10 TIPS FOR TOP GRANTS

Whether you're a novice grant writer or a seasoned pro, this is your secret weapon to strengthen your next grant application.

1. DO YOUR HOMEWORK.

Read the grant guidelines, call the funding body to ask questions or discuss your project and attend any information sessions.

2. IS THE GRANT RIGHT FOR YOU?

Understand the context, such as relevant government strategies or the funding body's mission. Can you find case studies or a previous recipient list to understand what and who has been funded in the past?

3. IS IT ATTAINABLE?

What was the success rate of previous applicants? Writing a grant application is time intensive, and comparing success rates between grant opportunities can be a useful guide if you have limited time and resources for submitting applications.

4. TACKLE YOUR BUDGET EARLY.

A strong and viable budget is important for funding bodies, but it's equally as important to you! Poorly costed budgets are risky. Many grant programs will require quotes and/or reference to industry standard rates. For large projects or infrastructure grants, ask the funding body if you can include a contingency in your budget for price escalation or unexpected changes.

5. DON'T LEAVE SUPPORT MATERIAL UNTIL LAST.

From letters of support to financial documents, many grant applications require additional attachments. Allow time to engage with external stakeholders and gather the required information.

6. DON'T BE AFRAID TO USE DOT POINTS.

Where relevant, capture some of your written responses in dot point form. Dot points are a simple but useful tool that enable you to:

- Double check if you've really answered the question.
- Avoid lengthy, large blocks of text that lose your key message.
- Provide clarity to the grant assessor about what you're doing and why.

7. PROVE IT.

Provide relevant data to support any claims you make, and to evidence the need for your project. This may include researching and referencing demographic information, tourism data, customer surveys or feedback, ticketing data and more.

8. CONVEY ALL KEY DETAILS TO THE GRANT ASSESSOR

Have you clearly outlined the why, what, how, who, when and where of your project? Don't rely on the grant assessor doing extra research outside of your grant application – if it's important, capture it.

9. FOCUS ON PROJECT BENEFITS AND IMPACT

Align the key benefits of your project to the objectives of the grant program (you can find these in the grant guidelines). Have you clearly described the short-term, medium-term and legacy outcomes of your project?

10. PHONE A FRIEND.

Ask a colleague or friend to read your application before you hit 'submit'. Give them 10-15 minutes to understand the project and key outcomes. Listen to their feedback and if needed, revisit your application if they've identified areas that are unclear, or confusing.