

# NONPROFIT MASTERMIND & GRANT WRITING

Free Deliverable Guide - Grant Lifecycle Visual Roadmap

FREE ACTIONABLE RESOURCE

## The 7-Stage Grant Lifecycle Flowchart

A Complete Operational Roadmap from Initial Funder Research to Award Stewardship and Reporting

### Visual Lifecycle Overview

Grant writing is an ongoing operational cycle. Follow this 7-stage flowchart to keep your team aligned, manage submission deadlines, and avoid common operational bottlenecks.

#### STAGE 1

**Timeline: 60-90 Days Before Deadline**

#### Research & Prospecting

Identify prospective funders matching your mission, geographic footprint, and budget scale.

- **Key Deliverables:** Curated list of 10 to 15 qualified grant prospects.
- **Actions:** Search Candid/FDO, review Form 990-PF filings, screen for 5 alignment criteria.



## STAGE 2

**Timeline: 45-60 Days Before Deadline**

### Alignment & Relationship Outreach

Establish initial contact with foundation program officers and submit Letters of Intent (LOIs) if required.

- **Key Deliverables:** LOI submission or documented conversation with program officer.
- **Actions:** Send introductory email, attend pre-application webinars, verify funding priorities.



## STAGE 3

**Timeline: 30-45 Days Before Deadline**

### Planning & Project Scope

Design the project model, define goals and SMART objectives, and create the draft budget.

- **Key Deliverables:** Project logic model, draft budget spreadsheet, key staff assignments.
- **Actions:** Hold team kickoff meeting, confirm match commitments, set internal drafting deadlines.



## STAGE 4

**Timeline: 15-30 Days Before Deadline**

## Drafting & Assembly

Write the core proposal narrative, budget justification, evaluation section, and gather required attachments.

- **Key Deliverables:** Full draft narrative, budget narrative, 501(c)(3) letter, audit, board list.
- **Actions:** Draft sections against RFP prompt guidelines, request partner letters of support.



### STAGE 5

**Timeline: 7-14 Days Before Deadline**

## Review & Quality Assurance

Conduct a rigorous red-team review to score the application against the funder's rubric.

- **Key Deliverables:** Final polished application package ready for executive sign-off.
- **Actions:** Proofread for grammar and formatting, verify math accuracy across budget and text.



### STAGE 6

**Timeline: 3-5 Days Before Deadline**

## Submission & Tracking

Submit application through funder portal or email and save receipt documentation.

- **Key Deliverables:** Portal confirmation receipt and archived submission PDF bundle.
- **Actions:** Submit early to avoid portal crashes, record expected decision date in tracking calendar.



#### STAGE 7

**Timeline: Post-Award (12 Months)**

### Reporting & Stewardship

Execute grant agreement terms, track expenditure compliance, and submit interim and final progress reports.

- **Key Deliverables:** Signed grant agreement, mid-term progress report, final financial report.
- **Actions:** Send thank you letter, establish restricted fund account, schedule reporting deadlines.

## Common Lifecycle Bottlenecks & Solutions

| Lifecycle Stage     | Common Bottleneck                                          | Operational Solution                                                       |
|---------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Stage 3<br>(Plan)   | Budget numbers do not align with narrative scope.          | Force project lead and finance director to co-create budget at kickoff.    |
| Stage 4<br>(Draft)  | Delayed letters of support from external partner agencies. | Provide partners with pre-written template letters at least 3 weeks early. |
| Stage 5<br>(Review) |                                                            |                                                                            |

| Lifecycle Stage         | Common Bottleneck                                                     | Operational Solution                                                     |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                         | Executive Director review happens 2 hours before submission deadline. | Institute a hard internal freeze date 5 business days prior to deadline. |
| <b>Stage 6 (Submit)</b> | Grants.gov or portal technical glitch causes missed deadline.         | Enforce 48-hour submission buffer rule; never submit on deadline day.    |

MASTER THE FULL SYSTEM

## Build a Seamless Grant Engine with NMGW

Transform this flowchart into an automated, highly efficient grant machine inside your organization.

Join **60 Days to Grant Ready (\$997)** to get complete workflow SOPs, tracking templates, and direct coaching from veteran grant strategists.

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