

# 5 Tips for Giving Grants to Teachers



Does your foundation give to local schools or teachers? If you want to make the most of the dollars you give, Nimble Press can help. We surveyed over 132 people who apply for educational grants. Two out of three respondents had started a grant application without completing it. To prevent that from happening to you, here are five tips for building a better application.

## 1. Keep your questions short and simple.

More than half of those surveyed stressed that a grant application should be simple and quick to fill out. One respondent offered this advice: "Spend time listening to educators - don't make the process so complicated that it isn't worth the time to apply relative to the dollars awarded." To keep your applicant pool large and diverse, keep application questions focused on the details you'll use for judging.

## 2. Make critical information easy to find.

Over 80 percent of those surveyed ranked **deadlines, eligibility, and rules** as information they need to know. Check your brochure or web site. Are these details on the first page of information? More than 70 percent indicated that **award details, application questions, and judging criteria** helped them. Giving people a chance to review information before they start their application increases your completion rate. When you hide essential details, you risk losing qualified applicants and ineligible applicants may apply.

## 3. Make your application available online.

An online grant application makes it easier and more convenient for teachers to apply. Over 50 percent of those surveyed ranked an online application form as their first choice of any type. Even those who had never applied online before

preferred an online application process. In addition, almost everyone ranked the option to start and return to an online form as important. Only five percent of respondents start and finish their application in one sitting.

## 4. Share successful projects from previous years.

Winners are models for success and help your grant program lay out expectations for applicants. Better qualified teachers will be more likely to apply if they know what type of projects are likely to win. One respondent stated, "make it seem do-able, give lots of examples of past winners or ideas for grants." Past winning projects may inspire potential applicants to create a great new program.

## 5. Promote your grants on the web and in e-mail newsletters.

The most effective way to publicize your grant is through web site postings and e-mail newsletters. According to the survey, 75 percent of respondents usually, frequently, or always find out about grants by browsing the web; 70 percent discover grants through e-mail newsletters. Another 56 percent of respondents ranked grant listing services as effective search tools. List your next contest on Grant Wrangler to reach thousands of teachers nationwide. ([www.grantwrangler.com](http://www.grantwrangler.com))

## Nimble Press can Help

Nimble Press offers grant consulting services and a ready-to-use online application service. Whether you are creating a new program or bringing an existing one online, we can help you make the process easy and effective for applicants, reviewers, and grant administrators.

Contact Nimble Press to learn more:  
888-867-7619 or [demo@nimble-net.com](mailto:demo@nimble-net.com) [www.nimble-net.com](http://www.nimble-net.com)

# Advice from Grant Writers

Allow a grant to support an existing program. We shouldn't have to invent something new to get money. Remember the ARTS.

Publicize as much as possible, and consider giving smaller awards to multiple schools rather than one or two larger awards. Sometimes seed money can sow a lot more progress on the grassroots level and positively affect more children.

Identify areas in which funding is typically not available.

Make the grant simple, with clear instructions: the more time consuming, the fewer teachers will apply.

Make the application easy to understand; do not be redundant; ask questions that are relevant to the project; be clear about your expectations within the application (e.g. provide a sample proposal/application).

Make the application process as easy as possible. Be clear with directions and make requirements as concise as possible. Include a final checklist. This would reduce problems and honest oversights.

Make it seem do-able, give lots of examples on past winners or ideas for grants. It's really hard to find an ideal grant. I pass up a lot of grants, just because I don't have the luxury of time to figure out what kind of project I could create for the grant.

Ask for relevant information. Consider new ideas. Be willing to award grants to smaller sites. Have a wide range of funding (\$50-100 is a lot of money to a classroom teacher or small center).

Make it easily accessible. Use a straight forward and simple form that can be filled out without having to search for answers.



## About the Survey

Nimble Press conducted an online survey in August 2006 by contacting subscribers of our Grant Wrangler Bulletin. Fifty-nine percent of the 132 respondents were teachers:

- 56% elementary
- 15% middle school
- 28% high school

Seventy-one percent had applied for a grant within the past six months, with most applying for grants to receive funding for technology, materials for student projects, and resources for the classroom.

**To list a grant, contact [grants@grantwrangler.com](mailto:grants@grantwrangler.com) or visit [www.grantwrangler.com](http://www.grantwrangler.com)**

**To learn more about our consulting services, contact [demo@nimble-net.com](mailto:demo@nimble-net.com) or visit [www.nimble-net.com](http://www.nimble-net.com)**

## Application type Preference

