JARS OF OIL

A Biblically Based Personal and Business Finance Blog

Grant Writer Selection Checklist & RFP Template

1. Clarify Your Goals and Needs

- Define the purpose of the grant: startup capital, program funding, equipment, etc.

- Identify your target grant type: government, private foundation, corporate, etc.

- Know your timeline, budget, and expectations for the grant writer.

2. Look for Relevant Experience

- Choose someone with experience in your industry or niche (e.g., small business, nonprofits, education, etc.).

- Ask about success rates and past wins — how many grants they've helped secure.

- Ensure they understand grant guidelines, compliance, and funder expectations.

Avoid anyone who guarantees grant approval — no one can promise funding.

3. Check Credentials and References

- Look for certifications like:

  o GPC (Grant Professional Certified)

  o Membership in the Grant Professionals Association (GPA)

- Ask for samples of past work, references, and testimonials.

- Call past clients and ask:

    o Did they meet deadlines?

    o Were they easy to work with?

    o Was the grant application successful?

4. Review Their Proposal Writing Skills

- Ask for a writing sample or portfolio — the writing should be:

    o Clear, persuasive, and professional

    o Tailored to funder goals

    o Evidence-based with strong data and outcomes

5. Discuss Fees and Payment Terms

- Some charge flat fees, others charge hourly or per project.

- Avoid anyone asking for a percentage of the grant award — this is unethical and discouraged in the grant writing profession.

- Get a clear contract or agreement that outlines deliverables and timelines.

6. Evaluate Communication Style and Compatibility

- Do they listen to your vision and ask insightful questions?

- Are they responsive and respectful of deadlines?

- You'll be working closely — choose someone you can trust and collaborate with.

7. Ask About Strategy, Not Just Writing

- A great grant writer helps with:

  - Identifying the right grants to pursue

  - Developing a grant calendar

  - Strengthening your program structure, budget, and impact narrative

8. Check for Red Flags

- High-pressure sales tactics

- Poor grammar in emails or website

- Vague about pricing or process

- Promises of guaranteed results

- No past clients or samples

☑ Grant Writer Selection Checklist

- ✓ Clarified goals and funding needs
- ✓ Identified type of grants to pursue (government, foundation, corporate, etc.)
- ✓ Researched potential grant writers with relevant experience
- ✓ Reviewed credentials and certifications (e.g., GPC, GPA membership)
- ✓ Requested and reviewed writing samples or past proposals
- ✓ Checked references and testimonials from previous clients
- ✓ Discussed and confirmed pricing structure (flat fee, hourly, per project)
- ✓ Avoided writers charging a percentage of grant funds
- ✓ Confirmed understanding of your industry or niche
- ✓ Evaluated communication style and responsiveness
- ✓ Reviewed grant strategy support (not just writing)
- ✓ Checked for red flags (e.g., grammar errors, vague answers, pressure tactics)

Request for Proposal (RFP) Template for Grant Writer Services
Use this template to invite proposals from qualified grant writers.

1. Introduction
Provide a brief overview of your organization and the reason you are seeking a grant writer.

2. Scope of Work
Describe the services needed, including:
- Identifying suitable grant opportunities
- Writing and submitting proposals
- Reviewing and editing application materials
- Developing grant strategy
- Post-award support (if applicable)

3. Proposal Requirements
Request the following from applicants:
- Resume or company profile
- Examples of past successful proposals
- Three client references
- Fee structure
- Proposed timeline and availability
- Approach to identifying grants and writing proposals

4. Evaluation Criteria
Explain how proposals will be evaluated. Example:
- Relevant experience and expertise
- Writing quality
- Client satisfaction/references
- Cost and value for money
- Communication and responsiveness

5. Submission Details
Include deadline for submission, preferred format (PDF, Word), and contact details.