

While letters of support do not win a grant by themselves, good letters of support can make a grant more competitive. They demonstrate broad-based commitment to a project, from the range of stakeholders. ***The letters of support show that the planned collaboration is both appropriate and genuine.***

These are the two elements to a persuasive letter of support: (1) enthusiasm and (2) convincing details.

That is why this document is intended as a guideline only: writers should tailor the details in their letters to their unique positions, entities, mission, and goals. The details should illustrate how the work of the grant affects their entity's ability to achieve its mission and/or goals.

There are multiple types of letters that come under the general rubric of "letters of support." For most grant applications, letters fall into two main categories: (i) letters of support from high-level stakeholders such as legislators (senators or members of congress) or the President of Fresno State, and (ii) letters of support from mid-level stakeholders such as community organizations or partners on the application. These two types of letters usually have different addressees:

All letters from high-level stakeholders must go to the same person: the chief officer of the sponsoring organization:

Examples

Secretary Shaun Donovan
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban
Development
451 7th Street S.W.
Washington, DC 20410

U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202

All letters from mid-level stakeholders should go to the head of the program:

Examples

Shelley R. Poticha, Director for Office of
Sustainable Housing and Communities
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban
Development
451 7th Street S.W.
Washington, DC 20410

Eduardo Ochoa, Assistant Secretary for
Postsecondary Education
U.S. Department of Education
Office of Postsecondary Education
1990 K Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20006

SAMPLE TEMPLATE

[Letterhead]

[Date]

[Addressee]

Dear -----:

1st ¶—*Introductory Paragraph*: Briefly in 2-3 sentences express enthusiasm and endorsement of grant application. Use project narrative's exact title and use the full name of the sponsor (e.g., U.S. Department of Education, Andrew W. Mellon Foundation...).

2nd ¶—*Explanatory Paragraph*: Explain why you support this project based on your position (e.g., mayor of a town, OR director of historical society, OR mediator at interfaith institution...). What exactly is your entity getting out of this? Why is it relevant? If you have a history of collaboration with the grant applicant or the grant applicant's organization, mention that. Give convincing details on how the grant funding would help your entity to realize a goal, be good for your specific population, and/or fill a gap (in services or knowledge).

3rd ¶—*Commitment Paragraph*: If applicable, note any contributions (staff, facilities, services) that your organization is committing to the project. There are two types of commitment: cost share (costs of project that your entity actually bears) and leveraged resources (resources that your entity will bring to the project to create synergy between your resources and those of the project). Note whether your commitment will be cost share or leveraged resources, and give exact value of any cash or 'hard' in-kind contributions. If applicable, clarify your organization's plans to sustain the work of this grant beyond its end.

4th ¶—*Closing Paragraph*: Briefly in 3-4 sentences re-confirm that you are giving your fullest support/commitment, and end on a positive note, such as that you highly recommend this project to sponsors and look forward to hearing about its success.

Sincerely,

Name & Title
Entity