

# How to Write a Grant Proposal Cover Letter



Writing an effective cover letter for a grant proposal is important because it helps capture the attention of recipients, who may receive dozens of proposals from different organizations and individuals. Here are overall tips to ensure you write an effective cover letter for your grant proposal:

- Clearly define your project's details before writing your cover letter.
- Consider a narrative format for your cover letter to engage reviewers further.
- Proofread your cover letter for grammatical errors.
- Ensure your cover letter is clearly and concisely written.
- Provide references for other funders with whom your organization has previously worked.
- Include a personalized signature at the bottom of the letter.
- Research the potential funding organization to ensure you address the right person.

An average grant proposal letter shouldn't be more than one page long. Cover letters are the pitch of your detailed grant proposal. Do your research before starting the cover letter on the foundation and the grant's funding priorities.

First, you need to open the letter. Most people choose to include a formal header at the top of a grant proposal cover letter. In this section, you can include elements such as:

- Your contact information
- The date you sent the letter
- Recipient's contact information

Adding these elements allows recipients to contact you quickly and reference the date of the proposal. This can also help them link you with your organization, especially if you write the proposal on institutional letterhead. You can quickly find the correct contact information via a single call, email, or Internet scavenging. If this might seem inconsequential, consider the following perspective: Funders have a keen eye for sloppiness. Since they will skim any cover letter first rather than read it to the last paragraph, you don't want mistakes popping out. The initial information tells the funder you didn't go in headfirst, and proper addressing tells them you're a professional candidate. If the letter lacks formality, you'll be mistaken for a novice instead of a candidate worthy of awarding a grant.

In the first paragraph, introduce your organization. This can be beneficial, as it can provide reviewers with a background understanding of your organization or department and its purpose. Specific things you may mention in this section include:

- Title of your organization
- Purpose and values of your organization
- How long your organization has existed

When writing this section, it's important to remember that the purpose of the entire letter is to secure financial funding for your organization's project, not the organization itself. Therefore, it might help to condense this information to create more space to discuss the project itself. Another great touch is to validate your project via research. If you have cold data that justifies the need for the grant, be sure to include it in the first paragraph.

The main section of your cover letter allows you to discuss the purpose of your project. This is important because you can provide reviewers with a general understanding of

what your proposal aims to accomplish. Here, you can share:

- Your project's name
- Your project's purpose
- The future outlook of your project

Remember this is a cover letter of your proposal, so only include as much information as necessary to ensure reviewers can attain a comprehensive understanding. By doing this, you're effectively telling the funder that you have a plan in motion.

After your reviewers have a general understanding of your organization and the project you want to implement, you can explain the reasons why you require funding.

Information you might emphasize here includes:

- How you plan to use the funding
- The amount of funding you're seeking
- Why your organization or department requires support

Depending on the format, you can also include a graphical modal for visual representation.

You should also explain how your project matches the funder's mission and how it meets the funding priority.

Some writers like to use a numbered sample. The format can work both when you're explaining your goals and strategies. For example, briefly describe the organization's four main goals or the project's five phases. Numbering provides a clear summary, while further details make the letter more professional. An additional touch is to offer a timeline where you explain significant milestone and their due dates. You can also do that by using a brief bullet-point format. The timestamps can be months or quarters, depending on the project's length.

Emphasizing the impact of potential funding in your grant proposal letter is essential

because it can help reviewers understand how their contributions can directly aid your cause. Specific elements you may choose to highlight include:

- The positive effects your project might achieve
- The people who may benefit from those positive effects

This information might persuade reviewers to fund your project if they believe their funding can positively contribute to individuals affected by the problem your organization aims to address.

You should add a formal closing statement at the end of an effective grant proposal cover letter. Typically, effective closing statements are between two and three sentences long. Be sure to reiterate what the project can accomplish for individuals and include language that shows appreciation for reviewers considering your proposal.

## Cover Letter Tips & Mistakes to Avoid

For the final polish of your proposal, you can do things to give the letter a more professional touch.

### Ask for Feedback

Before pressing “send,” have co-workers read the sample of the proposal one more time. Don’t be shy about reaching out to your wider community for support.

If you’re not 100% sure if your cover letter concisely explains your proposal and why it should be funded, share it with friends or co-workers. Ask them these 2 questions:

- Can you tell me what the project is about? – Although the mission is clear to *you* as a writer, it might read like an astrophysical development proposal to a fresh pair of eyes.
- How did you feel when you read the requested funding? – This is to see how another person will react. Could they detect your passion and dedication

towards the project?

## **Use Plain English**

The point of a proposal letter isn't to show your extensive vocabulary but to state your case as straightforward as possible.

## **Final Formatting**

Ensure the dates match the cover letter and the main grant proposal. This goes for other files you'll send as well.

The main body of the cover letter should use single-space. Double-space means less room to write the limited information you need. Try changing the line spacing from single space to multiple space: 1.15 pt. This gives the letter room to breathe.

## **Send the Cover Letter in PDF**

If you're emailing the grant proposal letter, email the document in PDF. Unlike other text files, PDFs are safe from malware. Not only will it make you look like a serious candidate, but it will also leave a good impression in the eyes of more grant funders.