

**When you ask about the number of persons served, do you mean the number served by our entire agency or the number served by the specific program for which we're applying for funding?**

Actually, we need both. A question on page 1 of the grant application asks for information about the number of people served by your entire organization, along with the percentage of minorities and the percentage of people of low/moderate income. Question 1 on page 2 asks for similar information for the people served by the specific program.

**Why do you ask about the ethnic makeup of our organization's board of directors or trustees?**

Our foundation seeks to promote diversity and believes that the governing boards of non-profit organizations tend to work better if they reflect the populations they serve. The composition of your board is one of many factors that provide us with data about how well equipped your organization is to serve your clientele.

**Why do you ask about whether we receive support from the United Way? If we do, would that disqualify us from receiving a Liberty Bank Foundation grant?**

Let's answer your second question first: absolutely not! Organizations and programs that receive United Way funding are not disqualified from receiving a grant from our foundation. We ask about United Way support because the fact that an organization was able to meet the United Way's standards to qualify for funding gives us some information about its management and effectiveness.

**When you ask for a budget for the project to be funded by the grant, you request both income and expenses. What if we don't know yet where the income will come from?**

We realize that, at the time you apply for funding, you may not yet have determined all of the sources that will supply revenue for your program. However, you should at least have plans for where the money will come from: funders to whom you plan to apply for grants, projected fees from the program itself, proceeds of fundraising events, cash on hand, etc. If any of the sources on your list are not definite, you should note their status—for example, a grant request could be "pending" if you've already submitted it, or "projected" if you haven't. Please note: If the income side of your project budget doesn't equal the expense side, you can expect a call from us to find out why!

**You ask for a narrative of no more than 5 pages about our project. Can it be more than 5 pages, or less?**

This is an area where the old saying "More is better" does NOT apply. If you can answer all the questions listed in the application in one page, then feel free to do so. Most applications will need more space than that, but please keep in mind that your grant request is not being judged on how much you write! The best applications are those that clearly and concisely describe the program, and that include answers to all the questions on the list. Use whatever space you need—so long as you don't exceed 5 pages.

**In question 1 on page 2, you ask about “other pertinent demographic data identifying the target population.” What do you mean by that?**

We’re looking for any data that will help us understand whom your program will serve. Age, gender, income level, ethnicity, geographic location, etc., are all of interest and may help us determine how closely your program conforms to our funding priorities.

**What if we don’t have data on income level or other characteristics?**

Obviously you can only provide us with information that you have. If you do have statistics on income level, for example, you’ll want to include them. If you have anecdotal data on it, but not hard numbers, you can include that, but please note it as anecdotal.

**What do you mean when you ask if a program is new or ongoing?**

This question isn’t asking about your organization as a whole, but about the particular program for which you’re requesting funds. We like to know whether the program is just starting up, or has been in operation for a while.

**You ask about the qualifications of our staff, but you tell us not to send you staff resumes. What information do you want?**

We’re looking for brief descriptions of the qualifications of your staff and your organization as a whole to perform the work outlined in your program description. With regard to staff qualifications, a brief paragraph or a few bullet points on each key staff member involved with the program would be fine. Don’t feel you have to report on everyone’s background—just the staff members with the most significant roles.

**In the question about measuring the success of the program, what do you mean by “specific outcomes”?**

This question seems to confuse a lot of our applicants—and it’s true that some programs are easier to measure than others. Still, we need to see some kind of yardstick against which you will measure your results to determine whether you accomplished what you set out to do. Since we’ll be asking you for a report on your grant one year after it has been awarded, you should think in terms of outcomes that can reasonably be expected to have been achieved by that time.

Here’s an example: An after-school program has the goal of promoting school success and preventing substance abuse among a group of children aged 12-14. Outcomes that might be measured include:

- Improvement in school grades – measurable by reviewing report cards before and after the program
- Improved performance on standardized tests (such as CMT) – comparison of scores before/after program
- Improved attendance at school, reduced tardiness, reduced incidences of disciplinary problems – measurable by school records and/or teacher surveys before/after program
- Reduction in specific behaviors known to precede or accompany substance abuse – measurable by before/after surveys of students, parents, teachers

Here are some examples of “outcomes” we’ve seen listed on grant applications that don’t seem meaningful to us:

- Pre- and post-surveys of parents and/or students  
(Don’t get us wrong—we have nothing against surveys, and we’ve frequently seen them used successfully for measuring outcomes. But the survey itself isn’t an outcome—it’s a measurement tool. Describe for us what you plan to measure with your survey.)
- Hold four forums on substance abuse prevention, with attendance of 200 students.  
(This is a program activity, not an outcome. Your stated goal is to affect the students’ choices about substance abuse—that’s what needs to be measured.)
- Student/parent satisfaction surveys about the program  
(The fact that program participants are satisfied with the program doesn’t necessarily mean that the program has achieved its goals.)

We realize that measuring outcomes can be challenging. As we see it, the key is to keep in mind that the question you’re trying to answer is, “Did we achieve the goals we set for this program?” Any outcomes you measure should lead you to that answer.

**Today is the grant deadline for this quarter. Should I drive my grant application to the foundation office to make sure it gets in on time?**

There is no need for you to drive your application to the foundation office. Your application will still be considered to be on time so long as it’s either postmarked on the deadline date, or delivered to any Liberty Bank office by the deadline date. (If you choose to deliver it to a Liberty Bank branch, just give it to any member of the staff and ask them to send it via interoffice mail to the Liberty Bank Foundation.)

By the way—if it’s the day before the deadline, please don’t waste your money sending your grant request in by overnight mail! Remember—if it’s postmarked on deadline day, it’s on time.

If you have any other questions about our grant application or the process we use to review grant requests, please don’t hesitate to call us! Contact information for our staff is below:

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