Strategies for a Successful Application:

Tips:

What is the purpose of the Uniform Grant Application (UGA)?
The Uniform Grant Application (UGA) has been created to simplify the process of requesting and making grants. The format has been designed to assist grant-seekers with organizing and writing their proposals. The process has been streamlined to eliminate redundancy when applying to participating foundations.

Which foundations are currently participating in the UGA?
The following foundations are currently utilizing the Uniform Grant Application:
The Community Foundation for South Central New York, the Stewart W. and Willma C. Hoyt Foundation, the Conrad and Virginia Klee Foundation, the Roger Kresge Foundation, the George A. and Margaret Mee Foundation and the Dr. G. Clifford and Florence B. Decker Foundation. Other foundations may only require the cover sheet. If the foundation you are applying to is not listed, phone them directly to ask if they are using the UGA.

How should you start?
Grant-seekers must contact the foundation(s) they are interested in applying to in order to determine the eligibility of their proposal PRIOR to completing the UGA.
Know your purpose in applying. Thoroughly research the need for your proposal and be able to articulate the proposal's goals and objectives. Develop a statement of need for your proposal that will be used to "shop" your request to potential funders.

What happens next?
Conduct research to identify foundations that make grants to your type of organization in your geographic area. Make certain the purpose of your proposal fits within a funder's guidelines. Find out about each funder's application process. Some may not want a proposal right away and may want you to begin with a letter of inquiry. If the foundation accepts the Uniform Grant Application and has requested a full-proposal, complete the UGA coversheet, narrative, budget, and attachments.
Participating foundations reserve the right to request additional information when considering applications.

What types of support may be available?
The types of support that are available vary. Please directly contact the foundation(s) you are interested in applying to and/or review their funding guidelines to clarify the types of support they currently offer.

How can you ensure your proposal is the best it can be?
- Take the time to review your completed proposal to make sure it is complete and that you have included all information that has been requested.
- Do **not** include any information that hasn't been requested.
- Be clear and brief.

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- It can be difficult to assess the clarity of your proposal when you are very close to the project. Consider having a board member or other associate review and edit your proposal.
- Adhere to page limits.
- Provide any additional information requested by the funder in a timely manner.

Question-by-Question Guidance:
This section is meant to offer applicants guidance when completing the Uniform Grant Application Narrative.

Section One: Organizational History

Question 1: The historical overview of your organization is your opportunity to convey your successes and to make the case for why your organization is the right one to implement the proposed project or program. Please include current programs and services. Explain the fit between the organization's mission and the proposed project or program

Section Two: Administration:

Question 1: When answering please consider whether your organization has experienced a decrease or discontinuation of funding from federal, state or local sources. You may also want to include the impact of the economic downturn on your fundraising efforts.

Question 2: Please describe the steps your organization has taken to reduce expenses which may include: layoffs, programmatic cuts, reduced staff travel/training, not filling vacant positions, etc. Also detail the steps you have taken to increase revenue which may include: increased grant-seeking, extra fundraising, special appeals to community members, etc.

Question 3: Please describe how you have altered the operation of your organization as a result of your efforts to reduce expenses and raise revenue**.**

Question 4: Please describe your board of directors' involvement in and reaction to the operating decisions your organization has made as a result of your efforts to decrease expenses and increase revenue in a declining economic environment. Are they confident that these changes will stabilize your operations? What do they base that confidence on?

Question 5: Describe what modifications, if any, your organization would have to make if your proposal is not fully funded.

Section Three: Need for Program/project

Question 1: Please specify how the requested funds will be applied.

Question 2: Discuss the process undertaken to ensure your proposed program/project does not duplicate existing services provided elsewhere. If similar services are provided, please provide an explanation as to why yours are also needed, or what differences exist between the programs/projects.

STOP!   **If your request is for *general* operating support stop here. Proceed to & complete Section 5: Evaluation.**

     For operating requests to fund a specific program or project, and for all other requests, complete the entire application, including questions 3-5 of this section.

PRIOR to completing the UGA, confirm with the foundation what type of support you are applying for.

Question 3: Please state clearly and concisely what community need your program/project is seeking to address.

Question 4: The strongest applications will cite *local* data to support their statement of need. Sources for data related to community need can be found on state, county, and municipality websites (e.g. www.gobroomecounty.com, www.ny.gov, www.cityofbinghamton.com) The local United Way (www.uwbroome.org) also has need assessment data as does the Community Foundation for South Central New York (www.donorswhocare.org). Applicants should also consider including information regarding how they've engaged their consumers to receive input regarding need. (e.g. focus groups, need survey, personal interviews, etc.)

Question 5: Discuss the findings of your need assessment process that are most relevant to the program/project you are proposing.

Section Four: Program/project Description

Question 1: Please provide a brief paragraph (not to exceed 250 words) that summarizes the funding request and includes the following information: the general purpose for the grant, the amount of funding requested, a synopsis of the project, and the major outcome(s) to be achieved.

EXAMPLE: The XYZ Neighborhood Project initiative is a comprehensive community project designed to reduce tobacco use through a combination of education and local government policy changes. A grant request of $15,000 over 12 months will allow the project to target youth ages 10-21 with anti-smoking messages,

educational programs. This effort is designed to culminate in the passage of comprehensive indoor clean air acts in XYZ County and to reduce the initiation of smoking in the targeted age group.

Question 2: The goal of your program/project is its major intent, or what you hope to accomplish over the life of the program/project. Please state your goals clearly and make sure they are obtainable. The following are examples of an attainable vs. unattainable goal statement:

- **Attainable**: Students in the XYZ school district will increase their knowledge regarding the health risks of smoking.

- **Unattainable**: To end teen smoking in Broome County.

Question 3: Program/project objectives will outline the steps your organization will take towards accomplishing the program/project goal. In order to aid with evaluation, all program/project objectives should be measurable. What follows are three examples of objectives that are designed to accomplish a program goal:

- **Program/project goal:** Students in the XYZ school district will increase their knowledge regarding the health risks of smoking.

- **Measurable program/project objective**: 85% of students who participate will be able to name four health risks associated with smoking.

- **Measurable program/project objective:** 85% of students who participate will be able to demonstrate one way they can say "no" when offered a cigarette.

- **Measurable program/project objective:** 85% of students who participate will report sharing the information they've learned with a friend or family member.

Question 4: Collaboration to achieve program/project goals is strongly recommended. What organizations will you partner with to carry out your stated goals and objectives? What role will partnering organizations play?

Question 5: Please describe the program activities that your organization and its partners will take on to achieve the program/project stated objectives. If applicable, please include the activity, the number of people you expect to impact, the staff responsible, and the target date for completion.

Question 6: Most grant awards are time-limited in nature**.** If applicable, please describe the specific mechanisms and/or sources of support you are proposing to achieve the sustainability of your program/project.

<u>Section Five: Evaluation</u>

Question 1: Please describe what methods you will use to evaluate each of your measurable objectives. The following is an example of an evaluation strategy:

-   **Measurable program/project objective:** 85% of students who participate will be able to name four health risks associated with smoking.

-   **Evaluation Strategy:** This objective will be measured through the development and administration of a pre- and post- test to all participating students.

If requesting general operating funds, how will you know that the short-term assistance has improved your long-term sustainability?