



# Grantwriting 101

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# What is grant writing?

Writing grant applications (or any funding proposal) is about pitching an idea to someone to convince them to invest in your plan. Your writing should reflect a few basic ideas:

- **What is the need?**
- **Why is your organization best suited to meet it?**
- **What are you trying to accomplish?**
- **How will you do it? How will you measure the impacts?**
- **Why does this work need to be done now?**



# Types of Grant Funds

## PHILANTHROPIC FUNDING

- Foundations, Donor Advised Funds
- Can be harder to access (invite only, not always regularly offered)
- Focus driven by funder/investor priorities
- Can be more flexible
- Typically application and grant management is less cumbersome

## PUBLIC FUNDING

- Government funding
- More requirements to apply (long apps, LOS, partners, EBPs)
- Focus is data-driven
- Strict requirements to manage
- Can be more sustainable if done well



**How do you start?**



# Assess and Plan Before You Start

## What information do you need?

1. **READ the RFP** and make a [Funding Opportunity Summary](#)!!!
2. **Gather Documents.** Do you already have things written that can be adapted to answer these questions? Are there 501c3 verifications and job descriptions you need to gather? Letters of support you need to request early?
3. **Meet with your team** to discuss budget and staffing needs for this work, Create a timeline and plan for writing the grant application itself? [Evaluate the Grant Opportunity](#)!

**Make sure this grant is right for your organization first!**



# Reminders During Your Team's Evaluation

## Mission Creep

Do the requirements of this grant and the expectations of funders align with your organization? Are you trying to do it all yourself instead of partnering with others? Are you pursuing your vision or chasing funding?

## Overpromising

Are your proposed outcomes realistic within the timeframe? Is this enough funding to do what you want to do? Will you be overextending yourself or your staff? Are you signing up for more than you can manage with this funding? (More money does not equal more hours in a day.) How ready are you to implement what you propose?

## Not Prepared to Manage the Grant

Do you have the structures in place to manage these funds? Can you accomplish what is required within the timeframe? Is this a reimbursement grant? Do you manage your documentation and finances in a way that will allow you to be successful with this funding?



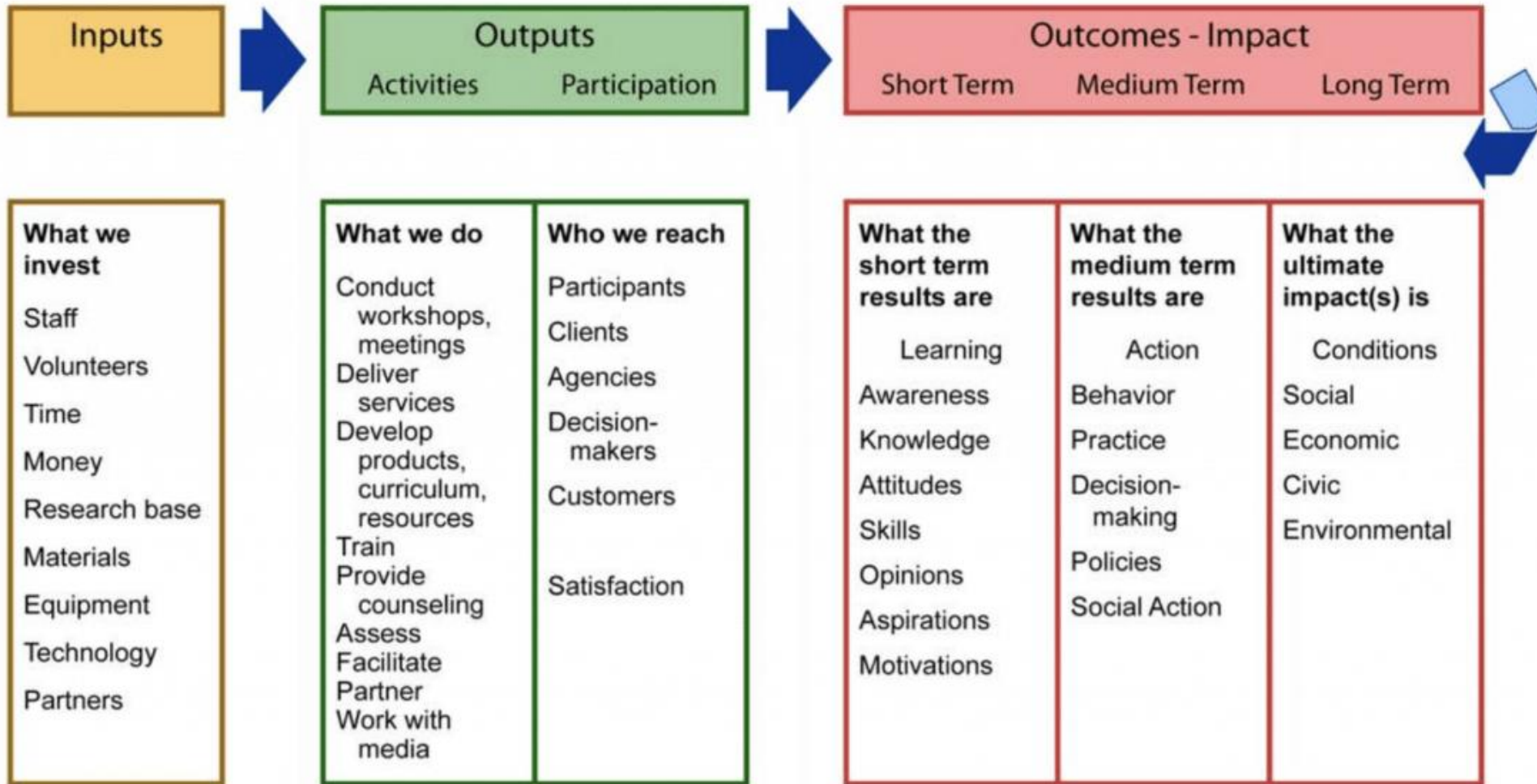
# Discuss the Big Picture

- Be honest about the real challenges for changes to root causes (distrust, systemic racism, scarcity mindset, starting/stopping programming)
- Be strategically honest about the real challenges for your organization (still building systems, inconsistent funding, staff turnover)
- Not everything has to be a new program. Grants can fund existing work to expand capacity or sustain it longer. Stand behind effective programming, especially if you can describe the benefits/impacts.
- Are there others doing this work? What can you learn from them? Can you work together?



# Organizing the Information

## Program Action - Logic Model



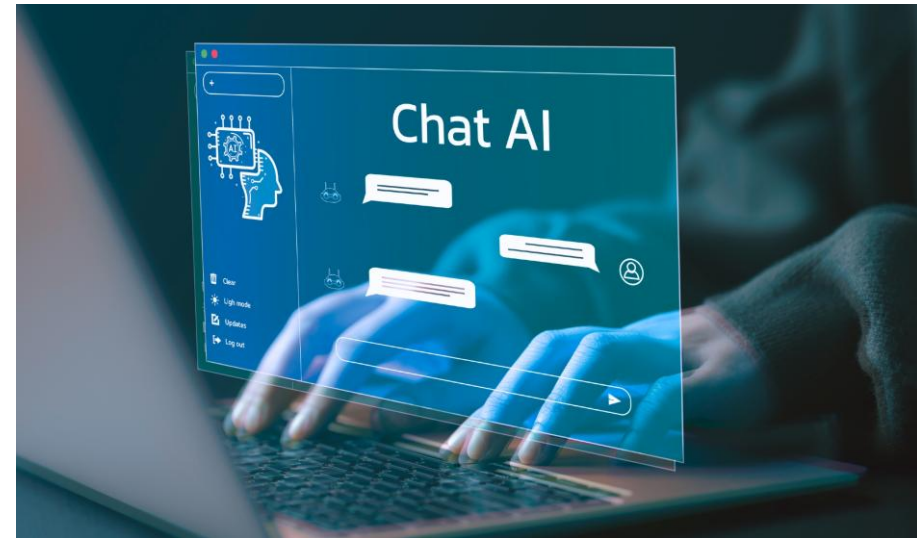
# The Actual Writing

Create a template with the questions and just cut and paste existing information and thoughts about the project

Brainstorm with your team/partners and collect all the ideas before paring down to something reasonable

START EARLY with a draft and have people read, edit, and add to your ideas. Walk away for a few days and come back fresh.

A.I. can be a great tool to get you **STARTED**. If you submit something written by A.I. without editing, we'll know!!



**What happens  
on the  
funder/evaluator's  
end?**

**What are they  
looking for?**



# Reviewing Applications

- **Be very clear!** Imagine I've never heard of you or your organization. Have an outsider review your narrative.
- **Answer the question directly.** Good practice is to **bold the sentence** that specifically addresses it when writing.
- Remember that readers are **reading MANY applications**, usually after work. Tell a story to make it memorable.
- Sometimes they are trained or have lived experience in this area. Sometimes they don't. **Paint the picture.**
- **Use the language** in the RFP, but do it strategically.
- Create **reasonable deliverables** and outcomes for the timeline and funding amount.



# Imposter Syndrome is Real!

- **Practice**
- **Share Your Work**
- **Ask for Feedback**



# Not being selected doesn't mean your project isn't worthy

| Grant Name  | # Apps Received | # Grants Awarded |
|---|-----------------|------------------|
| Stockton Housing Innovation Fund 2024                             | 23              | 5                |
| Community Economic Mobilization Initiative-Capacity Building 2023 | 80              | 14               |
| Community Health Fund 2025  | 70 (LOIs)       | 9                |





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# Thank You

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for our emails to stay up to date  
on grant opportunities

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