Elements of a Typical Letter of Inquiry

Introduction

The introduction should be a short executive summary. It includes the name of your organization, the amount of money requested, and a description of the project. You'll want to explain how the project fits with the funder's guidelines and funding interests.

Organizational Description

Be concise and concentrate on your organization's ability to meet the need that you've stated. Give a brief history of your nonprofit and provide an overview of your programs. Make sure to connect directly what you currently do and what you want to accomplish with the requested funding.

Statement of Need

Explain the need that can be met by your project. Describe the target population and geographic area. Provide a few significant statistical facts and several examples.

Methodology

How will you solve the need? Describe the project succinctly and include the major activities, names, and titles of key project staff, and your project's objectives.

Other Funding Sources

If you are approaching other agencies or nonprofits for support of this project, mention them in a brief paragraph. Include whatever funding you've already gotten and explain how you expect to support the project after the start-up period.

Summary

Restate the intent of your project, invite additional questions and thank the funder for his or her time and consideration. Include any attachments asked for in the funder's guidelines.

A [budget may or may not be required](#) for your letter of inquiry. Check the funder's guidelines. Some guidelines are precise, and it is important to follow them exactly.

But, also, Mim Carlson, author of "[Winning Grants: Step by Step](#)", suggests that you review your LOI with these questions in mind:

1. Did I state the name of the project and the amount of money I'm seeking in the first paragraph?
2. Does my second paragraph elaborate adequately about the project and any related projects?
3. Did I include our mission statement?
4. Did I lay out the need for the project?
5. Have I been clear about the outcomes the project will achieve?
6. Is the implementation of the project clear?
7. Have I made a case for a good fit between this project and the foundation's priorities?
8. Did I include information about any funding already committed?
9. Have I included the contact details for a particular person who can answer questions?