

ARTS PARTNERSHIP GRANTS



Tips for Writing Strong Grant Proposals

Ensure your school's voice shines through.

- Certainly collaborate with your proposed arts partner in developing a proposal, but do not allow them to write your proposal – schools must take the lead in the proposal development process.
- Avoid excessive boilerplate or copy-pasting too much content that was not prepared by you or your school team.

Illuminate connections between your school's needs and the grant program's objectives.

- Each program exists to address specific challenges we see in the field; emphasize how your school's needs, aims, and proposed project align with the purpose of the grant program to which you are applying.

Convince us of the artistic rigor involved.

- This means using language that alludes to appropriate Blueprint/NYS benchmarks, specific learning objectives, and presenting what kind of learning arc is to take place.
- Unpack and provide specific, detailed information about your proposed project/residency.
- Present a thoughtful balance between cohort size and the likelihood of meaningful arts instructional time.

Respond to the (entire) question.

- All of the application questions (and their sub-questions) map directly to each grant program's evaluation criteria – it is in your interest to respond to everything.
- Also anticipate any follow-up questions we might have. As examples: Why focus on this particular art form?; How is this residency customized around the needs and interests of the students? How would you ensure parent attendance if you're scheduling events during the day?; How are you going to ensure student participation at an afterschool program?

Portray a partnership through and through.

- Convey a spirit of collaboration at all levels of the project.
- Demonstrate administrator and teacher involvement throughout.
- Consider how the project can involve co-teaching, co-evaluating, or other ways to enable classroom teachers and teaching artists to learn from each other.
- Sustainability of a partnership is a goal across all three grant programs – seeing collaboration throughout all levels is a way of convincing us of this.

Other General Tips

- Prepare a proposal that leaves us convinced that the project will happen as proposed. Minimize our doubts, be realistic, and when possible, include details about school capacity and a track record with similar projects and pursuits.
- Provide a great value proposition. Ensure you are asking for the right amount of funding (remember that you are not required to request the maximum amount) and present a project of excellent value given its costs and benefits. In this spirit, provide clear details about any in-kind/cash matches your school is able to contribute toward the project if your project is funded.
- Ensure your proposal features clear, concise, and typographical error-free writing.
- We recommend doing all of your writing in MS Word, utilizing the word count and copy editing tools beforehand – you ought to have all of your responses already prepared before submitting via the online application form.