

Nongovernmental Grant Proposal Checklist

A guide for preparing proposals for submission to private foundations, corporate funders, and other nongovernmental organizations.

How to use this checklist: Work through each section below before routing your proposal for internal sign-off. Foundation and corporate funders vary widely in format and requirements, so always confirm specifics against the funder's guidelines or RFP. Contact the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP) early for guidance and required institutional approvals.

1. PRE-SUBMISSION PLANNING

- ☐ Funder's mission, priorities, and past grantees researched for fit
- ☐ Funder guidelines, RFP, or letter of inquiry (LOI) instructions reviewed in full
- ☐ Eligibility requirements confirmed (institutional, PI, and project eligibility)
- ☐ Internal Notice of Intent to Submit filed with ORSP (send to cbranch@cau.edu)
- ☐ Funder deadline and CAU internal routing deadline both confirmed

CAU typically requires final documents in the routing system 5 business days prior to the funder deadline.

- ☐ Funder's preferred contact or program officer identified and, if appropriate, contacted
- ☐ Online submission portal or grants management system account created/verified

2. LETTER OF INQUIRY (IF REQUIRED)

- ☐ Concise statement of need and proposed project
- ☐ Requested funding amount and general project timeline
- ☐ Organizational background and qualifications summarized
- ☐ LOI reviewed and approved by ORSP prior to submission

3. ORGANIZATIONAL & ADMINISTRATIVE DOCUMENTS

- ☐ Cover letter on CAU letterhead, signed by authorized signatory
- ☐ Proposal summary / executive summary
- ☐ IRS 501(c)(3) determination letter or CAU tax-exempt documentation
- ☐ Proof of nonprofit/educational institution status, if requested
- ☐ List of CAU Board of Trustees or governance documentation, if requested
- ☐ W-9 or other funder-required financial identification forms

4. PROJECT NARRATIVE

- ☐ Statement of need / problem the project addresses
- ☐ Goals, objectives, and expected outcomes clearly stated
- ☐ Project design, methodology, or program approach described
- ☐ Project timeline / work plan with milestones included
- ☐ Evaluation plan and success metrics defined
- ☐ Sustainability plan beyond the grant period, if applicable
- ☐ Narrative complies with funder's page, word, or format limits

5. BUDGET & BUDGET JUSTIFICATION

- ☐ Detailed line-item budget completed in funder's preferred format
- ☐ Budget narrative / justification for each line item
- ☐ Indirect cost rate applied per funder policy (note: many foundations cap or disallow F&A)
- ☐ Matching funds, in-kind contributions, or other funding sources documented
- ☐ List of other funders/pending requests for the same project, if requested
- ☐ Budget reviewed and approved by ORSP / Grants & Contracts Accounting

6. PERSONNEL & ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

- ☐ Biographical sketches, resumes, or CVs for key personnel
- ☐ Letters of commitment from co-investigators, partners, or collaborators
- ☐ Organizational chart or staffing plan, if requested
- ☐ Description of CAU's capacity and track record to carry out the project

7. COMPLIANCE & INSTITUTIONAL ASSURANCES

- ☐ Human subjects determination made; IRB approval or exemption obtained/pending
- ☐ Animal subjects protocol approved by IACUC, if applicable
- ☐ Conflict of interest disclosures completed by all senior/key personnel
- ☐ Data privacy, ownership, and sharing terms reviewed, if applicable
- ☐ Any funder-specific terms and conditions reviewed by ORSP and Legal Affairs

8. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

- ☐ Letters of support from partner organizations or community collaborators
- ☐ Institutional letters of support / endorsement
- ☐ Organizational annual report or audited financial statements, if requested

- ☐ References / bibliography, if applicable
- ☐ Appendices assembled and within any page or count limits

9. FINAL REVIEW & SUBMISSION

- ☐ All required forms and attachments completed per funder's submission checklist
 - ☐ Full proposal proofread for consistency across narrative, budget, and attachments
 - ☐ Internal ORSP routing and sign-off completed (send to cbranch@cau.edu)
 - ☐ Proposal submitted ahead of the funder deadline (accounting for portal/system delays)
 - ☐ Confirmation of successful submission received and saved
 - ☐ Copy of final submitted proposal archived with ORSP
 - ☐ Reporting requirements and deadlines noted for post-award compliance
-

Questions? Contact the CAU Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP) for guidance on funder-specific requirements, budget development, and compliance approvals.