



Grant Application Tips and Pitfalls

A good grant application is clearly presented and persuasive in arguing the need and value of its intent. Sounds simple! While not everyone has had experience applying for a grant, most likely you have had to write a logically-argued persuasive paper at some point, which is essentially what a grant needs to be. Remember you are writing for readers who need to be convinced that your project is substantive, adding value, and that you are capable of carrying it out and reporting outcomes in a timely, thorough fashion. The grant application itself, and the samples online, give pointers about what we are looking for in terms of information; below is a list of common reasons why grant applications are declined.

- BPEF did not receive your follow-up form from your previously received grant, or your follow-up did not correspond to the original intent of the grant.
- The budget was not specific, particularly in the case of items to be purchased (name, model #) or the cost of those items.
- The cost per student is exceptionally high and/or the number of students affected is very low.
- The scope and intentions of the proposal were unclear, calling for too many assumptions to be made by the committee, and/or raising too many questions.
- The proposal did not demonstrate or refer to a direct connection to the curriculum.
- The proposal appeared to duplicate or lacked connection to efforts within the school site or department.
- In general, BPEF does not grant funds for food, rewards or parties.
- BPEF applicants must be BUSD personnel working in classrooms or programs in schools, for grades pre-K through 12.

Some Alternative Sources of Funding

Below is a list of other funding sources that may be of help to you:

- The Berkeley High School Development Group (BHS only)
- Your school PTA
- BSEP funding/site funds – see your Principal or school governance leaders.
- Lions' Club
- Rotary Club – provides Dictionaries for every Berkeley public school third grader
- Donor's Choose – www.donorschoose.org -- national online organization. A 'grant' comes in the form of materials, and is awarded if fully funded by online donations.
- Philanthropic Ventures Foundation – www.venturesfoundations.org