

# NONPROFIT GUIDE TO GRANT WRITING FOR BEAVER WORK

National Beaver Working Group on Funding

## GETTING READY

So your beaver advocacy organization would like to apply to foundations or other funders in order to fund your beaver advocacy! First, let's make sure you have the organizational capacity!

- Make sure your 501(c)(3) status is in order.
- Your banking should be in order.
- You should know when your FY starts and ends.
- You should have a final financial statement for the previous fiscal year, preferably audited.
- You should have a budget for the upcoming fiscal year, approved by your board members. For the purposes of grant writing, you could also put together an aspirational budget for expanded programming.
- You should have a copy of your filled out the IRS Form 990; this document will list the agency's yearly revenue, expenses, and balance sheet for the previous year.
- Take a look at your website. Is it up to date and does it reflect your current mission statement, programming, staff, and board members? Potential funders will check you out, and a dated website indicates a lack of organizational capacity.
- Maybe you're looking for funding to pay for work that is currently being performed by volunteers. Make sure you've quantified those hours and the in-kind value.

Gather other information you will need for grant writing. This might include:

- Federal Employer Identification Number.
- A DUNS number.
- Current board member list: names, city/state, short bio for each.
- SAM certification on [sam.gov](http://sam.gov); you have to register your entity and it can be time consuming.
- A [sam.gov](http://sam.gov) Unique Entity ID.
- Current certificate of good standing from your state's Secretary of State.
- Current bylaws and articles of incorporation.
- IRS determination letter.

## OUTCOMES MEASUREMENT

How do you measure the outcomes of your current programming? Funders will want to know how many people are impacted by your current programming? What is their demographic makeup?

- Consider developing a fact sheet about your nonprofit that you can share with the public on your website. Then you'll have that information at your fingertips when grant writing.
- Process measurement measures the number of people served (or maybe the number of miles of watershed or the number of beaver conflicts that you resolve or the number of public education opportunities or beaver walks you provide per year).
- Outcomes measurement measures the outcomes of your programming. This could look like, "Participants in our programming understand the ecosystem services that beavers provide."
- Are you administering pre- and post-program survey instruments to program participants? Or collecting feedback via a group discussion?
- Think about how you would measure outcomes

A logic model is a graphic depiction (road map) that presents the shared relationships among the resources, activities, outputs, outcomes, and impact for your program. It depicts the relationship between your program's activities and its intended effects.

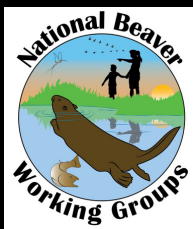
The process of developing a logic model will allow you to identify gaps in your organizational capacity, serve as a roadmap for programming, and help you measure outcomes.

For more information about logic models, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/evaluation/logicmodels/index.htm>

## FILLING OUT THE APPLICATION

You've identified a potential funder and it is time to sit down and write the application.

- Save or copy and paste the application into a google doc. You might need to set up an account on the funder portal to access the application. Use the google doc to collaborate with your colleagues.
- Read the application and FAQs carefully.
  - You want to provide answers to each question even if you feel like you already answered it elsewhere in the application.
  - Sometimes a funder will include the scoring rubric. Make sure your answers will gain you the maximum points possible for each section.
- Customize your application so that it specifically addresses the environmental conditions of your state or region. Don't focus on how beavers can help combat wildfires if you don't live in an area that experiences wildfires. What are your region's issues? Water quality? Loss of habitat and biodiversity? Flooding?
- Identify your program participants and any differentiators. Build inclusion into your grant by, for example, asking for funding for Spanish language educational materials or for making the programs accessible to people with disabilities. Funders also like programs that take place in Environmental Justice areas (i.e., low income)
- Collect letters of support from organizational partners or entities who would be positively impacted by the project.:
- Is there a match? Sometimes the match can consist of in-kind services. Other times you can seek out other grants to contribute to the match.
- Finalize and submit with required supporting documents.



## THE ASK

Conceptualize your proposed beaver advocacy or restoration project. Possible projects include:

- Conflict resolution (flow devices or tree wrapping).
- Education.
- Beaver restoration projects (i.e., riparian restoration, BDAs, relocation programs).

Write a generic letter of interest that can be customized for foundations that request an introductory LOI. You'll want to include:

- Your mission statement.
- How your mission aligns with the funder's priorities.
- Current program descriptions with outcomes and how they are measured.
- Description of the proposed project, for example:
  - How flow devices work.
  - Research on the ecosystem services that beavers provide.
  - The cost-benefit analysis--flow devices save money over the mid-term.
  - Site analysis.
  - Any watershed plans or state wildlife action plans that support riparian restoration or habitat development.
  - A project budget and schedule.

There are a couple of ways to find funders.

- Check out the NBWG resources at <https://www.beaverinstitute.org/national-beaver-funding-working-group/>
- Subscribe to a grantmaking database.
- Look for state and local opportunities such as stormwater management commissions, state wildlife grants, state revolving water funds.

## COLLABORATE WITH OTHERS

Maybe you are not writing the grant on behalf of your own organization but rather on behalf of a local watershed group, drainage district, or park district who possess the qualifications required by the grant. Some funders require collaboration with other entities or nonprofits. Building relationships with these types of organizations can help you accomplish your goals.