

Applying for grants to support your iMentor program

Grants from foundations, government programs, and corporations are important sources of funding to support your iMentor program. The following article provides [sample language](#) as well as [tips for preparing and writing proposals](#)

Sample Language

Example: This [sample proposal](https://imentor.box.com/s/fzxiqrdrxtwqqs5tr23ucsbajkpnsxkn) is an example what iMentor submits when applying for grants to support our direct service program. We recommend that you review the sample proposal for an idea of the type of information, format, and language that has been successful in helping us secure funding in order to generate ideas for creating your own proposal.

Each organization's proposal will look different and we suggest you keep the following in mind as you review the proposal:

- This sample proposal can be used as a starting for point many types of grants, including foundation, government, and corporate opportunities.
- Program model: this language has been successful in explaining the program model and benefits to participants.
- Program results: These results are specific to our New York City program. If your program is new and you do not yet have results to report, it may be helpful to reference the types of results achieved by similar programs, including iMentor's outcomes.

Language about iMentor partnership services: Effectively communicating the support, resources and network that you access through your iMentor partnership can help funders understand the multi-faceted relationship and value that it has to your program.

Additional language: Also consider adapting language and data from:

- [About iMentor](http://partners.imentor.org/help/about-imentor)
- [Impact Summary](#)
- [Hear From Pairs](http://partners.imentor.org/help/hear-from-pairs-in-imentor-overview)
- [An Overview of Core Metrics](http://partners.imentor.org/help/core-metrics---an-overview-of-the-imentor-program-model)

Tips For Strong Proposals

Consider the tips below as you prepare to write grant proposals for your mentoring program. Use the comments feature at the end of the article to share any additional strategies that have worked for you.

Learn as much as you can about the funder

- Look at the funder's website.
- Look at the funder's 990 form to see how they have allocated funds in the past.
- Try to set up a call or meeting with the funder to introduce your organization and learn about their priorities. Board members, existing funders, and other stakeholders can help you make the connection and set up a meeting.
- Some smaller funders don't have a website. Meetings can be especially helpful in this situation.

Decide how much funding to request

- Look at how much the funder has granted organizations that do similar work or focus on the same outcomes as your program.
- Pay attention to who the funder has actually supported in addition to their official stated priorities.
- Funders prefer to support organizations that draw funding from a variety of sources. The amount you request should be balanced by other sources of funding.
- Decide what aspects of the program to focus on.
- Align as much as possible with the funder's grant making priorities.
- Look for some aspect of the program that you can focus on. Your proposal should still cover all aspects of the model, but you can hone in on aspects of your program that align with their focus.
 - For example; if the funder's focus is financial aid, you can focus on how the program helps students with FAFSA and other financial aid resources.

Gather information before starting to put the proposal together

- Look for regional statistics including state high school graduation rates, specific schools' graduation rates, and demographics of your school or local area (e.g. free and reduced lunch rates, students of color)
 - Most proposals will ask for a need statement — focus on information that is relevant to your area or target population.
 - Focus on quality over quantity of data and statistics. A few key statistics that are directly relevant to your population, program, and outcome goals can really strengthen your proposal.
 - A landscape analysis of programs doing similar work in your area is an opportunity to make your program stand out. Focus on demonstrating how your program model is different from other programs and the specific benefits of your model. What makes your program a unique value? Examples include:
 - A whole cohort model
 - Multi-year matches
 - Evaluation opportunities
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