Grant Proposal Review Checklist

This checklist is designed to serve as a guide for reviewing grant proposals. It is intended for use by grant proposals writers in reviewing their own proposals as well as by those reviewing grant proposals prepared by their peers. It is important to note that not all sections or criteria will apply to all grant proposals. The sponsor's format should be followed in all cases. This checklist includes common sections for grant proposals but should not be considered a definitive outline for preparing a grant proposal for an external sponsor where guidelines are available.

Title

Criteria	✓	Comments
Makes an obvious connection to funding opportunity		
Specific to the project		
Provides adequate information about project without being too lengthy or complicated		

Table of Contents

Criteria	✓	Comments
Includes proposal section titles and page numbers		
Follows sponsor's guidelines, if applicable		

Abstract

Criteria	✓	Comments
Understandable as a separate item from proposal		
Reflects of the big idea of the proposal		
Explains why the project is important		
Briefly describes goals/objectives and strategies		
Written for a non-scientific audience		

Introduction

Criteria	✓	Comments
Engaging		
Establishes context		
Describes the agency's mission as related to the project		

Needs Statement

Criteria	✓	Comments
Convinces readers of the seriousness of the problem		
Clearly defined		
Documented and concrete		
Describes sources or causes of the problem		
Explains long-term effects of the problem without intervention		
Reflects a scope that is in line with proposed project		
Related to the sponsor's goal		

Background / Literature Review

Criteria	✓	Comments
Establishes current status of the field		
References and discusses the work of experts in the field		
Demonstrates a clear understanding of the subject		
Indicates how project will advance knowledge in the field		
Discusses prior work, if applicable		

Impact and Significance

Criteria	✓	Comments
Clearly defines the impact and wider implications of the project		
Demonstrates that the project addresses an important problem and that scientific knowledge will be advanced as a result of the project		

Goals

Criteria	✓	Comments
Define the overall purpose of project		
Reflective of the sponsor's goals		
Clearly connected to needs statement		

Objectives

Criteria	✓	Comments
Clear connection to how problem will be solved and goals of project		
Define how success will be measured		
Focus on outcomes		
Reflect realistic expectations		

Methods/Activities

Criteria	✓	Comments
Thoroughly describes project activities		
Clearly connected to needs statement and goals for project		
Describes innovative methods for solving the problem		
Includes a timeline for project activities		
Includes a justification for methods, such as research on effectiveness		
Includes activities required by sponsor, if any		

Evaluation Plan

Criteria	✓	Comments
Measures both quantitative and qualitative aspects of program		
Includes both formative and summative components		
Clearly describes how success will be measured		
Identifies sources of data and methods of collection and analysis		
Describes qualifications and roles of external evaluator, if included		

Qualifications / Management Plan

Criteria	✓	Comments
Describes qualifications of key personnel and their responsibilities in project		
Is convincing of ability to manage program		
Describes aspects of project oversight and management		
Describes past experiences with similar projects		
Describes availability of facilities and equipment needed for project		

Dissemination Plan

Criteria	✓	Comments
Clearly presents a plan for sharing results of project through a variety of mediums		
Discusses aspects of project with potential for replication		

Sustainability Plan

Criteria	✓	Comments

Clearly presents a plan for continuing project beyond grant funding cycle, if applicable		

Bibliography

Criteria	✓	Comments
Accurately cites sources referenced in the narrative using an appropriate citation style		

Budget and Justification

Criteria	✓	Comments
Driven by project methods and strategies		
Provides justification for expenses		
Reflects accurate calculations		
Explains cost calculations		
Describes matching funds, if applicable		
Does not contain amounts for unexplained purposes (i.e., miscellaneous)		
Includes credible and realistic costs		
Adheres to sponsor's guidelines and funding limitations		

Format

Criteria	✓	Comments
Follows sponsor guidelines in order		
Includes all sections required by sponsor		
Adheres to sponsor's space limitations		
Uses appropriate margins and font type and size		
Does not contain excessive bold or italicized text		
Written in clear, concise English		
Flows smoothly between ideas and sections		
Does not overuse jargon or technical terms		

Additional Notes