



## Grant Writing Tips

- Be clear about what your goals are for your property. How do they align with the objectives of your watershed?
- Assess the current condition of your yard, how you'd like to improve the ecology and make a plan. Resources that may be helpful to you include:
  - DIY educational opportunities:  
Friends of Tryon Creek, Landscaping for Conservation workshops  
Naturescaping for Clean Rivers, Site Planning workshops
  - Direct technical assistance:  
Backyard Habitat Certification Program  
Southwest Watershed Resource Center  
Tryon Creek Watershed Council Mentor Program  
West Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District  
Other landscaping & design professionals
- Consider your site/project in the watershed context. Is there a natural area downstream? Is a sensitive species known to occur nearby? What ecological priorities have been identified for the watershed? Answering these questions will make your application more compelling. Find out more about your watershed from the Portland Bureau of Environmental Services web site or the SW Watershed Resource Center.
- Review grant program guidelines to decide how your project goals can be aligned. Visit [http://swni.org/watershed/funding\\_resources](http://swni.org/watershed/funding_resources) or [www.wmswcd.org/content.cfm/Grant-Opportunities](http://www.wmswcd.org/content.cfm/Grant-Opportunities).
- Partnerships make a stronger project and add community value.
  - While your project will be primarily ecological, don't overlook potential social and community benefits.
  - Investigate partnering with a local stewardship group, if your project is aligned with their mission. Some groups may be especially interested in the educational or outreach value. Visit [http://swni.org/watershed/sw\\_watershed\\_stewards](http://swni.org/watershed/sw_watershed_stewards) for information.

→Some grant program require a 501 (c)(3) sponsor or fiscal agent. Talk to potential partners early so you have time to make any changes before the grant deadline.

- Read and respond thoroughly to all grant application questions. Reviewers will reject your application if it's not complete or clear. It's always wise to have a third party review your application before sending in.

- Since you are in competition with lots of applicants, show potential funders how you will give them the biggest “bang” for their “buck.”

→When putting your budget together, get multiple bids for contract work. Find out who has the best price for plants. Make your numbers as accurate as possible.

→Try to quantify outcomes and results. Give your best guess of the project's on-the-ground impact whether it's calculated in the number of plants installed, amount of invasive debris removed, number of people reached in education campaign or distance of creek bed restored. Funders are accountable to and need to report data to trustees, organizations and agencies.

→Demonstrate responsibility for the investment. Show that you're committed by detailing how the project will be maintained and sustained beyond the grant time frame.

- If at first you don't succeed, try, try again! Everyone who writes grants gets rejection letters which are based on a wide variety of reasons, the least of which is your project. Talk to the funder to find out why your project wasn't chosen and why. Next time, you'll know how to tailor your application to their needs.

*The mission of the West Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District is: “To conserve and protect soil and water resources for people, wildlife and the environment.”*

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