

Grant Management Assessment and Planning Worksheet

Why worry about grant management? A grant management solution helps you stay organized and prepared to answer questions like these:

- What do we need to do to increase the success rate of our grant efforts?
- If you had more money, what investments (in people, tools, training, skills, consultants, etc.) would you want to spend them on?
- What is involved in successful grant seeking, and why does it take time to do well?
- What would it take to get our organization ready to apply to more funders?

When you are prepared, organized, and have the data you need - you can be depended upon to provide your organization with solid advice. You will become recognized as a grant professional and others will listen to your recommendations, and be more likely to take your advice. You can show the results of your efforts and investments, and make data-driven decisions. If you want to get the best return on your grant seeking efforts, you will want to follow processes and utilize tools that help save you and your organization time and increase the amount of funding you receive as a result of your efforts.

Instructions:

- 1. Rate your current performance using the stars.**
 - 1 star = Disagree / not doing now.
 - 3 stars = Doing some of the time, but not consistently.
 - 5 stars = Agree / consistently doing this.
- 2. Go through your list and rate the importance of these items to the success of your grant seeking efforts:**
 - Top priorities = A
 - Mid-level importance = B
 - Less important - C
 - Not currently relevant to you and your organization = D
- 3. Assign an "effort to implement" score of 1–10 for each area.**
 - Easy/inexpensive to implement = 1
 - Requires some investment of time and/or money will be needed = 5
 - Requires focused effort over time and/or a significant amount of money = 10
- 4. Select the items you will focus your efforts on.**
 - Find the items with a low number of stars. These have the most room for improvement.
 - Select the ones on the list that are rated the highest priority (an A or B).
 - Determine how strategic it is to your organization to improve your grant funding success this coming year; i.e., how much effort or how many items can you effectively work on this year?
 - Identify items that will get you the best return on your efforts, but won't exceed the amount of effort/resources you can apply to them.

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<p>Grant Preparedness</p> <p>☆☆☆☆☆ (Assessment)</p> <p>Importance: _____ (‘A’, ‘B’, ‘C’, ‘D’)</p> <p>Effort: _____ (1 - 10)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> We follow a process to keep our funder, grant, and contract records backed up, accessible, and available. <input type="checkbox"/> We have our baseline proposal, boilerplates, and answer templates written and accessible to the team. <input type="checkbox"/> We have all standard documents and attachments typically required for grant applications organized and available to the team. <input type="checkbox"/> We have a common file directory or other type of document repository that organizes all our important grant and funder information. <input type="checkbox"/> We are able to use a variety of team members (interns/ coordinators/ volunteers) for grant tasks because our processes and toolkit are assembled and organized.
<p>Search, Research & Manage Pipeline</p> <p>☆☆☆☆☆ (Assessment)</p> <p>Importance: _____ (‘A’, ‘B’, ‘C’, ‘D’)</p> <p>Effort: _____ (1 - 10)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> We have a list of funders we’ve received funds from in the past. <input type="checkbox"/> We have a list of current grants, with deadlines and report due dates. <input type="checkbox"/> We have a list of opportunities we plan to apply to this coming year. <input type="checkbox"/> We have access to prospect research tools, grant search databases, lists of grant maker funding opportunities from regional and/or cause-specific sources. <input type="checkbox"/> We regularly search for new opportunities (quarterly or yearly). <input type="checkbox"/> We set up future deadlines in our tracking calendar as soon as we know we will be applying to the funder again, sometimes over a year in advance. <input type="checkbox"/> We have a place to record notes of past conversations with funders, their recommendations, and other important information for future reference. <input type="checkbox"/> We can classify and group our funders by categories such as repeat funders, strategic candidates or lower probability opportunities. <input type="checkbox"/> We can tell which funder deadlines are hard (set), vs. soft (rolling, open) <input type="checkbox"/> We glean critical information from funders’ websites, 990’s and other resources before we apply. <input type="checkbox"/> We are selective on the grants we apply for, using a checklist or Matching Matrix’ to evaluate if potential funder aligns with our mission, programs, geographic area, etc. <input type="checkbox"/> We can easily filter the funder list on the type of program/area of interest they fund.
<p>Grants Planned & In-Process</p> <p>☆☆☆☆☆ (Assessment)</p> <p>Importance: _____ (‘A’, ‘B’, ‘C’, ‘D’)</p> <p>Effort: _____ (1 - 10)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> We organize our grants and funders using a spreadsheet and a list of grant management tool and keep it up-to-date. <input type="checkbox"/> We have in place a process to reassign tasks/grants to someone else. <input type="checkbox"/> We have a work plan/calendar where everyone on the grant team can see what deadlines, report due dates and other tasks are coming due in the next two to four weeks. <input type="checkbox"/> Everyone gets automatic email reminders when grant deadlines, reports, or other tasks are approaching. <input type="checkbox"/> We have the time and resources needed to effectively apply to grants that are in our plan/budget. <input type="checkbox"/> We follow a procedure for who approves proposals before they are submitted. <input type="checkbox"/> We follow a defined procedure for signing and approving the grant acceptance letters and other gran- related contractual obligations. <input type="checkbox"/> We can easily access items in our grant toolkit where ever and whenever we need them.

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<p>Submitted Grants</p> <p>☆☆☆☆☆ (Assessment)</p> <p>Importance: _____ (‘A’, ‘B’, ‘C’, ‘D’)</p> <p>Effort: _____ (1 - 10)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> We know which proposals are pending and reach out if we haven’t heard from the funder when expected. <input type="checkbox"/> We have a place and process to store what we submitted to funders, record when we submitted it, and keep any other important communications, documents or dates. <input type="checkbox"/> We know what type of grant documents we need to keep archived, where we save them, and for how long to maintain them.
<p>Awarded/Denied Grants</p> <p>☆☆☆☆☆ (Assessment)</p> <p>Importance: _____ (‘A’, ‘B’, ‘C’, ‘D’)</p> <p>Effort: _____ (1 - 10)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> We track grant award letters and other documents/contracts. <input type="checkbox"/> We know what level of financial tracking is required for our grants and have systems to help track expenses against appropriate grants. <input type="checkbox"/> We track amount awarded, amount received, amount spent by budget category, and other financial information required to close out a grant. <input type="checkbox"/> We know our reporting requirements and we have a tracking method to ensure they are completed on time. <input type="checkbox"/> We send out all our grant reports on time. <input type="checkbox"/> We submit end of grant reports even if not required by the funder. <input type="checkbox"/> We follow up with all funders when requests are denied, and record reason in a system we can refer to in the future. <input type="checkbox"/> We acknowledge both awards and denials with an immediate letter of appreciation.
<p>Grant Reporting & Metrics</p> <p>☆☆☆☆☆ (Assessment)</p> <p>Importance: _____ (‘A’, ‘B’, ‘C’, ‘D’)</p> <p>Effort: _____ (1 - 10)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> We can easily report on important metrics that summarize our grant fundraising status: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Top funders — Quantity and dollar amounts of grants awarded/denied — Quantity and dollar amounts for a particular program (planned, awarded) — Quantity and dollar amounts of grants that are pending a decision — Dollar amounts requested vs dollar amounts awarded — Of the amount that was awarded, how much has been received — Grants awarded, but not yet closed out <input type="checkbox"/> We can quickly and easily pull information together when it is needed, such as the following lists: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Top funders — Grants that are pending a decision — Grants that were awarded, but not closed out yet — Summary of upcoming or past due deadlines/tasks

Grant Management Assessment Work Plan

Date					
<p>1. List areas with a low number of stars (most room for improvement)</p>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; height: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="height: 25px;"></td></tr> <tr><td style="height: 25px;"></td></tr> <tr><td style="height: 25px;"></td></tr> <tr><td style="height: 25px;"></td></tr> </table>				
<p>2. Which areas on this list above rated the highest priority (an 'A' or a 'B')?</p>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; height: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="height: 25px;"></td></tr> <tr><td style="height: 25px;"></td></tr> <tr><td style="height: 25px;"></td></tr> <tr><td style="height: 25px;"></td></tr> </table>				
<p>3. Assess how strategic it is to your organization to improve your grant funding success this coming year; i.e., how much effort or how many items can you effectively work on this year?</p>					
<p>4. Identify items that will get you the best return on your efforts, but won't exceed the amount of effort/resources you can apply to them.</p>					