



## GRANT WRITING

Do you have a great idea and want to turn it into innovation, but don't know where to start? Do you need funding to take your idea to the next level? Have you considered applying for a grant. Grants can be a very cost-effective means of funding for businesses and researchers to develop their idea. There is more than \$7 billion available in grants for agriculture in Australia.

Applying for a grant requires researching the funding organisation, clearly defining the problem, providing a clear solution and an understanding of the conditions for the need and use of funds. To the inexperienced, grant writing can seem like a very challenging task with little chance of success. To improve your chances of success, consider using a professional grant writer.

If you can't decide between hiring a professional or attempting the task yourself, here are five factors to take into consideration:

### **Reduced Cost**

You see an opportunity to apply for a grant but are busy managing your business or research project and don't have the time or resources required to complete the application. An in-house grant writer would offer advantages but their employment involves costs – salary, desk, phone, pay-roll tax and so on. The other option is to outsource your grant writing, which can be very cost effective.

The next time you are considering applying for a grant include all costs, including the opportunity cost of diverting critical resources away from core business and then consider outsourcing it to a professional consultant. One-off fees with no on-costs can be very competitive.

## **Expertise**

Writing a successful grant application is a combination of science and art, often taking many applications, hopefully successful, to master. To write a grant application it must start with a clear definition of the problem, who is feeling the problem and how much is it costing them? When writing the grant application be specific - outcomes, outputs and milestones must be SMART. The more detail you can provide the better chance of success you will have.

Consultants develop their grant writing expertise as entrepreneurs working in start-ups, as researchers applying for new projects and working for organisations who fund grants. Funding organisations can quickly determine if a grant application has been put together by a professional.

## **Applications completed on time**

Managing your business or current research project is your primary focus, writing a grant application takes time and resources away from time critical functions in your day to day role. Some organisations put teams together to write applications, this strategy can work well but, it can also end up producing applications which are incoherent and cobbled together from mismatched parts. When assessing applications, grant funders quickly determine those which have been well thought out and planned, compared to applications which have been rushed and put together at last minute.

The advantage of outsourcing your grant applications is that this becomes the sole focus of the consultant. The consultant should work with you and develop a draft application well ahead of the deadline providing plenty of time to critically review the application before it is submitted. Critical to the success of any grant application is to have it submitted well before the deadline.

## **Collaboration**

Collaboration is often one of the key selection criteria used by grant funders. In agriculture, for a grant application to be successful it will often require demonstrated, strong commitment and collaboration between partners. Within your own business or research team you may may have a small network, however, by outsourcing your grant writing, you are engaging a consultant who should have an extensive network in the public, private and not-for-profit sectors.

When you engage a consultant to write your grant they should use their extensive network and pull together the best team for your application.

### **Technical Knowledge**

When completing your grant application you will often be required to outline the solution to address the problem and in many cases you will need to provide technical details. While many businesses and research organisations have technically trained people, the advantage of outsourcing your grant application is that you get independent, technical input and review. This can be a great advantage, especially when there is more than one technical approach to solving the problem.

Consultants should have extensive technical knowledge across a range of disciplines which they use when developing your grant application. This can significantly increase your chance of success.

For help or guidance with your next grant application, feel free to reach out to the team at AGRIGROW who are experts with proven results in successful grant applications. Contact us at [Darren.hughes@agrigrow.com.au](mailto:Darren.hughes@agrigrow.com.au) or 0436 115 462 to set up a time to talk about your project.