



COLORADO
Department of Education

Grant Writing Training

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Unit of Federal Programs Administration
Office of Competitive Grants and Awards

March 2017

This training will cover:

- CDE Grants Overview and Trends
- Application and Scoring Rubric
- Tips for Planning your Grant Application
- Tips for Writing your Grant Application and Budget
- Tips for Finalizing and Submitting your Grant Application
- Resources for Finding Funding Opportunities

Grants Overview & Trends

writing
sustainability capacity
budgets money
cooperation goals meetings
checklists narrative models
planning projects
reporting signatures
proposals description
objectives collaboration
needs evaluation
funding



Who writes and submits grants to CDE?

- Health and Wellness Coordinator
- Principal
- Whole Child Initiatives Coordinator
- Grants Administrator
- Director of Communications
- Teacherpreneur
- Occupational Therapist
- Preschool Director/District Grant Writer
- Data Management Specialist
- Superintendent
- Grants Manager
- School Counselor
- Financial Services Director
- School Psychologist
- Instructional coach/grant coordinator
- Executive Director
- **Grant Writer**
- Financial Services Director
- Secondary ELA Instructional Coordinator
- Grants Fiscal Coordinator
- Research, Data & Accountability Officer
- Office Administrator
- Special Education Director
- K-12 Admin. Assistant, Registrar, Food Director
- BOCES PD Coordinator
- Parent
- Drama Coach, Grant Writer
- Instructional Coordinator

35 Total funding opportunities

\$59 million

Total amount of awarded state and federal funds administered by CGA for all applicants

*For FY 2015-16

At a Glance: Competitive Funding Opportunities

FY2015-16

Total applications received: **386**

Average number of applications per grant: **10 (from 1 to 39)**

Average number of awards per grant: **7**

Average success rate for an LEA applicant: **72%**

Median award amount for all applicants: **~\$98,000**

Understanding CGA's Competitive Process

CGA Application Process

Plan & Develop

- CGA and program managers meet to develop the rules, funding eligibility, application requirements, scoring rubric, and timeline.

Release & Publicize

- After approval of the application, CDE releases applications in the *Scoop* and the program posts application to website and networks.

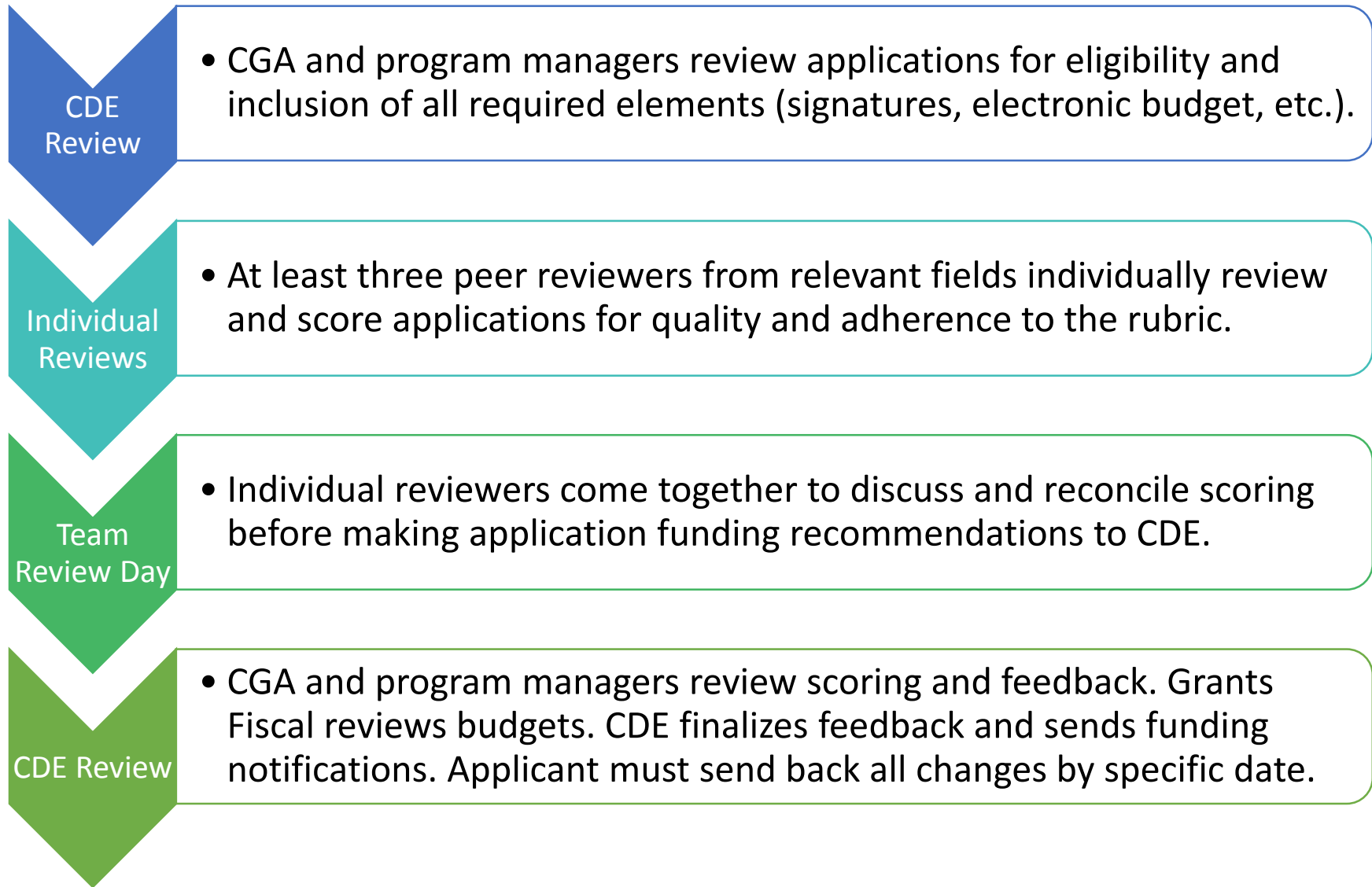
Technical Assistance

- CDE provides technical assistance to potential eligible applicants, including hosting a webinar, posting Q&As, and answering questions.

Submit Applications

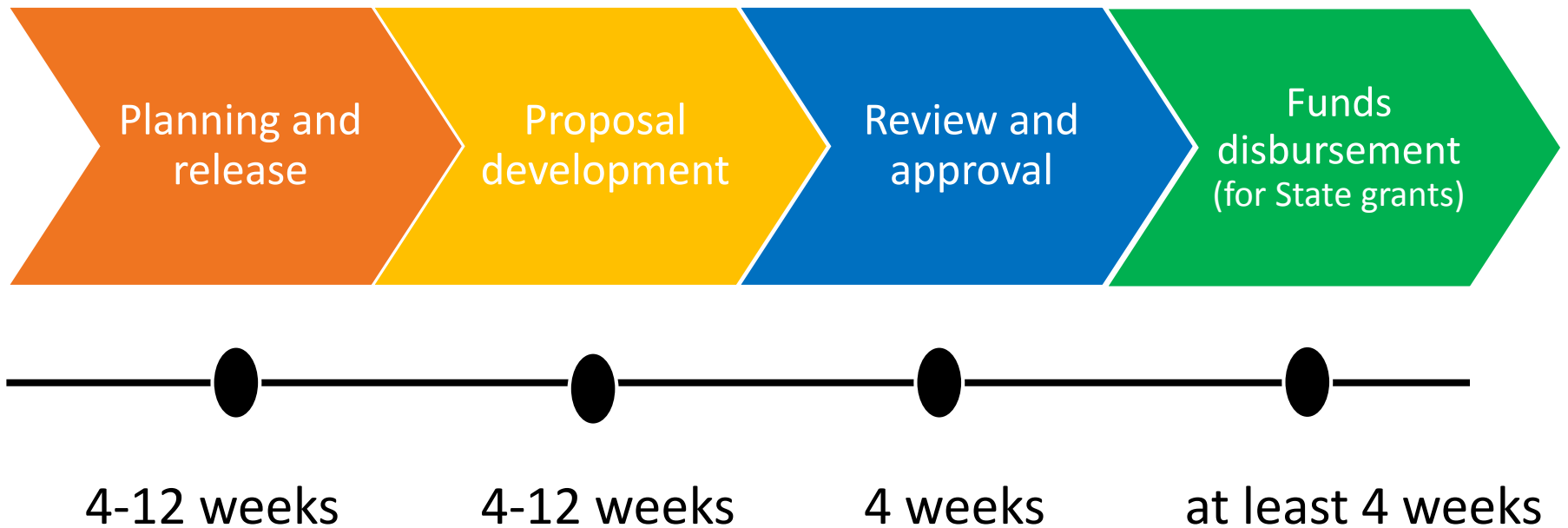
- Applicants submit their proposals and budgets electronically by the deadline in order to be considered for funding.

CGA Review Process



State Competitive Grants Timeline

4-8 months for pre-award process



Overview of the application & scoring rubric

Funding Opportunity

Applications Due: Wednesday, February 1, 2017, by 11:59 p.m.

Application Information Webinar: Wednesday, November 30, 2016 9:00 a.m.

Letter of Intent Due: Friday, December 16, 2016 by 11:59 p.m.

Adult Education and Literacy Grant Program

Pursuant to: 22-10-104 C.F.R.

For Program Questions:

Jennifer Jirous-Rapp, Ph.D., State Programs and Pathways Manager
(303) 866-4812 | jirous_j@cde.state.co.us

For Budget/Fiscal Questions:

Marti Rodriguez, Office of Grants Fiscal
(303) 866-6769 | Rodriguez_M@cde.state.co.us

For Application Questions:

Kim Burnham, Office of Competitive Grants and Awards
(303) 866-6916 | Burnham_K@cde.state.co.us

EXAMPLE

Application required elements

Required Elements

The format outlined below must be followed in order to assure consistent application of the evaluation criteria. See evaluation rubric for specific selection criteria needed in Part II (pages 13-15).



Part I: Application Introduction (not scored):

Part IA: Cover Page – Applicant Information

Part IB: Partnership Signature Page

Part IC: Program Assurances Form

Executive Summary

Table of Contents



Part II: Narrative:

Section A: Needs Assessment

Section B: Proposed Project Description

Section C: Evaluation and Reporting

Section D: Budget Narrative and Electronic Budget



Part III: Required Attachments:

Program Partners Letters of Support

(Not included in page limit but not to exceed five (5) additional pages)

Part I: Introduction

Part I: Introduction

- Cover Page
- Recipient School Information and Signature Page
- Assurances Form
- Executive Summary or Project Abstract
(not usually scored)

Part II: Narrative

SCORED PART OF THE APPLICATION

- Needs Assessment
- Proposed Project Description
- Partnerships
- Sustainability
- Evaluation & Reporting
- Budget Narrative & Electronic Budget

Scoring Rubric Example

Section B: Project Description	Not Addressed or Met No Criteria (information not provided)	Met One or More Criteria (requires additional clarification)	Met All Criteria (concise and thoroughly developed)
Applicants Please Address the Following:			
1) Describe the approach for implementation including how the LEA will support activities and meet the requirements of the program.	0	5	7
2) Provide clear, measurable goals/objectives consistent with desired outcomes of your proposed project using grant funds.		5	7
Reviewer Comments:			
TOTAL POINTS	/ 14		

There are several categories where reviewers will assign points.

Answer all questions clearly and completely.

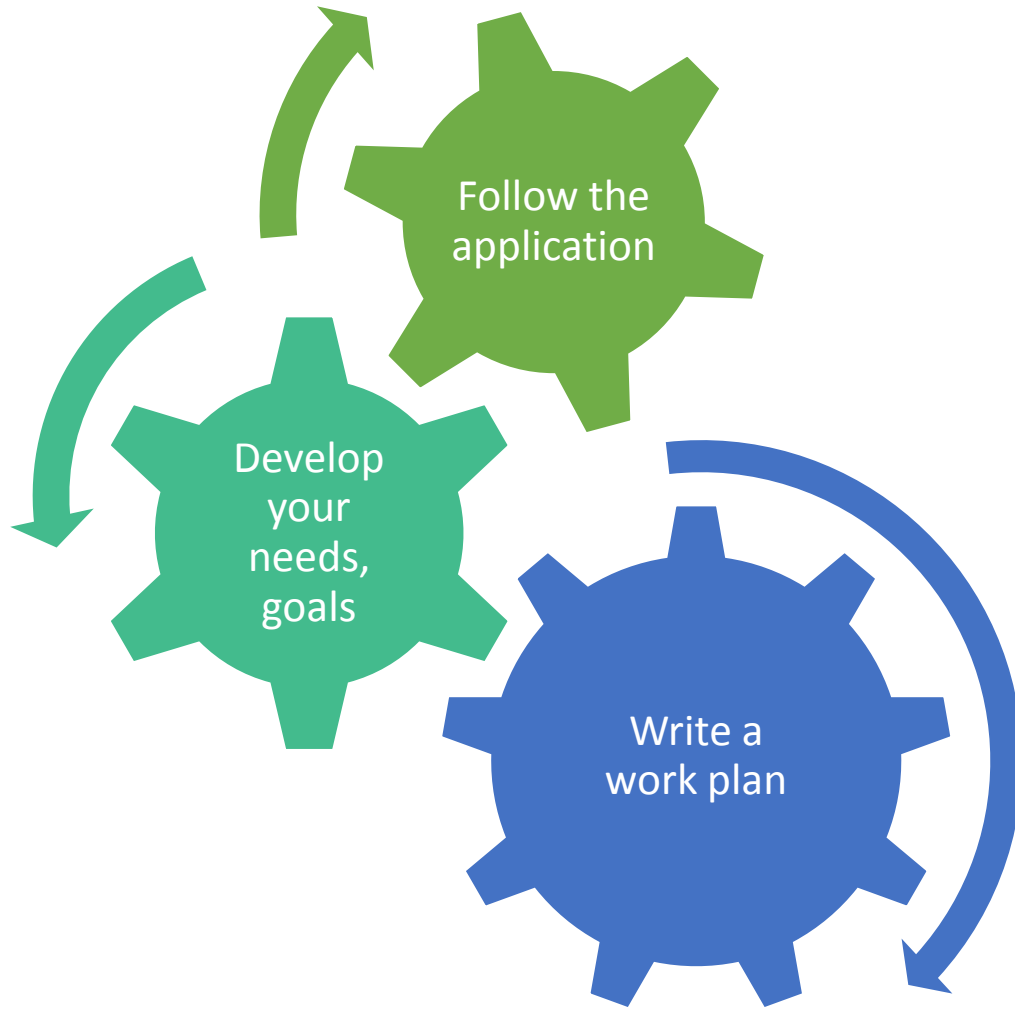
Points given to each question will be clearly marked.

Comments will be given for any strengths, weaknesses, and/or required changes.

Points will be totaled for each section, then totaled for your overall application.

Best Strategies for Planning your Proposal

Planning your Proposal



- Read and re-read the *entire* application and scoring rubric
- Identify how your needs/goals align with the grant program
- Make a checklist of tasks and a timeline for you to complete the application
- Decide who will contribute and what information you need to complete all of the application
- Double-check how your application will align with grant program

Best Strategies for Writing your Proposal

Writing your Proposal

What is your need? What do you have? What do you need to get?

- Keep your writing simple, your sections clear and complete, while still including all necessary information
- Maintain a consistent “voice”
- Use a journalistic style to spell out the “Who, What, Where, When, How” for each section
- Make your proposal easy to read by using bullets, lists, tables, headers, etc. for each rubric section and element
- Avoid “eduspeak” and many acronyms; assume reviewers do not know your schools(s) and/or district(s)
- Avoid using “boilerplate” information unless it aligns with the grant
- Answer and design your writing around each question
- Answer all questions within the section where it is asked, so reviewers and program do not have to search for content

Best Strategies:

**Writing your
Needs Assessment**

Definition of Needs Assessment

- A systematic process for determining and addressing needs, or “gaps” between current conditions and desired conditions or “wants”.
- The discrepancy between the current condition and desired condition must be measured to appropriately identify the need.
- The need can be a desire to improve current performance or to correct a deficiency.

Section A: Needs Assessment

Section A: Needs Assessment	Not Addressed or Met No Criteria (information not provided)	Met One or More Criteria (requires additional clarification)	Met All Criteria (concise and thoroughly developed)
Applicants Please Address the Following:			
1) Identify current gaps or weaknesses in services and explain current trends or reasons for the gaps or weaknesses, using data where applicable.	0	3	5
2) Identify specific strategies currently in place to address the gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure or opportunities.	0	3	5
3) Clearly and thoroughly describe whether the Education Provider has successful teams/leaders in its recipient school(s), including: the number, roles, and responsibilities.	0	3	5
Reviewer Comments:			
TOTAL POINTS	___ / 15		

EXAMPLE

Tips for Writing a Needs Assessment

- Gather the data (UIP, Diagnostic Review, Strategic Plans, demographics, performance, parent involvement, etc.) but **do not include PII!**
- Identify your needs/gaps based on data and write needs assessment based on gaps, weaknesses, etc.
- Highlight current resources (partners, funds, other grants)
- Consider including hypotheticals if needs are/are not addressed, i.e. “without this funding to provide..., our school(s) will not be able to...”
- Check and re-check your writing to align with grant intent
- Separate problem(s) from solution(s)

Best Strategies:

**Writing your
Project Description**

Definition of a Project Description

- Temporary endeavor designed to produce a unique product, service or result with a defined beginning and end.
- This endeavor seeks to meet unique goals and objectives, typically to bring about beneficial change or added value.
- The challenge of the project description is to achieve all of the project goals and objectives while honoring the preconceived constraints of the grant program: scope, time, quality and budget.

Section B: Project Description

Section B: Project Description	Not Addressed or Met No Criteria (information not provided)	Met One or More Criteria (requires additional clarification)	Met All Criteria (concise and thoroughly developed)
Applicants Please Address the Following:			
1) Describe the approach for implementation, including how the LEA will support activities and meet the requirements of the program.	0	5	7
2) Provide clear, measurable goals/objectives consistent with desired outcomes of your proposed project using grant funds.	0	5	7
Reviewer Comments:			
TOTAL POINTS	___ / 14		

EXAMPLE

Tips for Writing a Project Description

Do not try to make the grant program fit what you want to do.

- Your proposed project should align with the intent and purpose of the grant.
- Be sure to connect proposed project to your needs assessment
- Ensure the timeline of the project matches the funding cycle
- Include timelines, SMART goals, etc. as requested or needed
- Use action phrases with clear, measurable goals and objectives

Best Strategies:

**Writing about
Partnerships**

Definition of Partnerships

- An agreement between two or more parties that stipulates each member of the partnership will leverage resources, expertise, time and effort for the greater good of the partnership.
- The overall goal of a partnership is to make each member of the partner stronger or more successful with achieving project goals that they would each be individually.

Section C: Partnerships

EXAMPLE

Section C: Partnerships	Not Addressed or Met No Criteria (information not provided)	Met One or More Criteria (requires additional clarification)	Met All Criteria (concise and thoroughly developed)
Applicants Please Address the Following:			
1) Describe the extent to which the LEA has developed or plans to develop partnerships to serve the purpose(s) of this grant.	1	3	5
2) Thoroughly describe the services and responsibilities of each of the partnership members.	0	1	3
3) Provide a plan for the sustaining the partnership(s) beyond the grant funding period.	0	1	3
Reviewer Comments:			
TOTAL POINTS	____ / 11		

Tips for Writing about Partnerships

- Determine if partnerships should be simple/short term or complex/long term for a particular grant program if needed
- Determine what resources, including space and time and personnel that each partnership requires
- Get approval from partners to include in proposal beforehand
- Include name(s) and title(s) of key personnel, experience, and qualifications of organization
- Explain history of collaboration (if any) and commitment of each partner, include letters of support if required
- Make explicit how each of the roles is critical to the success of your proposed project
- Consider adding a matrix or organization chart

Best Strategies:

**Writing about
Sustainability**

Definition of Sustainability

- The ability to sustain OR the capacity to endure.
- In the case of grant programs, sustainability is integrated into the program to continue the activities, services, or personnel after the grant timeline and funds have expired.

Section D: Sustainability

Section D: Sustainability	Not Addressed or Met No Criteria (information not provided)	Met One or More Criteria (requires additional clarification)	Met All Criteria (concise and thoroughly developed)
Applicants Please Address the Following:			
1) Demonstrate the LEA's emphasis and commitment to continue work with partners on this project after the grant.	0	3	5
2) Describe a clear and well-conceived plan for how the proposed project will be continued once the grant dollars have expired. For example, how will quality services continue to serve to students once the grant has expired?	0	3	5
Reviewer Comments:			
TOTAL POINTS	____ / 10		

EXAMPLE

Tips for Writing about Sustainability

- Begin with the end in mind
- Convene a board or group to make decisions
- Incorporate practices into existing education framework (without supplanting)
- Never give up, look at it from all angles
- Never write a “one-liner”



Best Strategies:

**Writing about
Evaluation & Reporting**

Definition of Evaluation

- Evaluation provides information for making decisions about programming.
- The primary purpose of evaluation is to provide decision makers with enough information to help them make project design and delivery decisions without overwhelming them with details.
- The secondary purpose is to assist funders in assessing if the funds were well spent – your project merit and worth.

Definition of Reporting

- When reporting your results you need to include enough information so that someone unfamiliar with the project can read the report and understand:
 - the purpose of your evaluation the issues/questions the evaluation addressed,
 - the audience from whom you collected data, and
 - what those data (the results) say about the impacts of your project.

Section E: Evaluation & Reporting

Section E: Evaluation & Reporting	Not Addressed or Met No Criteria (information not provided)	Met One or More Criteria (requires additional clarification)	Met All Criteria (concise and thoroughly developed)
Applicants Please Address the Following:			
1) Describe the evaluation methods that will be used and show how these methods are thorough, feasible and appropriate to the proposed program design and student outcomes, and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible.	0	3	5
2) Describe how results of the evaluation and reports will be used to refine, improve and strengthen the program, and how information will be made available to the public.	0	3	5
Reviewer Comments:			
TOTAL POINTS	____ / 10		

EXAMPLE

Tips for Writing about Evaluation/Reporting

- Be explicit with the methods you have chosen to use for evaluating your project's objectives. Be sure to write:
 - **What** will be evaluated
 - **When** will evaluation occur
 - **Who** will be evaluating who and what
 - **How** you will be evaluating
- Decide who will help and what information is useful for them
- Include both formative and summative evaluation activities
- Keep in mind time constraints of program and final reporting requirements when writing your plan
- Your evaluation plan does not have to be elaborate, but it has to be effective

Best Strategies:

**Writing your
Budget Narrative**

Definition of Budget Narrative

- A complete and concise explanation of all of your budget line items, justifying your expenditures and connecting to your proposed project description.
- This is **in addition to the budget detail** you provide in your electronic budget.
- The narrative must tell the reviewer/program managers more than why the costs are needed but give a mental picture of the impact that can be made with the grant funds being requested.

Section E: Budget

Section F: Electronic Budget & Narrative	Not Addressed or Met No Criteria (information not provided)	Met One or More Criteria (requires additional clarification)	Met All Criteria (concise and thoroughly developed)
Applicants Please Address the Following:			
1) Describe all expenditures contained in the electronic budget and connect to project goals and activities. The costs of the proposed project should be reasonable and the budget sufficient in relation to the objectives, design, scope and sustainability of project activities.	0	5	7
2) Demonstrate how the funds awarded under the program will be used to supplement the level of funds available for authorized programs and activities, and will not supplant federal, state, local, or non-federal funds.	0	1	3
Reviewer Comments:			
TOTAL POINTS	___ / 10		

EXAMPLE

Tips for Writing your Budget Narrative

- An effective budget narrative explains:
 - how the budget would be spent,
 - why the items are needed, and
 - why they are reasonable.
- Make sure to include all matches or in-kind contributions (space, FTE, janitorial services, etc.) as part of your narrative.
 - Consider making a table to make these clear.
 - Keep in mind that not all grants require in-kind or matching funds.
- Make a strong case for using grant funds to supplement activities/programs rather than supplanting existing sources of funds.

Best Strategies:

**Writing your
Electronic Budget**

Definition of a Budget

- A budget is the key element of many grant proposals. It outlines a proposed budget in fiscal terms and helps reviewers to determine how the project will be conducted.
- The budget should be reasonable, necessary to administer the grant, appropriate and allocable to the grant; that is, it should be based upon actual costs and allowable under the program. Reviewers are often familiar with costs that are common to many projects.
- The budget should be complete; that is it should include all the costs of any personnel, supplies, and activities required by the grant.

Tips for Completing the Electronic Budget

- Make your budget realistic and request only what you need to fulfill grant objectives
- Be specific with each budget line item and category
- Be mindful of planning phases, phasing up, or phasing down
- Be aware of allowable/unallowable costs
- Be aware of administrative versus indirect costs and their respective restrictions
- Check and re-check your budget. Your line items and budget total must be equal, and must match what is listed in your budget narrative.

Sample Budget Detail

Sample – No calculation on which to determine total cost – **POOR DETAIL**

\$30,000.00	- curriculum and supplies
\$500.00	- Stipends
\$1,000.00	- Travel

Sample – Specific calculation on which total cost was determined – **GOOD DETAIL**

\$3,780.00	- Use of Conference Room (540 sf) for Summer Program when school is closed
\$2,300.00	- One PTE ESL Lead Instructor (\$20/hr, 10hrs/wk, 50wks/yr = \$10,000 * 23%)
\$238.00	- Portion of benefits package: PTE ESL Lead Teacher (\$1032 * 23% = \$238)
\$1,500.00	- CAEPA Fee @ \$375 for 4 instructors

Best Strategies for **Finalizing** your Proposal

Finalizing your Proposal

- Self-edit and proofread using the eyes of a “reviewer”
- Double-check your writing to rubric requirements
- Have 1-2 people review and critique your entire proposal, against the scoring rubric if possible
- Complete your grant at least a few days before the due date so that you can have other people read and review your grant



Best Strategies for Submitting your Proposal

Submission Process and Deadline

[Found in application along with Application Format and Required Elements...](#)

- An electronic copy of the application (in PDF format) and electronic budget (in Excel format) must be submitted to CompetitiveGrants@cde.state.co.us by **Thursday, January 26, 2017 by 11:59 pm.**
- The electronic version must include all required components of the application as one document.
- Please attach the electronic budget workbook in Excel format as a separate document.
- Faxes will not be accepted. Incomplete or late applications will not be considered.
- If you do not receive an email confirmation of receipt of your application within 24 hours of the deadline, please email CompetitiveGrants@cde.state.co.us.

Submit the electronic copy of the application and electronic budget to: CompetitiveGrants@cde.state.co.us
By: **Thursday, January 26, 2017 by 11:59 pm**

Resources

Finding CDE Grants

- Competitive Grants and Awards website:
(<http://cde.state.co.us/cdeawards>)
- CGA Grants Forecast:
(http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeawards/cga_grantsforecast)
- *Scoop* announcements, CDE newsletter each week:
(<http://eepurl.com/Ai8lf>)
- Help finding information on grant programs:
(young_a@cde.state.co.us)

Additional Questions?

- Patty Gleason, CGA
(303-866-6143 or gleason_p@cde.state.co.us)
- Anna Young, CGA
(303-866-6250 or young_a@cde.state.co.us)
- Marti Rodriguez, Grants Fiscal
(303-866-6250 or rodriguez_m@cde.state.co.us)
- Darcy Hutchins, Partnerships
(303-866-5921 or hutchins_d@cde.state.co.us)

Thank you!