

For week two we'll begin the main proposal, which we'll call our template.

This template is a baseline--meant to be used as is, but can also be revised as needed for other grant packets. For example, let's say you're switching from a "general operating funds" proposal to a project proposal. You need a small storage shed and some fencing.

You'll start with your template and pull out certain sections that don't apply, and then you can adapt those remaining. Once the shed/fencing template is done you save it as a separate document.

The original template (and others you create from it) can always be tweaked and improved. You may be standing in the shower one morning and think of a wonderful sentence or two to add, go for it. Just remember some grant-makers specify a page limit.

This lesson looks long, don't fret--it's just the examples taking up space.

Fortunately, for those who struggle to write, you can do one template section at a time, at your own pace. Use the examples below or find others online.

My personal suggestion: don't attempt this project and stare at a blank computer screen **without** samples in front of you. Nobody writes perfect sentences the first time, expect to prepare a rough draft of each section and improve on it gradually. This week's lesson is just two sections of our template.

Even if a grant-maker uses an application form, generally they will be asking for the SAME information, just in a slightly different format.

We're doing the template now, so that later you can easily reduce it to make a letter of inquiry and a letter-style proposal. We'll talk about both those documents in a future lesson.

The following is a list of typical sections of a template. It is not an "absolute" list. **You must customize this information to your group. The text can be broken up by these titles (or similar) called sub-heads.** This is for ease in reading and writing.

- History and mission statement
- Problem statement
- Amount of funding requested
- Partnerships or collaborations
- Population served or demographics
- Accomplishments
- Results expected
- Timetable for implementation

Sustainability

What if funding is not secured

Evaluation and follow-up

Summation

Depending on the length of each section, and which sections you include, the total template would probably average between 5-9 pages for the small organization and 9-20 pages for a larger organization with a more complicated request.

Much like a college freshmen writing home for a check from mom and dad, your grant template has to make a convincing case for why your group should get the funds.

College boy Derrick makes a good analogy. Derrick emails home saying he needs \$100 for an extra literature textbook and dorm snacks. (**amount of funding requested**)

He's found a senior to tutor him once a week (**partnerships**) and he proudly announces he got an "A" on his latest history paper (**accomplishments**).

He needs the cash by next Friday (**timetable for implementation**).

It makes perfect sense when you think about it. These are the very same bits of information that grant-makers want.

Okay, we're ready to start! Most everyone knows their mission by heart, but here are three variations of this section you can use as examples. Following that are two examples of problem statements.

Example one: Who We Are and Our Mission

XYZ Animal Rescue is a non-profit 501(c)(3) animal welfare organization in Upstate New York. (Our IRS determination letter is enclosed.) We are a no-kill shelter/sanctuary currently housing over 100 dogs and cats in our 5000-square foot building. We recently celebrated five years in operation. Our adoptable animals are posted on www.petfinder.com and at our website.

All companion animals that come to XYZ Animal Rescue are treated with the care and respect they deserve. Each is spayed or neutered before adoption. Dogs are tested for heartworm and cats for feline leukemia. All are available for adoption into strictly approved homes and home visits are a standard procedure for us. Home visits are completed prior to adoption to be certain the home is suitable.

Further, our mission is educating the public about responsible animal ownership and the importance of spay and neuter. We work to find new homes for homeless animals at our shelter or provide lifetime care if necessary.

Example two: Background and Mission

Friends of Animals is comprised entirely of volunteers joining together to make a difference. We take animals into our homes and into our limited 'housing' on residential space near Columbus, Ohio. We are a “no-kill” organization that finds homes for animals or continues to care for them indefinitely. We have been highly successful at searching out suitable forever homes for our charges.

Further, our mission is educating the public especially youth about responsible animal ownership and the importance of spay and neuter to control the over-population problem. We are a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization—our IRS determination letter is attached.

Example three: Mission and Purpose

Concerned over the inhumane treatment of stray animals, the humane society was organized in 1984. The mission and purpose of this organization is to balance the health, public safety, and welfare needs of people and animals by responsibly and humanely enforcing animal-related laws and by providing a safe environment for unwanted, stray, abused, and impounded animals. We are a non-profit organization and our IRS letter is attached.

Because of our strong belief in the human-animal bond, we work very hard to match pets and potential pet parents, screening applicants with references and home checks. The animal's needs and the family's needs are considered very carefully, so each companion animal can become an integral member of its new family. Like other animal welfare groups, finding a “forever home” for each animal is our goal. Any animal that cannot fit into its new home successfully is asked to be returned to our care, not passed off.

Example one: Statement of the problem

Lilac County, Indiana is a sparsely populated area with a serious animal over-population problem. Only two groups are currently addressing this need, the county shelter, (which is a small, under-funded kill shelter) and Friends of Animals, Inc.

Currently, the mindset of a large number of the population is that pets are disposable and are abandoned at an alarming rate and/or relegated to a backyard where they proceed to die from neglect or abuse. Believe it or not, others feel shooting strays is the answer and they take it upon themselves to do so.

We're sorry to say, our region has yet to get the vital message about spay and neuter. Many, many animals die needlessly in Lilac County every month and it is our goal to change that!

We are a profoundly poor region. While most residents urge us to continue our efforts, financial support for the animals is far from adequate. Average income for this rural, economically depressed county is below poverty rate and the county has one of the highest welfare rates in the state. Unemployment figures for this county are very high based on a statewide average.

This county struggles to maintain even the minimum of social services and their United Way office was just disbanded. Recent tornadoes struck the county and they have no sirens, so many suffered.

As one ramification, animal welfare often takes a back seat to human concerns. Geographically, the county is large, but in population it's small, thus creating a small tax base and wide coverage area. Neglected, abandoned and homeless animals have little chance in this situation. Help us be one of their chances!

Example two: Problem Statement

Southern Kentucky has yet to get the important message about spay and neuter and the consequences are often tragic. Homeless animals seem to come in an unending flow. Many animals are "dumped off" at our facility during the night. Animals in this state are frequently considered disposable property and the local county animal shelter is full to overflowing at all times.

Many more are brought in to our facility, Animal Haven, during open hours, however we must refuse a large number of them (at least for now) due to space, money and staff limitations.

While there is overall support from the community, financial support for our animal shelter is less consistent. As a private organization we have, thus far received no support from government. The welfare of the animals rests with caring and generous people like you.

These factors, among others add up to two things, a continuous struggle for adequate funding and an on-going challenge to place animals. We realize our problem is not unique. However, we firmly believe there is a great need for our animal shelter/sanctuary in this part of our state.

Notes on problem statement section: we all know the "problem" is at least in part a lack of money, but you must go more in-depth to the root of the problem. All non-profits are seeking money—that's a given. You can't just say the problem is we have no money.

The problems (at least for companion animals) are: poor attitudes, animal over-population, lack of education about the importance of S/N, lack of groups responding to the issue, lack of public awareness etc. etc. Spell that out.

This is the section you can pull the heart strings, if you wish...doom and gloom. Use anecdotes and statistics, if you have access to some. Make your point! This section is only about the problem, remember don't start discussing the solutions yet.

Keep the material simple enough for an outsider to understand. Not everyone reading this material will know how a "rescue" operates. They may have only a vague idea of what an animal shelter does day in and day out.

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