COMPETITIVE GRANT WRITING TIPS

TERI RED OWL

Owens Valley Indian Water Commission

December 8, 2020

U.S. EPA Region 10 Environmental Justice Training

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Payahuunadü

Land of the flowing water
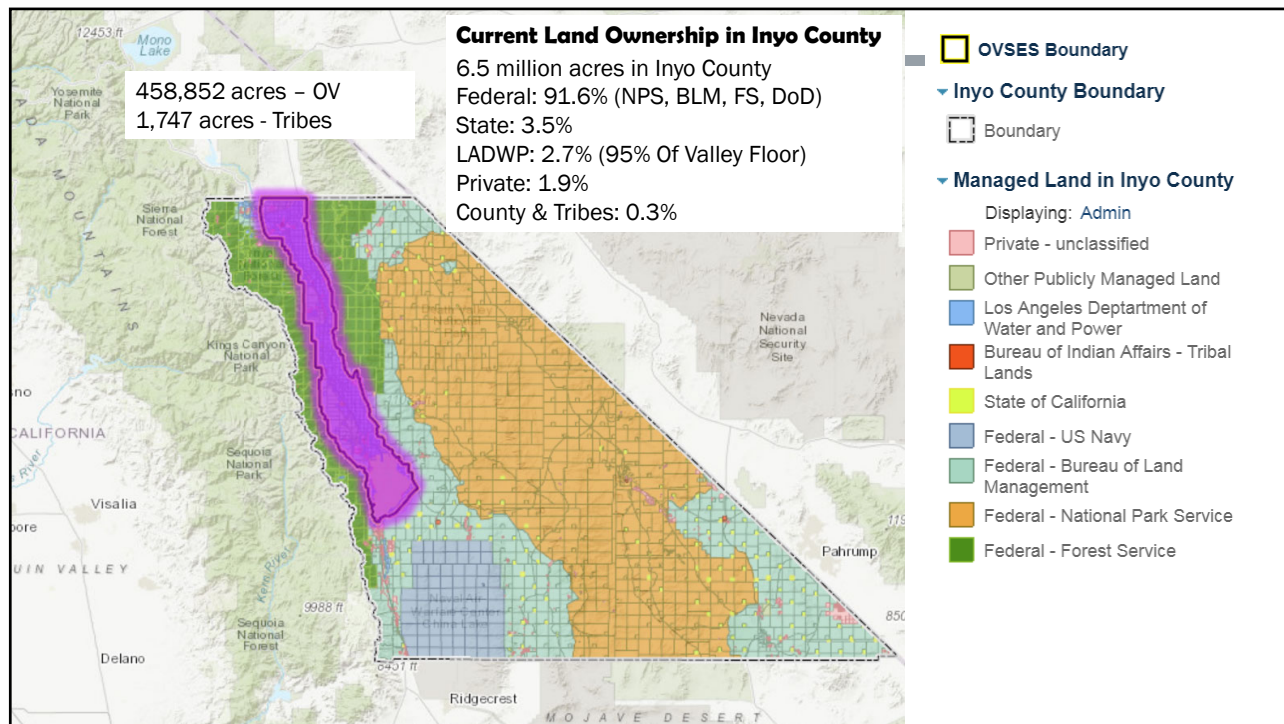
Owens Valley
Located in California's Eastern Sierra region
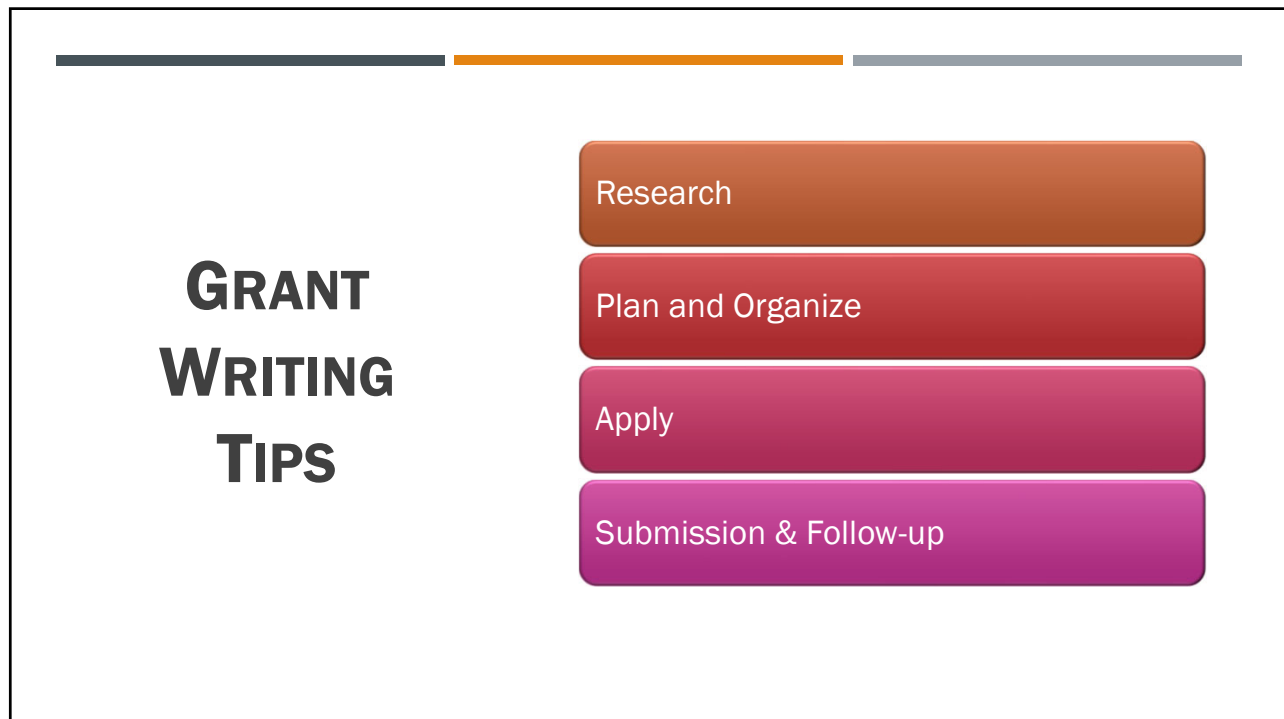
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458,852 acres – OV
1,747 acres - Tribes

Current Land Ownership in Inyo County
6.5 million acres in Inyo County
Federal: 91.6% (NPS, BLM, FS, DoD)
State: 3.5%
LADWP: 2.7% (95% Of Valley Floor)
Private: 1.9%
County & Tribes: 0.3%

OVSES Boundary
▾ Inyo County Boundary
    Boundary
▾ Managed Land in Inyo County
    Displaying: Admin
    Private - unclassified
    Other Publicly Managed Land
    Los Angeles Deptartment of Water and Power
    Bureau of Indian Affairs - Tribal Lands
    State of California
    Federal - US Navy
    Federal - Bureau of Land Management
    Federal - National Park Service
    Federal - Forest Service

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GRANT WRITING TIPS

Research

Plan and Organize

Apply

Submission & Follow-up

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RESEARCH

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Research opportunities that align with your mission

Begin with your mission. It's important to apply for grants that advance your mission rather than applying for grants that will take time away from reaching your programming goals.

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Research opportunities that align with your mission

Don't completely plan your proposed program to suit grant requirements; instead tailor your plans to make sure your already relevant idea perfectly suits the grant's requirements.

Can you meet application deadlines?

Can work be completed within specified time period?

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Get to know the Grantor

The funder's interests should match well with your Tribe's or organization's mission, and your proposal must follow the funder's guidelines.

Funders look to see if your mission is worthwhile and aligns with their grant-giving, that your operations are sustainable, and that your projects and plans for the grant funds are logical and will work.
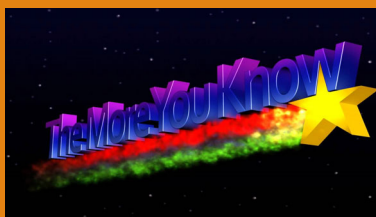
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Get to know the Grantor

Look at grantor giving history. Who has received grants in the past? What kinds of projects does the grantor support? Look at grantor's political and social values. Who are key decision makers?

Who are your advocates? These are the people you build relationships with and they can let you know personally what is going on and assist you. These people can champion your cause and find money for you.

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Grant Specifics

Read funding opportunity or request for applications thoroughly. Pay attention to timelines and key deadlines.

Participate in request for proposals/applications webinars if available.

Does funder require a letter of inquiry first, a proposal, or application?

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Grant Specifics

What are eligibility requirements? What are allowable uses of funds? What are unallowable uses?

What are factors for awards, scoring criteria?

Mandatory documentation. Is specific language required in resolutions?

Create a checklist/guide in a spreadsheet or other document.

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PLAN/ORGANIZE

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| Organize Data and Information Needed for Proposal or Application | Compile materials, data, and documentation needed for application. *(Budgets, audit reports, indirect cost agreements, governing documents, statistics, past accomplishments, letters of support, resolutions).*

What questions need answered?

Reach out to grantors to clarify questions you may have. Talk to past recipients about their experiences and what helped them get funded.

Don't delay. Gather materials and documentation early. |

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APPLY

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Grant Writing

Tell Your Story

Sell Your Project

Write application clearly and boldly. Be descriptive but specific. Keep your language straightforward and make it as persuasive as possible.

Stay concise and focused. Know character limitations for online applications.

Provide relevant details whenever possible.

Support plans with data.

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Grant Writing

Tell Your Story

Sell Your Project

Provide concrete stories of your tribe's or organization's impacts in your community.

Are there families or individuals you've helped who want to share their story or a quote? Personal stories about community impacts can be extremely persuasive. Use photographs if allowed. (Remember the primary focus should be on explaining the specifics of your project.)

"These Indians are bound to Owens Valley by every tie of sentiment which may bind a man to the soil […] They made it perfectly clear to us that they would rather die in Owens Valley than live prosperously elsewhere."

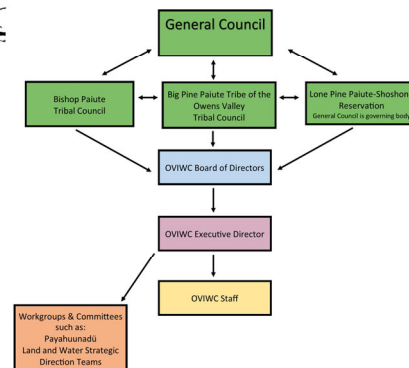(1935.2.23, 6) – 1935: Meeting in the Independence Court House

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Grant Writing

Tell Your Story

Sell Your Project

Funder is going to want to know about your tribe or organization structure. Be prepared to describe your leadership including board members and their roles. Organizational charts are good even when not required.

Owens Valley Indian Water Commission
Organizational Chart

General Council

Bishop Paiute Tribal Council

Big Pine Paiute Tribe of the Owens Valley Tribal Council

Lone Pine Paiute-Shoshone Reservation
General Council is governing body

OVIWC Board of Directors

OVIWC Executive Director

OVIWC Staff

Workgroups & Committees such as: Payahuunadü Land and Water Strategic Direction Teams

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Grant Writing

Tell Your Story

Sell Your Project

Who are the team members responsible for the project and grant administration? Are there collaborators?

Will need to demonstrate there is project oversight and accountability.

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Grant Writing

Follow-Directions

Follow grantors instructions, guidelines, and formats. Grantors want to review uniform proposals.

Does the funder want an organizational budget in addition to project (grant) budget. Does funder want expenses to date included in organizational budget?

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Grant Writing

Budgeting

Budget should stand on its own and answer questions about grant proposal/application.

Pick a tool to use such as an Excel spreadsheet. Make sure numbers in a column are visible and not cut-off (use wrap text). If budget runs onto more than one page, include column headings on each page.

Nuumü Agriculture Project						
REQUESTED GRANT PERIOD (12 Months)						
Please reflect only funding requested from NAAF						
		Year 1		Year 2		Total
Personnel						
Project Coordinator - 30% time (624 Hours @ $28.25/hour)	$	17,628	$	17,628	$	35,256
Personnel subtotal	$	17,628	$	17,628	$	35,256
Fringe (43%)	$	7,580	$	7,580	$	15,160
Total Personnel	$	25,208	$	25,208	$	50,416

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Grant Writing

Budgeting

Detail costs of the project. Show funder exactly what their money will pay for. List other sources of income for costs not covered by grant requested.

For cost share, know donor and volunteer engagement rates for in-kind contributions.

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Grant Writing

Budgeting

Categorize costs in a way that makes sense. Goal is to illustrate to the funder what it takes to successfully operate your program and complete your project.

Use real numbers. Get quotes from vendors and contractors, use online pricing.

Make sure your numbers add up. Double and triple check your numbers.

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Grant Writing

Budgeting

Be realistic about the amount you are requesting. Stay within budget guidelines.

Make sure costs tie in with your narratives.

A detailed accurate budget tells a story.

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Grant Writing

Budget Narrative

Opportunity to explain line items and make a clear connection between budget and project goals and objectives. This is normally in paragraph form.

Being thorough helps build credibility with reviewers.

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Grant Writing

Budget Narrative

Language should convey a sense of good investment and should demonstrate that you designed the most cost-effective solution.

Give reviewers confidence that you did research and that your project costs are reasonable and well thought-out.

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Submission

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Final Check

Read everything. Pay attention to the details. Make sure you followed directions.

Double and triple check spelling and grammar.

Have others review and edit documents.

Make sure Excel formulas are correct. Always good to double check with a calculator.

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Final Check

Use the check list you created to ensure all required documents and materials are attached to application.

Include contact names, titles, and information.

Be mindful of deadlines and submit well before deadline. This is especially important for online applications. Sometimes Internet accessibility could cause delays.

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Follow-up

Make sure you get a confirmation that your application has been received.

If the foundation or grantor allows, send a follow-up email or call to thank them for the opportunity to apply.

Sometimes grantors will provide an opportunity to let you know why you were or were not funded. Take them up on this opportunity.

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