.** Be careful with superlatives. If you say that your organization or project is “the best” at something, it would be wise to include documentation to support that statement.
- **Don’t assume anything.** Write your application for a reviewer who does not know you, your organization, or its history. Do not assume that the panel is familiar with your organization or project, even if it is fairly large or well known.
- **Do not whine.** Rather than complaining about a difficult situation, instead explain how your challenges will be met with a positive plan for moving forward.
- **Provide enough information.** Answer all questions thoroughly. Incomplete information can jeopardize the review of your application.
- **Include examples.** While your narrative should present facts, it should also tell a compelling story about your organization and its good work. Use real-life examples to illustrate the results of your work or the changes you have made as a result of program evaluation.

REVIEW

- **Revise and edit.** Once you have completed the narrative, put it away. Read it later...better yet, give it to someone else to read. Ask that person if you have addressed the questions and review criteria completely and clearly.
- **Follow the rules.** Make sure you follow the rules for structuring and organizing your narrative (font size, margins, spacing, headings, etc.).
- **Proofread.** Although panelists do try to overlook typos, grammar, and spelling errors, it can be distracting. Have someone help with proofreading.

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Before Uploading All Materials To eGrant:

- **Gather and convert all documents.** All narrative, supporting and budget documents should be in PDF format. Keep all final documents to be uploaded in a separate folder on your computer so that you can go back to them at a later date if needed.
- **Check your support materials.** If submitting images (must be JPG's) or URL addresses, make sure they open properly. For URL's you must include the entire address, starting with "http..." Make sure any video or audio sample on the web plays properly.
- **Submit only what is requested.** Extra materials or attachments other than what is requested will be removed prior to the panel review.
- **Make a checklist.** Review your application to be sure you have all components.

Delaware Division of the Arts Staff Contacts for Grant Programs:

For General Operating Support, StartUp, Project Support, and Arts Access Grants:

Katie West, Program Officer, Organization Support, 302-577-8287, Katie.west@state.de.us

For Education Resource and Artist Residency:

Sheila Dean Ross, Program Officer, Arts in Education, 302-577-8286, Sheila.ross@state.de.us

For Arts Stabilization Fund:

Paul Weagraff, Director, 302-577-8278, Paul.weagraff@state.de.us