Tips For Writing a Competitive and Effective FRWRM Grant Application

Purpose

This document is a resource to help FRWRM applicants develop competitive and effective application narratives. It is not a comprehensive guide to all required elements or evaluation criteria used in funding decisions. Applicants should refer to the FRWRM Request for Applications (RFA) and grant application for complete instructions and criteria.

The Basics:

1. **Read the RFA and entire application** before you begin writing.
2. Be sure to **understand eligibility criteria** and documentation requirements. Ask for clarification if needed.
3. Confirm that this is the right grant for your project:
   a. Do your project goals align with FRWRM's goals & priorities?
   b. Do you meet **all** the eligibility criteria?
   c. Is your project fully developed and ready for execution?
4. Project readiness considerations:
   a. Have specific project sites, landowners, partners, etc., been identified and confirmed?
   b. If not, don't apply yet. Focus on additional development, community outreach, and planning so your project is ready for future funding cycles.

   Note: Some early-stage fuels & forest health projects may be eligible for funding under a capacity building project type to finish necessary planning & development.
5. **Start preparing early!** Local CSFS staff *may* be available to assist if you contact them in advance with questions.
6. Consult local experts and utilize tools and resources provided on the FRWRM webpage and in the RFA.
7. **Don't wait until the last minute** to submit your application!
   a. A technical issue can occur, and late submissions will not be accepted.
8. **Follow all instructions** in the application and RFA carefully and completely.

Writing Tips

Strong writing builds trust in your proposal. Poor grammar, inconsistent flow, or vague language can make it difficult for reviewers to follow your project and assess its potential for success.

1. Be **clear and concise**. Focus on the essential information reviewers need to understand your project.
2. **Avoid filler words and unnecessary details**. Don't waste characters on background information that doesn't support the main point.
   ❖ Character limits encourage clarity and make it easier for reviewers to evaluate applications in a standardized way.
3. Avoid excessive jargon and highly technical terms. **Write for a general audience**.
4. **Spell out acronyms** the first time they are used.
5. **Answer the full question.** Your narrative should directly address each part of the prompt.
6. Utilize tools and resources that are available (i.e., Grammarly).
   ❖ Use caution if using AI tools to ensure accuracy
7. Always proofread carefully and have someone else review your application before submitting.

Application Narratives

When writing your narratives, think about telling a compelling story. Why is your project the best investment? How does it align with FRWRM goals and priorities? What makes it strategic, impactful, and grounded in strong partnerships? How will it succeed, and what will its lasting impact be? Tell a story that helps reviewers see both the immediate benefits and long-term outcomes of your work.