



## **Are You Curious About How to Hire A Grant Writing Consultant?**

Prepared by Michelle S. Mazzola Owner & Principal

### **Questions to Consider:**

1. **How much experience does the grant writer have?**

- How many grants have they written and how successful are they in getting projects funded?
- What is the length & complexity of the grants they have written (1 page or 150 pages)?
- What types of grants have they written (federal, state, foundation/ corporation)?

*(As an example, I have written hundreds of grants, have an 80+% success rate in getting projects funded, have written both long and short-length grants, and specialize in preparing State and Federal grants).*

2. **Is the grant writer familiar with your subject area, or willing to come up-to-speed quickly?**

Ask them about their experience working in your specialty area. Then tell them about your project and organization. Next ask them to explain how they would approach the grant writing process. *(As an example, I would tell you that I specialize in working with Fire Districts/Departments, Hospital Districts and Cities/Counties. My approach is to ask lots of questions, be an excellent listener, and to visit the project site and/or meet the principal players whenever feasible.)*

3. **Is the grant writer willing to involve you in the grant application process?**

Some grant writing firms will take your money and write you a generic grant application that looks much like the last one they wrote, without really engaging with you. *(As an example, my approach is to ask enough questions to understand your organization and what makes it unique. Then I craft a compelling narrative, in successive drafts, for client review. I specialize in good listening, client synergy and proactive communication every step of the way.)*

4. **What exactly do you want the grant writer to do for your organization?**

Each organization has unique needs, based on the skill-set found in-house. Perhaps you need someone to write and administer all of your grants, or maybe you just need someone to identify the funding sources for you. Since you do the hiring, make sure you acquire the skills for the project you have in mind. *(As an example, my skills include writing grant proposals, researching funding sources, critiquing grant applications written by others, revising unfunded grant proposals, preparing grant amendments, administering grants, teaching grant writing classes and mentoring individual grant writers).*

5. **Is the grant writer willing to assist you in administering the grant?**

Do you want to use in-house staff to do some of the work, or do you want your grant writer to also take care of some/all of the grant administration and reporting? *(As an example, I often administer grants. This can include assisting with contract development; ensuring construction bidding and certified payroll documents are prepared and implemented properly; developing civil rights, ADA, and non-discrimination policies; and/or completing quarterly grant reports and project close out documents).*

6. **How does the grant writer charge for services?**

- Hourly rate, plus time and materials?
- Charge a “set fee” for the project?
- Contingency based on the grant getting funded? (Unethical practice, read more at <http://www.grantwriters.org/ethics-and-commissions>).

*(As an example, I work on a “time and materials” basis, providing clients with a clear cost per grant delivered. I include a “not to exceed rate” on each signed contract, based on prior experience writing similar grants.)*

7. **Does the grant writer’s schedule match up with your project needs and the grant deadline?**

Plan ahead and hire a quality grant writer. It is much better to write a grant well the first time then to submit a quickly prepared grant application that may not get funded. *(As an example, I generally work with clients for several months before a grant deadline. This allows time to get the necessary planning and budgeting steps accomplished and have a good interchange of ideas, prior to preparing the grant application.)*

8. **Would you have fun working with this grant writer?**

Hire someone that you are comfortable working with. Putting together a quality grant application will require a large time commitment on your part, so make it fun by hiring someone that you will enjoy working with! *(As an example, I try to make the grant writing process educational and interesting. I like to laugh with my clients! )*

9. **How does the grant writer formalize the relationship with your organization?**

Legitimate grant writers will have a formal contract for both of you to sign. Pay close attention to the Scope of Work and make sure it outlines what you want the grant writer to do. *(As an example, I provide a copy of the contract to the client ahead of time so that they can obtain internal review prior to signing it. Contained in this document are firm costs with a “not to exceed” amount, and a clearly outlined scope of work and deliverables.)*

**Contact - Michelle S. Mazzola, Resource Solutions LLC**

PO Box 2229, Leavenworth, WA 98826

Phone: 509/669-4442

Email: [Michelle@ResourceSolutionsNow.com](mailto:Michelle@ResourceSolutionsNow.com)

Website: [www: ResourceSolutionsNow.com](http://www.ResourceSolutionsNow.com)