



Quick Start Guide to Writing a Successful Grant Application

BEFORE YOU BEGIN . . .

- Call Cynthia Nieb (303-866-2809), Lyle Miller (303-866-2779) or Erika Warzel (303-866-3493) to discuss your project proposal; for archaeological project proposals, contact Thomas Carr (303-866-3498).
- Review the SHF Grant Program Guidelines
 - Make certain your goals fit those of the State Historical Fund: Historic Preservation
 - Check to see if you are an eligible applicant (a non-profit or public entity). If you are a business or a private individual, locate a non-profit or a public entity to serve as an applicant for your application.
 - Verify the designation of your property (local, Colorado State Register of Historic Properties or National Register of Historic Places)
 - See if your project or property is a good fit with the SHF program.
 - Look at an example of a successful SHF grant.
- Think about whether or not you/your organization will be amenable to having your property protected with a legal property restriction (letter of agreement, covenant or easement).
- Familiarize yourself with The Secretary of the Interior's *Standards and Guidelines for the Treatment of Historic Properties* and the Preservation Briefs and Tech Notes, all available on the National Park Service web-site: <http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/publications.htm>
- Find community members of all ages and backgrounds who are interested in your project. Ask them if they would be willing to write letters of support at a later date. Provide them with written information on your project.
- Think about how the general public will benefit from your project.
- Review the SHF Grant Application Handbook and SHF grant application.
- Think about how your project will impact archaeological resources. If you are breaking ground, chances are you ARE impacting archaeological resources.
- Familiarize yourself with the schedule for the disbursement of funds: usually 40/50/10 percent. Remember that the final 10 percent is a reimbursement after the project has been completed and all invoices submitted.
- Make certain that you are or will be complying with ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act).
- If you don't own the property that will be addressed in the grant application, be sure the owner will allow you to physically work on or access the property and that the owner is willing to sign the application and grant award to comply with any property restriction(s).
- Be certain that you haven't started ANY of the work for which you are seeking SHF funds.
- Think about how you/your organization will respond to having someone from SHF having final say on how the work from your grant award is carried out.

ALMOST READY TO WRITE . . .

- Assess what needs to be done and get an idea of how to pull together a team that will suit your needs
 - Offer preservation professionals an opportunity to submit proposals or seek proposals/cost estimates from them. This can help you define the project and develop an appropriate Scope of Work and aid you in justifying costs shown in the Project Budget.
 - For architectural preservation projects, you might have construction documents drawn up at your own cost to pin down the work that needs to be done and determine the cost, OR
 - You can venture to the library and figure out the cost of your project using handy reference guides such as Ding's Construction Estimating: Professional Reference or Architects or Contractors, Engineers Guide to Construction Costs.
- Start your project out right by working with professionals who are thoroughly familiar with proper preservation practices. Ask them for lists of their previous historic preservation projects. Ask them if they are familiar with The Secretary of the Interior's *Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*. Ask SHF staff for the names of contractors who have previously worked on SHF projects in your area. Selecting qualified professionals can make or break a project's success.
- For architectural preservation projects, choose an appropriate preservation treatment and use correct terminology throughout your application. Know the difference between rehabilitating, preserving, restoring and reconstructing a building.
- Think about how much you will be able to accomplish in a 24-month contract period. Consider:
 - Professional consultants' and contractors' schedules, mobilization, and seasonal constraints at the project location
 - Your experience and ability (your capacity) to manage the project. If you don't have that experience, consider hiring a professional who can keep up with all of the paperwork, meet deadlines, manage the contractors, keep open lines of communication with SHF personnel, and succeed in keeping all of these balls in the air simultaneously.
 - How much money you have or can raise/afford for the required cash match.
 - Whether or not phasing the project into smaller grant phases might best fit your experience, capacity, and pocketbook.
- Don't forget to include contingency in your proposed Budget to cover unexpected conditions.
- Gather materials such as your Employer Identification Number, the legal description of your property (available from county assessors), a copy of your designation (which will have the historical information about the property as well as the period(s) of significance), and your Colorado Legislative Districts (House and Senate) and U.S. Congressional District.
- Have community members and anyone else who might benefit from the project—either directly or indirectly—write letters of support a month before the application is due.

READY TO WRITE . . .

- Look at the Scoring Criteria. Write a rough draft of what you think you need to say. Ask someone who will be critical to read the application and make comments. Revise the application to incorporate suggestions from critical, local reviewers. Your application information will include the following:

- A. A brief history of the property and its relationship to historic preservation. This should include a description of the building/site including its importance in history and the building techniques, materials, and size of the building(s). Note the period(s) of significance. If this is a Survey & Planning or Education project, explain exactly how the project is directly connected to historic preservation. This category tells us why the proposed preservation project is important. (0 to 10 points)
- B. A brief history of the applicant organization including the mission of the organization, a succinct overview of past projects that would indicate potential success with the proposed project, and a concise list of potential lead participants in this project (Grant Recipient Contact, Grant Administrator, Architect/Engineer, Contractors, other funders). This category speaks to grant and project management capacity. (0 to 10 points)
- C. A detailed description of the project/concern that needs to be addressed, the original materials involved, and an in-depth review of the proposed treatment for the project. This category indicates your knowledge of historic preservation approaches and techniques as applied to your resource. If you have a Historic Structure Assessment or Archaeological Assessment that addresses your project, you might want to include brief excerpts of the HSA/AA in this portion of your application. If this is an Education project, describe in detail the intricacies of the project, including what will be achieved, how it will be accomplished, which properties/ideas will be addressed and the potential long-term impact on audiences.(0 to 30 points)
- D. An explanation of why it is urgent to complete the work in your application NOW. You might address the condition of the resource and potential threats, partnerships or project conditions that are in place now but might dissolve in the future, or the natural conclusion of a multi-phased project. (0 to 15 points)
- E. An analysis of how/why the community supports and benefits from this project. Things you might note are:
 - Money raised locally for cash match
 - Planned publicity to raise awareness of historic preservation
 - Past phases of the project that were successful
 - Partnerships developed or encouraged by the project
 - Ways in which the project will educate and inform the public
 - Benefits to minorities or under-represented cultures or communities
 - Positive effects on the local economy, tourism or revitalization efforts
 - Public awareness of the project
 - Letters of support attached to this application
 - Past and future investments in the project
 - Preservation work or activities that would not otherwise be accomplished without the grant award

This category shows the overall benefit of the project to the community. (0 to 10 points)
- F. Explain how this project uses historic preservation treatments that contribute to a more sustainable future for our environment. This category indicates the importance of historic preservation treatments and sustainability to the project. (0 to 5 points)
- G. Write a detailed, outline of the work you propose to accomplish in this grant. This is called a SCOPE OF WORK*. See the example attached. This category indicates your knowledge of the work that needs to be done. It should reflect the information you provided in C. (0 to 10 points)

- H. Write a BUDGET* that correlates to the general categories in the SCOPE OF WORK. Attach bids/estimates or an explanation of how you determined your costs to the BUDGET. See the example attached. (0 to 10 points)
- I. Write a TIMELINE* that includes time for contract negotiation, SHF staff review of deliverables, and takes weather conditions into consideration. See the example attached. This category shows that you have fully considered how to adequately plan your project for completion within the 24-month completion deadline and that you are including SHF staff when planning your project. (0 to 10 points)
- Application Checklist
 - Original, completed application with seven (7) copies
 - No cover letter attached
 - 12 point Times New Roman used for all answers
 - All instructions except those in bold deleted
- Attachments
 - W-9 for grant applicant; blank form available at <http://www.colorado.gov/dpa/dfp/sco/forms/substitute%20form%20w-9.pdf>
 - Proof of local designation, if applicable. If you are requesting any physical work around the foundation or on the site, please be certain the designation extends to that area
 - Floor plans or other architectural drawings, if applicable
 - Applicable excerpts from Historic Structure or Archaeological Assessments
 - Clear, readable copies of photographs with informative captions showing what the property looked like historically, currently, and what work needs to be done now, if applicable. A photo that shows the entire project site is helpful. No matter what the project, photographs aid the reviewer in understanding the resources under consideration.
 - Current (no more than two months old) letters of support. Thoughtful letters—two or three- that reflect an awareness of the project’s impact are more persuasive than numerous general letters.
 - If this is a large-scale archaeological investigation, attach a research design. If you require more information, call Tom Carr at (303) 866-3498.

* If your proposal is awarded, you may be asked for additional information on your Scope of Work, Budget, and Timeline.

Please note that SHF staff is available to assist you in developing a successful project. If you need guidance in writing a competitive application, please call Cynthia Nieb (303-866-2809), Lyle Miller (303-866-2779) or Erika Warzel (303-866-3493)