

Nonprofit Success Series Winning Grants Workshop

May 20, 2025



Omaha Community
Foundation

Introduction



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Our Mission and Vision

Mission

We maximize the power of philanthropy to strengthen our community.

Vision

A connected community of passionate philanthropists, strong nonprofits, and thriving residents.



**Omaha Community
Foundation**



What is a Community Foundation?

- 900+ community foundations nationwide
- Structure: 501(c)(3)
- National Standards Accreditation
- Giving tools
 - Charitable giving funds
 - Concierge level service
 - Community connections
 - Partner grantmaking

Who We Serve



NONPROFITS

- Fund for Omaha
- African American Unity Fund
- Futuro Latino Fund
- Equality Fund
- Neighborhood Grants Program
- Nonprofit Capacity Building



COMMUNITY

- The Landscape
- CAP® Program
- Omaha Venture Group
- Nonprofit Capacity Building
- Community Loan Fund
- Community Resilience Fund
- Government Partnership Grantmaking



DONORS

- Giving Funds
- Legacy Giving
- Family Giving
- Corporate Giving
- Philanthropic Support Services

OCF's Impact

- **2,000+** Donor Funds
- **\$240M** in grants processed in 2024
- **17,000+** grants to **3,200** nonprofits



Mission in Action

- **Strong Nonprofits**

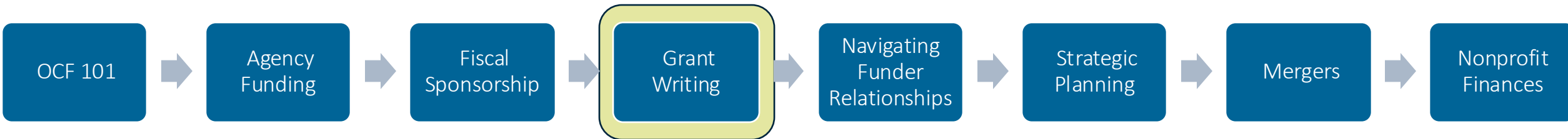
OCF Serves as a capacity building resource to strengthen the vital community of nonprofits to support diversified funding streams and sustainability.



Mission in Action: Capacity Building Series

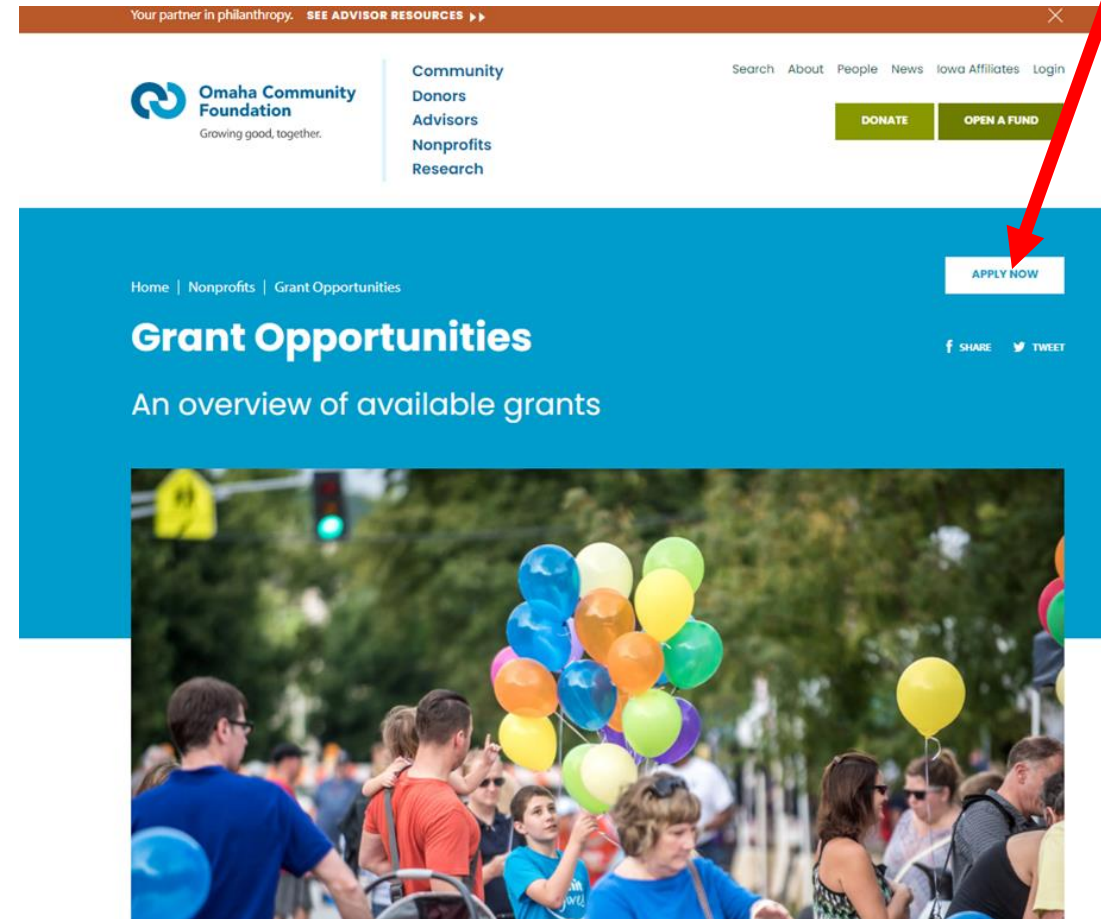
- **Building Resources**

Each session of the Nonprofit Success Series builds upon the content of the previous session. The goal is to equip nonprofits to thrive and meet their mission.



Community Investment Programs

- **Community Interest Funds:** January 1-March 1
 - Omaha Neighborhood Grants
 - African American Unity Fund
 - Futuro Latino Fund
 - LGBTQIA2S+ Equity Fund
 - Refugee Community Grant Fund
- **Field of Interest Funds:** June 1-July 15
- **Building Healthy Futures:** July 1-August 1
- **Fund for Omaha:** July 1-August 1
- **Nonprofit Capacity Building Program:** Summer



Upcoming OCF Workshops

Navigating Funder Relationships

June 17 at noon

Goodwill North 72nd

Strategic Planning

July 23 at noon

Security National Bank

Successful Mergers

August 21 at noon

Security National Bank



Proposal Grant Writing

Non Profit Success Series
Deb Bunting
Consultant



Introduction



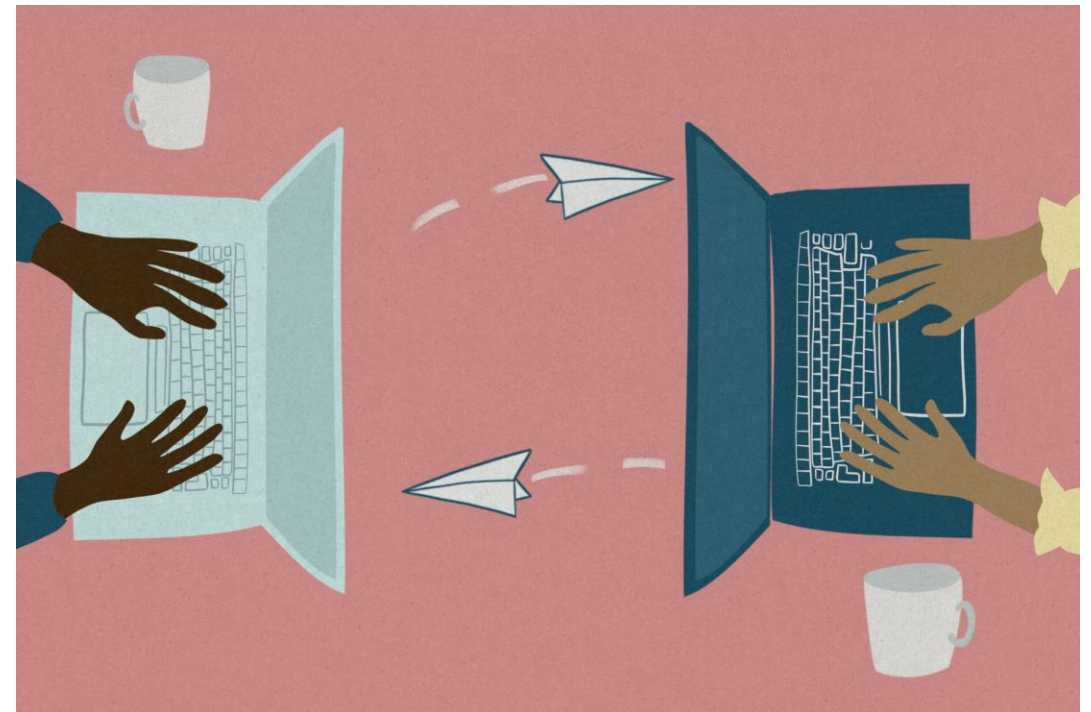
Deb Bunting

Arts & Community Engagement Consultant



What keeps us from applying for grants?

- Often it's fear of rejection. The reality is ...
- Only one proposal in 5 is turned down because the idea wasn't good enough
- A rejected proposal is worth hundreds of dollars of free advice
- The success rate is higher for proposals turned in the second time. The success rate on a third submission is almost 1:1
- *Remember, we want you to have the best opportunity for success!*



Source: Deborah Bunting, 2025



Why is good grantsmanship important?



- It tells your story
- It demonstrates a need, and how you plan to address the need
- It provides a framework for your organization
- It assures the committee that you are able to carry out the project

Source: Deborah Bunting, 2025



A grant is not an idea...It's a plan



An idea is something that only exists in your mind. Your task is to present the idea in a fundable proposal

GET the guidelines

READ the guidelines

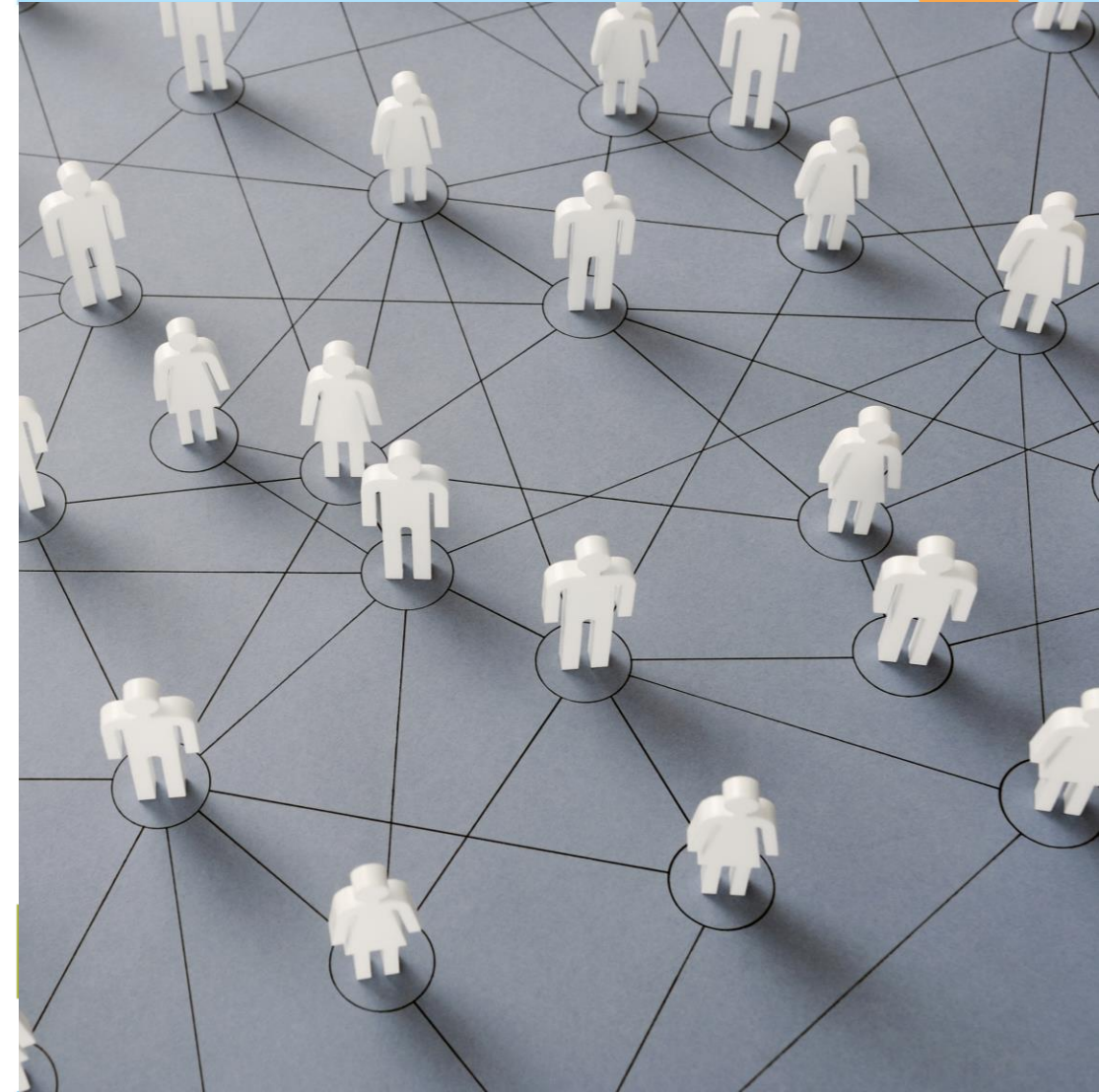
FOLLOW the guidelines

Source: Deborah Bunting, 2025



Remember

***A Grant is a Conditional Gift or a
Conveyance of Funds with Strings
Attached***



Preparing to write your proposal...

- Plan your project before you begin to write your proposal
- Allow plenty of time for writing and editing
- Contact the Omaha Community Foundation *early* with any questions or concerns
- Read the guidelines very carefully. Make sure your project fits within their funding criteria
- Most importantly, does my organization have the capacity to carry out the project?



Source: Deborah Bunting, 2025



Narrative

- This is the WHO-WHAT-WHEN and WHY of your request
- Be specific and descriptive of the project
- Offer a clear, current picture of your organization. Is the information on your website accurate and up to date?
- When will it take place? Where will it take place? Why is it important?
- What will your service provide? How is it unique?
- How will you achieve your objectives? Any collaborations?



Source: Deborah Bunting, 2025



Telling Your Story



- Think of your proposal as a story with a beginning, middle and an end.
- The Beginning- The why and the who
- The Middle-The solution to the problem/concern, or how you will address it
- The End-The results are your outcomes
- Use this as an opportunity to tell your story in a succinct, cohesive way
- Avoid using acronyms...
- Stick to the facts and write as if you are telling your story to a complete stranger...which you are!

Source: Deborah Bunting, 2025



Budget

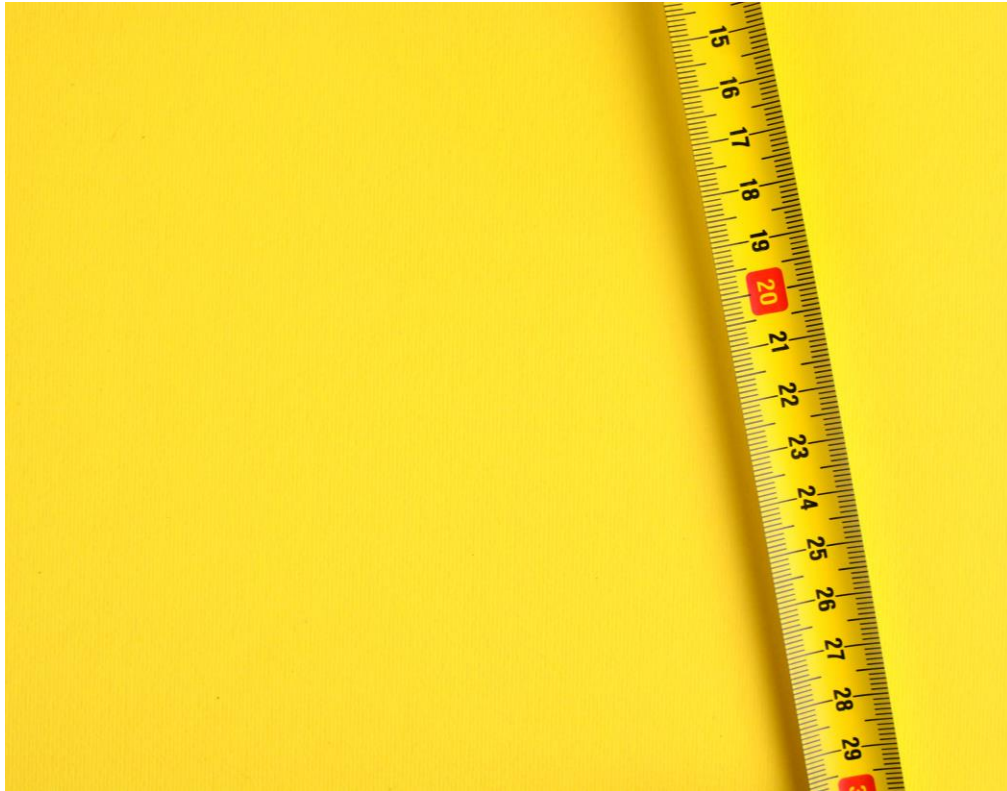
- If you are not using the provided template, is it in an easily understandable format? I strongly encourage the use of the organizations template. It is thorough and provides enough consistent information for assessment
- Is it specific to the project?
- Does it relate to the narrative?
- Have you provided enough detail?
- Have you listed all anticipated expenses and income? Does your budget reflect what you need to carry out the project? Did you ask for too much or more importantly, not enough?



Source: Deborah Bunting, 2025



Evaluation



- How will you know your project is accomplishing its stated goals?
- What will you measure?
- How will you measure?
- Create measurables and clearly state them in your proposal
- Creating an accurate record can influence future applications. Track and record as appropriate

Source: Deborah Bunting, 2025



What Do Funders Want?

**Good use of resources-
staff and volunteers**

Measurable outcomes

**Projects that support
the community and
further the mission of
the organization**

Evaluation/follow up

Qualified personnel

Collaboration

**To give you the
money!**

**Open communication.
They can provide the
resources you need to
be successful**



What Do Panelists and Reviewers Want?

A proposal that meets the goals of your organization and is in line with their funding principles

A well-written proposal that is clear and succinct

A balanced budget that is realistic to the project

For your application to Tell Your Story

To give you the money!

True numbers that indicate how many you are serving, and your projects impact on the community



Is Your Application SMART



Specific

Measurable

Achievable

Reasonable

Timely

Source: Deborah Bunting, 2025



In Closing

- Always review your proposal before submitting
- It's a good idea to have someone else read your application and welcome their feedback!
- Follow instructions!
- Be specific in formatting and mindful of page and word limits
- Don't wait until the last minute, especially if you need documents or information from others. Deadlines are real!
- Call Omaha Community Foundation or your applying organization if you need assistance. There is no such thing as a silly question.
- *Go for it!*



Source: Deborah Bunting, 2025

Frequently Asked Questions?



How can we have opportunities to connect with funders?

How can we persuade/educate donors to learn more about our organization before submitting a grant?

How do we increase the success of the grant submission?

Do you have any tips/hacks you would like to share?

Source: Deborah Bunting, 2025



Follow-up Conversations: Reflect and Share

Are there People of Color on Foundation adjudication panels?



How to meet Foundation expectations



Does your mission align with potential donors/funding



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Thank you!

**Please Take 5 Minutes
to Complete a Brief
Evaluation of the
Workshop**

Please Contact Us with Any Questions:

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