



FEMA

Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program

Summary

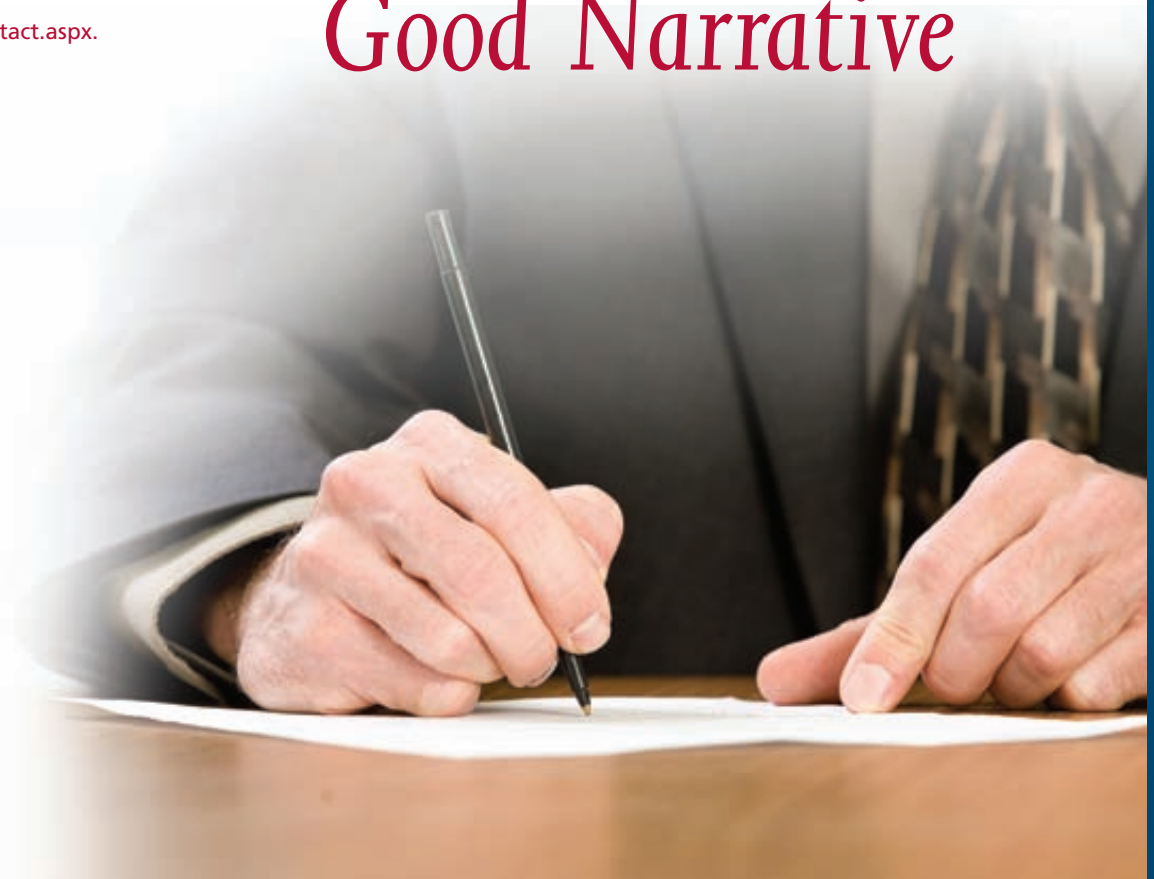
For whatever grant opportunity you wish to apply, read the Program Guidance and complete the Applicant Tutorial for that grant opportunity. Reading the guidelines will give you a good idea of what information is needed to include in your narrative. As a final step, you should print and proofread your application prior to submission. By doing this, you can insure the data you entered in the Request Details section of the application is correct and consistent with the information provided in your narrative.

The AFG Help Desk is available to answer any questions and to provide you with guidance. You may call 1-866-274-0960 or e-mail your questions to firegrants@dhs.gov for further assistance. FEMA Regional representatives are also available to assist you. Contact information for your regional representative can be found at <http://firegrantsupport.com/prog/contact.aspx>.

Writing a Good Narrative



FEMA



The Application

To apply for funding from the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program, you must complete an online grant application. Regardless of whether you are applying for the Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG), the Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Grant (SAFER) or the Fire Prevention and Safety Grant (FP&S), reading and understanding the Program Guidance for the grant of your choice is critical to writing a good application. Each Program Guidance explains the program priorities and the information needed to include in your application in order to be successful. For all proposed projects, the items requested must be identified as one of the top priorities for funding. Failing to request top priority items is the number one reason why applications are unsuccessful.

All three grant opportunities require specific information about your department or organization, community characteristics, call volume, current budget and funding challenges, problem or risk and proposed project solution. Some of this information is requested in the beginning of the application in an activity-specific question format. The rest of the information is provided by you in a written narrative explaining the details of your project.

You need to provide a project description, including community risk and budget, an explanation of your financial need and budgeting challenges, a description of the cost-benefit of your project and an explanation of how your project will improve daily operations. In addition, your project should showcase how your department or organization will more effectively protect your community, citizens and firefighters.

The Narrative

The information you provide in the narrative, including the budget details, is what the Peer Reviewers use to determine if they recommend your project for funding.

Financial Need

This area continues to be the most difficult part of the narrative for applicants to write and where scores are the lowest at the Peer Review Panels. When discussing your financial need, you must paint a picture of your department or organization's budget and expenses. This narrative must explain, in detail, what financial obligations prevent you from moving forward with your project without federal assistance. You must also discuss attempts to fund your project by other means and why you have been unsuccessful. What can you project about the future of your operating budget and possible shortfalls you may experience? What local or state issues effect your financial situation and prevent you from increasing your budget? Details are important.

Cost-Benefit

Offering a realistic and cost-effective solution for the identified problem is necessary to justify your request for funding. Have you chosen the best possible solution for the lowest cost? How will receiving the grant benefit your organization, community or region? What partnerships or collaborative efforts will this project initiate or support? Simply stating your request will benefit your community or organization is not enough. You must give specific details about how an award will help your organization, department or others whom you may have mutual or automatic aid agreements. For example, replacing gear when your department has experienced injuries due to noncompliant gear is good justification for cost-benefit.

Effect on Daily Operations

How will the funds from this grant enhance your ability to perform daily operations, improve firefighter safety, protect life and property and/or reduce civilian casualties? For example, it's unrealistic to commit personnel to life-threatening situations using substandard gear. If funding to achieve 100 percent compliance is your goal, then firefighters will be able to respond to the scene in a safer manner as well as fight the fire more effectively and overall operations are enhanced.

