idea corner

Ten Commandments for a Grant!

Many applicants for a grant overloo some of the most elementary points that are fundamental for obtaining the needed funding. By observing some simple, but crucial, pointers, the chances for getting a grant can be enhanced abou 90%. At least it'll put you in the top, rather than the lower, rank for funding. Remember—*almost* counts only in horseshoes!

1. *Read the regs (regulations) numerous times.* Look for special qualifications like "rural," "urban," "for senior citizens, inmates, and minoriti
2. *Query the funder.* Like a seasoned writer who queries the editor, before embarking on a grant proposal writing spree, query the funder. Find the key person who's determi the *kinds of projects* desired, a you're half way or more.
3. *Find the current emphasis.* If this year *consortia* is the big thing, shape your proposal to emphasize that framework.
4. *Check the funding level.* If the agency providing the funds ha an amount that it usually con siders appropriate for each project, find out that amount and target your budget to me that level. Otherwise you're d

5. *Find out who's on the advisory committee, if there is one.* The bias of that group may shape the funding policy. Don't hesitate to ask for advice.
6. *Be specific about objectives*, and how you plan to do each one.
7. *Build in an evaluation procedure.* Try to have an outside, objective group suggested for the evaluators. Federal agencies don't like mutual backscratching.
8. *Include comprehensive vitae* of the director and the faculty to be used. Skimpy vitae give an appearance of a skimpy project. Urge professionals to emphasize their program experience, and what they can contribute to the person's project.
9. *Include letters of support.* Choose them carefully. Ask people who have professional reputations in the field, and have some political clout. For example, a legislator who has been working for senior citizens can do a world of good on a project dealing with programs of the aging. A few strong letters of support are better than a mass of weak ones. And, be selective.
10. *Be sure the local institution will give the matching support needed* for the project. And be clear if it's "in kind" or if hard cash is demanded.

Grantspersonship is an art. Use these hints and you'll be well on your way to becoming such an artist! Happy writing, and happy programming.

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