

# Writing a Successful Grant

## *Top 10 Things You Should Know!!*

National Clean Diesel Campaign  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

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# Top 10 Things You Should Know

1. Assess Your Fleet
2. Assemble Your Partners
3. Do an Administrative Check-up
4. Consider How You Will Contribute
5. Start Writing Early
6. Watch for the RFA
7. Assemble Your Grant Application
8. Proofread Your Application
9. Remember Bonus Points
10. Finish



# #1: Assess Your Fleet

## Compile records

- vehicle and engine models
- ages, annual mileage, hours of operation
- fleet size, fleet purpose
- replacement rates
- needs
- fuel usage

## WHY?

- Helps you consider what to target
- Know your options
- Consider which technology path you will take



## #2: Assemble Your Partners

- Contact your state, public agencies, non-profits, port authorities
- Begin network of support

### WHY?

Eligibility Criteria limited to state, local government agencies, universities, non-profit organizations



## #3: Do an Administrative Checkup

- Check and see how prepared your organization is to receive and manage federal or state funds
- What is your organization's budget process?
  - This is also important for getting ready to have matching funds for federal grants

### WHY?

- Focus your proposal on results: purchasing hardware or activities that result in emissions reductions (not administrative overhead).



## #4: Consider How You Will Contribute

- Consider your matching amount (financial participation)
  - If you don't have dollars, consider an in-kind match (e.g., labor for installation, maintenance)
  - Quantify the amount and document your calculations
- Line up your matching contribution early as it may take time in a budget cycle.
- Identify local resources that could be used to satisfy matching fund requirements such as local or state funding and/or private sector contributions.



# #5: Start Writing Early

- Start preparing a written description of the kind of program you would like to implement early.
  - Be specific. This write-up may serve as the building block for your grant application and for describing your plan to your partners.
  - Describe your technical program and how you will communicate your results to the community and the granting agency.
  - Get feedback on your basic write-up.
- Ask your partners to be ready to write you letters of support.
- Learn about grant writing by taking a tutorial:  
[www.epa.gov/seahome/grants.html](http://www.epa.gov/seahome/grants.html)



# #6: Watch for the RFA (Request for Applications)

- Read it very carefully and follow the instructions exactly
- Answer each criteria fully and in order. Fine tune your project plan to match as many of the criteria as possible.
  - Don't write a general narrative that fails to specifically answer the criteria. Points are specified for each criteria.
- Don't assume that the reviewers know about anything you don't tell them.
  - Take credit for the things you're doing.
  - Blow your own horn -- demonstrate that you can accomplish a program like you are proposing.



# #7: Assemble Your Grant Application

- Your package will most likely consist of but may not be limited to:
  - Cover letter
  - Summary Sheet
  - Narrative Section
    - Intro
    - Problem Statement
    - Project objectives, methods, evaluation
  - Budget, official forms (SF forms, etc)
  - Appendices (letters of support, resumes)

# #8: Proofread Your Application

- Edit Your Application
  - Do the answers respond to the criteria and are they to the point?
  - Are you crystal clear about how you will execute the project? Do you discuss the types of technologies (even if you must go out for competitive bid) in a way that conveys you've done your homework?
    - Is the timeline realistic?
  - Ask a third party to edit the document or look for places where it could be stronger.

# # 9: Remember Bonus Points

- Develop a track record. Document your successes with
  - idle reduction and smart operating practices,
  - cleaner fuels
  - driver training to reduce emissions
  - fleet maintenance
  - other projects that demonstrate your organization's ability to work in partnership for a cleaner environment
- Obtain letters of support from partners
  - State officials
  - local American Lung Association or asthma groups, etc
  - technology suppliers or fuel suppliers
- If you have experts lined up or key personnel, supply their resume or summary of experience



## #10: Finish

- Turn it in by the deadline
- Thank your partners for their support and keep them informed of any news
- Wait for the good news....
- Contact EPA if you have any questions or check EPA's website for Q&As

# For More Information

Visit EPA's Diesel Collaboratives

[www.northeastdiesel.org](http://www.northeastdiesel.org)

[www.dieselmidatlantic.org](http://www.dieselmidatlantic.org)

