

CELEBRATE SUCCESS! REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

IT'S TIME TO CELEBRATE YOUR SUCCESSES—AND YOU KNOW THE BEST WAY TO DO IT!

You stayed after school to improve your work and grades in school or to do your homework. Great. You deserve recognition for your effort and achievement. But what should that recognition look like? A pizza party? Bowling? Books? Community event?

Different people have different ideas. Instead of program leaders telling students what the end-of-program event will be, this project is asking what YOU think would be good. What do YOU propose? If you had a budget of a certain amount of money, what would you do with it?

The *Celebrate Success RFP Project* gives you the chance to put out your idea, get the money for it, and do it. It is modeled on the way lots of organizations get money for their projects. Organizations respond to Requests for Proposals, or RFPs. Like them, you will write your proposal and submit it to reviewers who will decide if it's good enough to fund.

WHAT IS AN RFP?

Non-profit organizations such as community groups, youth services, environmental groups, or arts projects need money to do their work. They get it in part from grants from philanthropic organizations. To give grants, the donor or grant-making organization often issues an RFP (Request for Proposals). The RFP document spells out what the organization will give money for, how much they will give, and what needs to be done to apply for it.

Organizations and individuals who need money for their projects look out for RFP notices. They then write proposals and send them in, hoping they'll get the grant. Usually, more people or organizations apply for money than there is money available, so applications are very competitive. Everyone tries to write the best possible proposal so they will get the grant for their project, but many are rejected.

Here are some organizations that offer grants for youth-led projects:

Youth Service America www.ysa.org

www.youthventure.org

www.dosomething.org/grants

Search the web to find other organizations awarding grants to youth-led projects.

Maybe you and your friends will find a project that interests you. If so,...

GO FOR IT!



RFP documents lay out rules for applications. The proposal typically has several parts. All the rules have to be followed and all the parts presented or the application is rejected. Rules address, for example, who can apply, deadlines, and the length of the proposal. Proposals normally include an introduction, an explanation of what you are proposing, why it is important or a good idea, and a budget.

Learning to write proposals in response to an RFP is a skill. People who get good at it can get good jobs raising money for organizations by looking for and responding to RFPs and writing grant applications.

5 STEPS TO RFP SUCCESS

To write a successful RFP (one that is funded) you must be organized. Here are 5 basic steps to help you through the process.

STEP 1	Read and Understand The first step when you get an RFP is READ IT! <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand what it is asking for • Understand the rules • Understand the amount of the award (the amount of money you can apply for) • Start thinking
STEP 2	Think and Decide Brainstorm ideas and possibilities Can you do it? Decide if you can get it done well by the deadline Decide if you are going to do it
STEP 3	Plan the Work Decide who will work on what Divide up the tasks Set timelines
STEP 4	Do the Work Revise and polish your ideas Be sure you can actually do what you propose and do it well Calculate and show the budget Draft the proposal Rewrite and finalize it Get it in on time
STEP 5	Have Fun!! If you're not excited by your idea, no one else will be

