

Template for Writing a Grant to a Private Funder for a Project Adventure Physical Education Program

The following is intended to be used with the funder's guidelines. You will also find the information in the 'Finding a Funder' document on PA's website helpful.

Some general tips...

- Follow the funder's guidelines!!!! This seems simple, but if you don't your hard work may end up in the trash can, unread. This means every detail—page limits, required appendixes, what not to include, margins, font size, etc.
- Write well!!! No matter how great your program plan is, if it is not clearly and concisely communicated, it is not likely to get funded. So, make sure your proposal is thoroughly edited before you send it. It is a good idea to have someone unfamiliar with your proposed plan read your proposal. This person can help you insure that the proposal makes sense and is readable to someone who doesn't know your organization.
- Match your goals to the funder's and make the connection crystal clear!!! If you're preparing a grant for physical education and your potential funder is interested, for instance, in cancer research it isn't a good fit. Essentially, grant monies are given so that organizations can pursue the goals of the funder.
- Your proposal is your contract with the funder. If the funder agrees to give you money, you agree to do what you've proposed. Consequently propose only to do what you can reasonably accomplish. If, for some reason, you can't accomplish what you propose, you are obligated to let the funder know. Expect to be held accountable. After all, they want to know what you did with their money.
- Unless the funder's guidelines and/or your contact with the funder have told you otherwise, training, equipment and/or a challenge course are generally not fundable in and of themselves. However, they are highly fundable as important elements of a program. That is, for example, your school-age program staff need training and equipment so the children you serve can receive the impactful Adventure programming you propose. You need training and equipment to DO something.

The following template has been developed using the common proposal format of the Associated Grantmakers of Massachusetts. These are offered as support and do not replace the guidelines of your potential funder.

1. Brief summary of organization's history, goals, and key achievements.

So here you would briefly state:

- Your organization's mission
- Do you have a strategic plan? If so, state the goal that is related to this proposal. An example of a fitting strategic goal would be: to reduce the incidence of childhood obesity in our community by 10% by 2009.
- How long you've been in operation
- Who you serve—age, race, ethnicity, income level, etc
- How many people you serve
- Some of your organization's key achievements. If your organization has been around for a while, choose achievements related to the Project Adventure PE activities you propose.

Are you an elementary school that has been providing PE for 15 years? Are you a CBO that has been providing health and wellness programs to adolescents for 12 years? Essentially, this is the place to make your organization look good without making it look like it has fixed all the community's problems.

2. Overview of organization's structure and programs, including board, staff, and volunteer involvement.

This is fairly self-explanatory. If your organization uses a lot of volunteers, let them know. This is a good section for an organizational chart or some kind of visual.

If you're preparing this grant so you can get training, equipment and/or a challenge course from PA, you should describe PA here. Although they are giving you the funds, your budget will likely propose that you spend a fair portion of those funds with PA. Consequently, you'll need to tell them who PA is. This could look something like...

PA has been a leader in Adventure education for over 30 years during which time they have trained schools and community based organizations throughout the nation and the world to employ Adventure based physical education curriculum. As we propose to serve a diverse population of students, the curriculum developed by PA reflects the diversity in age and ability and encourages students to talk about, accommodate and value differences. Importantly, the curriculum is dynamic enabling staff to insure that it is responsive to community needs and reflective and valuing of students' cultures. We have been drawn to the curriculum because of PA's documented expertise in the field, its flexibility, its applicability to state PE standards, its compatibility with our mission and values and its effectiveness in diverse settings.

Your PA Consultant will help with a description of a different tenor should you need it.

3. Describe your organization's constituents for the project.

For example, total number and breakdown by age, gender, race/ethnicity, income levels, disabilities, geography, language spoken, or other criteria relevant to your organization or project. It is important to describe your project's potential constituents as relates to physical education.

Part of this section could be something like...

*The majority of youth that we serve are 95% minority, African American and Latino. Data from the CDC in 2000 indicates that these young people are at greater risk for being overweight or obese than their white peers. Nationally, while 13% of white boys and 12% of white girls, ages 12-19 were overweight or obese, 21% of black boys and 27% of black girls and 27% of Mexican boys and 19% of Mexican girls were overweight or obese. **(This is not fiction. More information related to childhood obesity can be found at the Centers for Disease Control website.)***

Research has found that the lower income a child's family has, the more likely he or she is to be overweight. (Prevention of Obesity—More Than an Intention. Concept and First Results of the Kiel Obesity Project Study (KOPS); Muller, MJ; Asbeck, I; Mast, M; Langnase, K & Grund, A; The International Journal Obesity Related Metabolism Disorders; May 2001)

4. Describe the community or regional need(s) and/or challenges that this effort will address.

It is important not to repeat what you said above. If you have found that you've done this, it is probably just a matter of moving what you've written into the right category. This is the place to describe the problems you will address as relate specifically to your community. The section above will describe who you'll serve and what problems they are likely to have (related to your proposed project, of course). This section will state what problems you do have.

Things to address here...

- Ratio of PE teachers to students
- Rate of failure of PE, if available
- Your state's PE standards and are you able to meet them
- Rate of childhood obesity in your community—is it growing?
- Number of disabled children who could be integrated into a PA PE program
- Etc

Potential sources for this information...

- The US Census <http://www.census.gov/main/www/cen2000.html>
- Your state Department of Education's website – look for accountability data by school district
- Your school system's website
- Your state/county or local Department of Health and, if they have it, their website
- Your local paper, they may have written about the problem you seek to address and have some of this research done

This section might include something like...

30% of the students in our high school fail physical education. Further, 8% do not graduate from high school because have failed physical education. (These numbers are a sample of ones that Project Adventure used in writing a grant with an urban CBO) The program we propose here will work by engaging students and providing them with what research says they want. Research indicates that young people want a fitness program that is “fun, interactive, accessible, convenient, low in cost, sensitive to the needs of adolescents, include(s) multiple physical activity options, and are (is) offered to all students, regardless of their weight.” (School Based Programs for Obesity Prevention—What Do Adolescents Recommend?; Neumark-Sztainer, D; Martin, SL & Story, M; The American Journal of Health Promotion; March-April 2000)

In this section you are painting a picture of your school/community that shows the reader you have real and pressing needs to address. In this case, it is good to look bad. Think of it this way. Funders like to give their money where it will have the biggest impact/address the most need.

5. Description of the specific request that includes goals and objectives.

This should flow from the needs you've expressed in the previous section. If, for example, you've spent a lot of time in the needs section talking about the needs of students with disabilities then your goals should be about inclusion and students with disabilities, not about preventing childhood obesity.

Explain clearly and concisely what you'll do...

Our project will reengage ABC's High School students in physical education by providing them with an hour-long Adventure based physical education class daily. To accomplish this, we will train 15 physical education teachers to provide Adventure education and construct a 12 low and high element challenge course.

Another good quote that could fit in this section..., “As societal demands for health and fitness are changing, physical education curricula must also change. The traditional multiactivity curriculum is inadequate, because poorly skilled students lack enough time to learn the necessary skills. Three alternative curriculum models (Adventure education, physical fitness, and sports education) redistribute instructional time effectively and cover fewer activities in greater depth.” (Same Sneakers, New Tricks: Curricular Alternatives for Physical Education; Lund, JL: NASSP Bulletin; Nov 1993)

Remember your potential funder is probably not familiar with Adventure, so it is up to you to describe it in a way that demonstrates its meaningfulness along with its ability to engage. For example...

Although Adventure can teach so much more than just motor skills, physical movement is central to what physical education is about. This curriculum integrates motor skill development in a subtle way; students experience and master critical motor skills in an environment that is fun and non-threatening. The noncompetitive nature of the activities allows for exploration of primary motor skills, which supports the varying ability levels in a class setting. No longer is learning about who can throw the ball the farthest, but about being engaged in a process where throwing happens naturally. The acquisition of motor skills is just part of the experience that captivates the students' attention.

If you keep your goals, specific, measurable, attainable but challenging and realistic, you'll be in good shape. Your goals should address the needs you've described.

S—specific, you should say you'll decrease the rate of failure of PE in your high school by 20% over the next three years. Saying you'll decrease failure with no parameters is too vague and will not allow funders to hold you accountable. Funders want to be able to hold you accountable—and they should, it is their money.

M—measurable, both you and the funder need to be able to determine if your goals have been attained. An example of a measurable goal is...We will fully integrate 80% of our school's students with disabilities into mainstream physical education by the end of the second year of programming. A goal without a time demarcation is not measurable.

A—achievable, don't set your organization up for failure, but do challenge it. You can best determine what your organization can achieve given its resources. *It is critical that the goals are challenging and truly address the needs you've described.*

R—realistic, this is close to achievable, but don't say, for example, you'll provide out of school programming if your organization is not capable of it. Know your resources: financial; human and material/in kind. *It is important to match the goals to what you can achieve if you receive this grant, not this grant and the other(s) you applied for.*

Examples of some goals Project Adventure has used in a physical education grant are (keep in mind that these are big goals because this funder offered and PA sought a large amount of financial support)...

1. *The number of young people, ages 6 to 18, of whom there are approximately 5,000, actively participating in physical education will increase by 10% in year one, 45% in year two and 80% in year three*
2. *A minimum of 50% of participants annually will be more successful at attaining state PE standards than both their peers and prior to program participation*
3. *A minimum of 50% of participants will improve their fitness each year*
4. *A minimum of 75% of participants annually will have demonstrated age appropriate understanding of how to achieve and maintain a healthy level of fitness*
5. *A minimum of 75% of participants annually will demonstrate age appropriate ability to work as a team*

6. Specific activities and timetable for meeting your stated objectives.

This is the nuts and bolts. The details of what you'll do and when.

Project Adventure frequently uses a table that looks like...

Date	Activity	Rationale	Person(s) Responsible
Sample... 7/15/05-8/21/05 tip—although this may only be a 5-day program, give yourself a window for scheduling, etc.	Sample... <i>Provide 10 physical education teachers with Project Adventure training in Adventure Programming</i>	Sample... <i>To enable teachers to provide students with the impactful and engaging physical education programming described here</i>	Sample... <i>Principal ABC Elementary</i>

7. Future plan for sustaining this effort and strategy for building your funding base.

Essentially, you'll need to describe how the program you propose will carry on beyond the funding period. Being able to sustain a program is a bonus and a good rationale for getting training and equipment as a core element for implementing a program. The expense of keeping training current, challenge courses safe and inspected and equipment intact is considerably smaller than the initial expense. (Talk to your PA consultant for an estimate.)

So is it reasonable for you to propose that, for example...

- your school system will absorb the future costs
- your students will raise the needed funds
- your local Kiwanis club will fund future costs

- Etc

8. Who are your staff and volunteers and what are their qualifications?

This is self-explanatory. Degrees, publications, training and experience are important here. If you feel it is needed, talk to your PA consultant about the qualifications of the trainer they *propose*— *not guarantee*.

9. If applicable, identify organizations that you collaborate with to address the issue(s) in this proposal.

This depends on what you're proposing. Just be sure your collaborators fit the proposed program. It would be appropriate to describe PA here, as detailed in section 2. However, don't describe us in both places.

10. Define your criteria for success for the project. State how you will measure your success in the short-term and in the long-term. What tool(s) will be used to evaluate your program? What is your strategy for implementing the evaluation process?

This is important. It is the information your funder will use to hold you accountable. What you'll measure is your stated goals. If your organization has an evaluator, have him or her help you plan and write this section. Remember, don't propose an evaluation plan that you won't have the resources to implement.

As an example, PA proposed to measure the above goals in the following ways...

1. *Young people in our program, ages 6 to 18, of whom there are approximately 5,000, actively participating in physical education during out-of-school time will increase by 10% in year one, 45% in year two and 80% in year three as measured by:*
 - 1.1 *Attendance, age, ethnicity and gender of participants*
 - 1.2 *Comparison of participants' involvement in out-of-school time PE to reports of the comparison group's involvement in structured PE*
2. *A minimum of 50% of participants annually will be more successful in attaining state PE standards than both their peers and prior to program participation as measured by:*
 - 2.1 *Comparison of student achievement at six month intervals on assessments chosen by staff and evaluators together to prior achievement*
 - 2.2 *Comparison of student achievement annually on assessments chosen by staff and evaluators together to peers in control group*
3. *A minimum of 50% of participants will improve their fitness each year as measured by:*
 - 3.1 *Comparison of students' Body Mass Index measurement at six month intervals to previous measurements*
 - 3.2 *Comparison of students' Body Mass Index measurement annually to those of their peers in the control group*
 - 3.3 *Comparison of students' speed and ability to perform a field fitness test (this test will be different for various age groups, using validated indices)*
4. *A minimum of 75% of participants annually will have demonstrated age appropriate understanding of how to achieve and maintain a healthy level of fitness as measured by:*
 - 4.1 *Comparison of student achievement at six month intervals on assessments chosen by staff and evaluators together to prior achievement*

- 4.2 Comparison of student achievement annually on assessments chosen by staff and evaluators together to peers in control group*
- 5. *A minimum of 75% of participants annually will demonstrate age appropriate ability to work as a team*
 - 5.1 Comparison of student achievement at six month intervals on assessments chosen by staff and evaluators together to prior achievement*
 - 5.2 Comparison of student achievement annually on assessments chosen by staff and evaluators together to peers in control group*

11. Budget

This is key. The budget needs to...

- Reflect what you've proposed—if you've talked about how will you pay for it, if you haven't talked about it and you need to go back and do so
- Fit the funder's guidelines for what they'll fund and how much they'll fund
- Show any and all matches, even if they are in-kind and the funder doesn't require a match. A big match demonstrates your organization's commitment.

Talk to your PA Consultant to get a training, equipment and/or challenge course budget that meets your goals and the funder's guidelines.