

**NCTCOG 2016 – 2017 Materials Management Call for Projects
Grant Writing Tips**

General Tips

- Remember the scoring committee is reading many applications, so have a good strong project summary.
- Make sure you fill out all sections of the grant application. Your grant application will not be scored unless it is completely filled out.
- Please make sure you address all the review criteria. Answer each question clearly and concisely. Be careful not to deviate too much from the review criteria. Your meaning can be lost when you try to include too much information that the application does not request.
- You may request that NCTCOG conduct a preliminary review and provide comments on your draft application. Please make sure you allow adequate time for NCTCOG review.
- A proposal should be realistic, promising no more than can actually be achieved and/or delivered. Be careful not to overstate your impact.

Budget Tips

- The budget should be neither obviously extravagant nor clearly inadequate. Be sure that the expenses requested are eligible (*provided in the Application Guidelines document and supporting Attachments*). Any amount requested for an ineligible expense will be cut from the budget completely and you will not be allowed to reassign the amount to an eligible expense.
- How are you going to sustain your project once grant funding is exhausted? Be sure to indicate how your entity will support the project after the grant period.
- For equipment costs, consider adding 5-10% to total unit cost to allow for price increases from grant application development time and actual purchase time.
- Do your homework; make sure your equipment requests match your level of need. Purchase the right equipment for your job. Also be sure that the equipment will be used for solid waste purposes 100% of the time.
- Investigate using state or regional cooperative purchasing programs for equipment.

Questions to ask yourself as you develop your proposal

- What makes your project special?
- What makes your project important?
- How does your project benefit the community?
- How will your project benefit other communities; can it serve as a model project?
- How will you measure the success/effectiveness of your project?
- If your project has disposal costs associated with it, how are you going to pay for those costs? Grant funds may not be used to cover disposal costs.
- How are ongoing project costs going to be covered once the grant funding is exhausted?

Extras...Helpful Hints

- If a presentation is requested from your organization, there is no need to reiterate understood solid waste concepts during the presentation because the scoring committee members are regional experts in solid waste management. Use your five-minute presentation time to discuss the merits of your particular proposal.
- Use visuals during your 5-minute presentation, if applicable. If you use visuals, make sure they are big enough so that the scoring subcommittee members can see them easily. It is preferred that you do not bring handouts.
- Remember that resolutions from commissioners' courts, city councils, and other governing bodies take time. Plan ahead to ensure that all documents requiring approval are submitted with the application. The same applies to letters of support.
- Under no circumstances may funds be used to purchase food, meals, beverages, or other refreshments for meetings or program participants.
- Make sure you give yourself credit for all your past work. Is your organization partners with other entities (non-profits, local governments) on other projects supporting materials management initiatives?

NCTCOG is available to help you.

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