

Hints and tips

How to prepare your grant application

The following information is designed to assist you with your grant application. If you have any queries that are not covered in this document, please contact us at grants@hw.qld.gov.au.

Read the guidelines, application questions and hints provided within the application form carefully.

Check eligibility. Applications that do not meet all eligibility criteria will not be assessed. Eligibility is an important first step in the application process, so take the time to review the guidelines thoroughly to understand what and who is eligible. If you are unsure after reviewing the guidelines, contact the Health and Wellbeing Queensland (HWQld) Grants Team at email grants@hw.qld.gov.au for assistance.

Allow enough time – start early and plan your project. The more time you have to prepare and write your grant application, the stronger your submission will be. Review the 'Preview Application Form' to understand what information will be required, then set a realistic timeframe for each section. Start gathering your information and documents early (e.g. evidence of partner support, quotes, etc).

Ensure your project aligns with the grant program objectives. We try to make our intent and guidelines as clear as possible, so please carefully read the funding objectives and refer to our [2023-2027 Strategic Plan](#). Ensure your application is a good fit for the funding opportunity. Back your claims and develop a compelling case as to why you require funding. This will help you look at the bigger picture and this information will be useful during the application process.

Prepare a good budget. The budget is an opportunity to demonstrate that your proposed project is well-conceived, well-planned, cost-effective and feasible. Consider where funding will best be spent and how you can best leverage your funding. A well-developed budget will highlight how achievable your goal and objectives are and where the funding income will be applied. Include quotes where required and if requested, and list all sources of income, with matching income/expenditure totals. Ensure your budget is detailed and that everything outlined will be used in your project. We want to see the funds benefitting the community, wherever possible. Do your research in terms of how much things will cost rather than guess. Your request for funding should match the scale of project.

Talk to your partners early, rally community and legitimate support. The more people who know and support your project the better. Connect with your community, beneficiaries, potential and existing partners and any other relevant stakeholders early. Ensure your application goal aligns and fits with the goal of your partner organisation and the needs of the community and beneficiaries. The quality of your grant application will increase significantly with the inclusion of community support, statistics and evidence, and with the right partnerships. Think about teaming up with established organisations who may support your application and who share the same values and mission.



Revise, proofread, revise again. Your goal is to submit a grant application that clearly communicates your project or idea. The proposal needs to be compelling with outcomes of the project clearly described. Be in specific rather than general when describing your project or idea - especially regarding outcomes. Spelling or grammar errors, waffling answers or vague ideas could hinder your overall application. Ask someone who is unfamiliar with your project to read your application to ensure it is clear and easily understood. A fresh set of eyes will help you address areas you may have left out or that need clarification. Consider their feedback and re-write, if necessary. Finally, avoid jargon or overuse of acronyms. Write your acronyms in full the first time you use them in your grant application.

Avoid potential complications with the online application process. SmartyGrants allows you to compose your answers directly online and allows you to keep track of your word count and save as you complete each section so you can come back to the application. If completing directly online, make sure you **save your online application regularly** when you complete it as SmartyGrants times out after 20 mins of not being used and you may lose work in progress if unsaved. You may compose your answers in a separate Word document and then copy and paste your responses to the questions into the online application form.

Sign off your application correctly. Identify early on who in your organisation has authority to 'sign off' your application. An appropriately authorised person is a person who has an authority to sign an agreement on behalf of the organisation.

Please contact the HWQld Grants Team if you are unsure about anything – do not guess!

Top 10 grant writing pitfalls

1. **Guidelines are not carefully read** – increased risk of eligibility not being met or proposal not aligning with grant round objectives.
2. **Not using plain English** - message is unclear, too much jargon or too many acronyms used
3. **Lack of proofreading.**
4. **Application is prepared at the last minute** – responses to questions in the application form are incomplete or poorly formulated
5. **Failure to clearly demonstrate** the importance and need of the proposed project or research idea.
6. **Proposed project is overly ambitious** – aims and objectives do not fit well within the timeframe and available budget, or lacks focus on aims, goals and future directions.
7. **Failure to provide adequate level of detail** on the approach to collecting data and/or running the activities
8. **Partnerships are weak** and applicant is missing critical skills or expertise.
9. **Budget is incorrect** or not reflective of the proposed project
10. **Attachments have not been provided.**

Preparing a project budget

Read the Guidelines carefully to make sure your costs are eligible for funding.



Write detailed descriptions of your expenses. This is your opportunity to show us how well you know your project, your organisation, your sector and work processes. For example, salary costs should include the position title, the position classification (if applicable) and duration of the role (e.g. Project Officer, Administration Stream Level 6; 0.8 FTE, 6 months).

Carefully outline all separate budget items. Ensure that the number of line items of your budget match the scale of the project.

Justify your budget items. Consider why you are asking for these items and show us you've considered the best way to spend the funding. Ensure budget items are eligible as per the guidelines.

Outline all your income and carefully consider all in-kind and cash contributions which will help boost the value for money argument offered by your project. Include things such as:

- **Volunteer hours:**
 - Calculate volunteer general labour at \$59.82 per hour (including on-costs), values available at this [link](#) (calculators not currently working on [Volunteering Qld website](#)).
 - Calculate volunteer specialist labour at the professional's standard rate (e.g. graphic designer)
- **Donated goods:** calculate the fair market value of each item – what it would cost you to purchase it.
- **Donated services:** you can calculate the value of time donated by staff for the project (*above and beyond their regularly scheduled job*) by dividing their annual salary by 2,080 (the number of hours in a 52-week work year) to obtain the hourly rate, then multiplying by the number of hours of service.
- **Travel:** travel costs associated with project (excluding travel to and from the office for normal work).
- **Cash contributions**

Salaried employees who donate their time for the project must be able to document the time they have provided in an in-kind capacity.

Some Useful Definitions

1. **Applicant:** the organisation applying for the grant.
2. **Activities:** what you will do to achieve the desired objectives and deliver the project.
3. **Assessment criteria:** aspects that your application will be considered against. Each assessment criterion will have a specific weighting which will vary depending on how well your application meets that criterion.
4. **Evaluation:** evaluation assesses how successful the grant project was in achieving the project's goal, objectives, deliverables, anticipated outputs and outcomes.
5. **Grant Agreement:** the legal document the Applicant needs to sign to receive funding. The funding agreement outlines the terms, conditions and obligations of funding, delivery of activities, accountability for both the funder and grantee and relevant partner organisations (if named in the agreement).



6. **Goal:** an achievable outcome that is generally broad and longer term than an objective. Objectives are shorter term and will define measurable actions to achieve the overall goal. A goal should be Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Time-framed.
7. **Grant round:** a funding opportunity that has an opening and closing date, during which time applications can be submitted.
8. **Project:** set of activities that make up the grant delivery.
9. **In-kind contribution:** any non-financial support provided to a grant project. This could include but is not limited to office space, phone usage, voluntary labour, donated goods, donated services, etc.
10. **Letter of support:** this is the official letter from partner organisations that will confirm support of partnership on project, and any contributions (cash and/or in-kind) made by the partner organisation.
11. **Objectives:** objectives are shorter term than goals and define measurable actions that will help work towards achieving the overall goal. Objectives should be Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Time-framed.
12. **Outcomes:** the impact or changes your project outputs/activities are expected to make in your community. Outcomes can happen soon after the activities occur or lead to others down the road (long-term outcomes). Several activities may work together to achieve one outcome, or one activity may lead to several outcomes.
13. **Outputs:** products, goods or services you expect to produce or deliver as part of your project, or the number of people you expect to benefit. They represent the concrete results of your activities.
14. **Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):** the measures that tell you if you are on the way to achieving your objectives or not.
15. **Stakeholders:** people or community groups who have an interest in the project.
16. **Priority groups:** similar to target groups/beneficiaries. They are the people or community that your project aims to reach and engage with.
17. **SmartyGrants:** online grant management system used to support application and communication processes throughout the grant round.

