

How to Write a Letter of Inquiry

Purpose: To introduce your organization to a potential funder, provide information so that they can determine if your project is appropriate for them to consider funding, and obtain application materials (guidelines, application, annual report, etc.)

Necessary components:

1. Begin by stating the purpose of the letter.
2. Follow with a brief statement about your organization.
3. Provide a short description of the proposed project.
4. Explain how the project relates to the funder's mission or priorities. Demonstrate that there is a "match" or a rationale for your application.
5. State (a) the total cost of the project, (b) how much money your organization expects to request from the grantmaker, (c) how you plan to spend the grant monies, and, if applicable, (d) other sources of funding. Alternatively, you may provide a menu of dollar amounts and uses and state that you would like the grantmaker to provide guidance about an appropriate grant request.
6. Letter should be written on your organization's letterhead.
7. Edit and proofread the letter carefully for spelling (particularly the name of the foundation and foundation director), grammatical, and typographical errors.

Additional information that funders sometimes request in a letter of inquiry:

- Documented need for the project
- Organization's past results or accomplishments
- Demonstrated support for the proposed project among participating organizations (through cost-sharing, program collaboration, etc.)
- How your organization plans to continue program(s) and/or service(s) beyond the identified funding period