



## **QUICK TIPS ON WRITING GRANT APPLICATIONS.**

### **PLAN.**

- Start early – it always takes longer than you think!
- Clarify
  - What is it you want to do
  - What you want to achieve / what the outcomes will be
  - How it will be done
  - What needs to be done and when
  - Who will/needs to be involved/informed
  - Materials required
  - Costs/quotes
  - Prepare a timeline – who, what, where and when!
- Identify
  - Who will be the applicant, and who the contact person is for the application
  - Who you will need to consult, get advice or approvals from, and/or approval or support
- Emphasise
  - Why your project is important
  - The value for money it presents
  - How the project will be monitored and evaluated. How will you know if it was a success?
  - How the project will be maintained in the long term, after the project has finished?

Once you are clear about what you want to do, identify the funding source that is most appropriate (I can help you with this – call 5820 1114 or email [caseyd@gbcma.vic.gov.au](mailto:caseyd@gbcma.vic.gov.au)).

### **PREPARE.**

- Collect:
  - Guidelines
  - Application form
  - Other documents, eg. tips and hints, checklists, plans, strategies, priority documents etc.
- READ THE GUIDELINES THOROUGHLY!!! Pay special attention to eligible/ineligible activities as some (or all) of your project may not be funded. Keep them close when completing your application as well.
- Read the Application Form.
- If the program is ongoing, check if any changes have been made.
- Get any approvals or permits required, eg. landholders, EPA, CMAs/water authorities, local/state government authorities etc.
- Find out about the assessment process
  - How will the application be assessed and against what criteria?

## **WRITING THE APPLICATION.**

- Keep in mind who will be reading your application. Remember it's usually competitive with limited funds, so you want your proposal to really stand out from the rest! It's also a good idea to give the application to someone who knows nothing about the proposal and see if they think it's clear and can explain back to you what it's about.
- Make the proposal interesting and easy to read
  - Type if possible
  - Format and choose a good font type and size (ie. Arial 10, Times New Roman 12)
  - Use everyday language
  - Be specific and get to the point
- Make sure the application and attachments can be read easily AFTER they have been photocopied (usually applications are copied for all assessment panel members).
- Answer ALL the questions.
- In describing your project, present a clear picture of what it is about, what the project will specifically achieve, and how it will achieve it.
- Match your project to the funding program (grant source)
  - Show how the goals of your project match those of the funding program
  - Use words from the guidelines, quote from plans etc, BUT don't copy and paste!
  - If the program has a particular focus (eg. on-ground works), highlight that in your project proposal
- A sketch and detailed map of the actual site and region may be required to indicate the location of the project
- Don't leave any required technical/feasibility advice, permits/approvals or letters of support until the last minute. These take time to organise! Identify what you will need early in the process.
- Many grant programs require you to show significant benefits to the local community. Think about how you can demonstrate/explain this, and don't just list it as an outcome.

## **BUDGET.**

- Ensure
  - It has sufficient detail to be clear on what the money is being used for
  - It adds up and that the budget summary matches the full budget
  - The budget matches the project description. The panel needs to be able to see what is being done and how much each activity will cost.
- If there are funding rules, follow them!
  - Don't put in ineligible items
  - Stick within recommended amounts or limits
- Justify your budget, especially if an item is more than a recommended limit (ie. rough/steep terrain, remote location etc)
- Demonstrate that you are using the most cost effective and economical methods
- If matching funding is required, be clear about contributions, where they are coming from and whether they are cash or in-kind. Make sure you include all sources of matching funding including volunteer labour, departmental staff time, community donations/payments, group contributions and any others you can think of.

## **SUBMITTING THE APPLICATION.**

- Check
  - Your application addresses ALL the criteria that will be used to assess it
  - It is complete
    - All questions answered
    - All additional information is attached (maps, letters of support, permits)
    - All required signatures are provided
- Give the application to someone who knows nothing about the proposal. See if they think it's clear and can explain back to you what it's about, how you will do it and what you will achieve.
- Send the original
- Keep a copy for your own records and reference
- Lodge it on time!!! Late applications and/or attachments are not usually accepted.
- Keep in mind posting dates. Some funding requires hard copies lodged in a certain place by a certain time. Leave lots of time and use an express post bag – then Australia Post can track it.