



STEPS TO A STRONG GRANT APPLICATION

Preparing an Application

1. Review Community Energy Association's [Funding your Community Energy and Climate Change Initiatives](#) or other funding guides to determine if programs are available to support your project.
2. Ensure a good fit. Check your project's goals and objectives against those of the funding program. Review evaluation criteria and ensure that your proposal responds directly to each, or as many as possible.
3. Contact funding agency. Describe your project and ask:
 - Does this project meet the funding program's goals and objectives?
 - What are key elements of past successful applications?
 - What are the evaluation criteria (if not listed on form)?
 - Can supporting material (such as letters of support) be submitted after the closing date?
 - Are previous applications available for review?
 - Is Council or Board endorsement of the application required?
 - If a previous application was submitted to the funding organization and was unsuccessful, can relevant feedback be obtained on that previous application?

4. Create a timeline for application preparation and an application package checklist, including:
 - Developing a budget and project scope
 - Obtaining executive committee, Council or Board endorsement, if required
 - Identifying and/or obtaining supporting funding
 - Identifying possible partners and reaching agreements
 - Writing the proposal and ensuring senior management review and final edits
 - Securing letters of support
 - Copying and filing
 - Submission deadline, format and method of delivery (postmarked document, email, etc.)
5. Review application package checklist and ensure that all requirements have been met.
6. Submit proposal on time in the required format.

Application Content

1. Follow the recommended format of proposal.
2. Focus on key elements and ensure that you clearly address evaluation criteria. Include everything you think is important, but be succinct – longer is not better.
3. List resources your agency has committed or will commit to ensure success of project.
4. Identify partners and note how you will work together to ensure success.
5. Describe any planned community engagement processes, if required. Consider using innovative approaches.
6. Facts and figures are helpful. If possible, calculate or estimate magnitude of benefits of the project.
7. A budget can be either calculated or estimated but it should not necessarily reflect the maximum amount of funding available, unless you can justify it. Provide a reasonable level of detail for costs, itemize matching funds, and mention in-kind contributions, if any.