

Innovative Approaches to Funding  
Tips from Mid-America Trails and Greenways Conference  
September, 2003

Speaker: Daron Jordan, Grant writer, City of Madisonville, KY

- 1) Spend the first 20-30 minutes writing, getting main ideas down on paper – Not answering the questions per se but “writing from the inside out”.
- 2) Find the easiest part to write first.
- 3) Read what you’ve written backwards to catch spelling errors – starting with the last sentence and work to the top.
- 4) Pantry Test – everybody that reads what you’ve written will understand it.
- 5) Use a 12 point font or larger – NOT LESS. Use a wide font like Arial or Times New Roman – not a narrow font
- 6) Use charts where possible – you need text and charts for the learning patterns of different types of grants application reviewers. It also breaks up the monotony encountered after reading dozens of applications.
- 7) Need bold headers that follow the headers in the grant application so reviewer can go to that section automatically without having to search for it.
- 8) Look for funding in these locations:
  - Internet
  - List serves
  - PBS – look at the credits at the end of the program – “funding provided by . . .”
  - Newspapers & magazines
  - Publications – “funding provided by . . .”
  - Community Ties – look at who’s being funded by whom
- 9) Develop boilerplate language – a template that can be plugged in to most applications to save time
- 10) Always think of what you need and tailor your grant language to that
- 11) Include mention of your volunteers and what tasks they are willing to do (type, plant trees, etc.)
- 12) Packaging – 24 lb. Paper instead of 18-20 lb. Weight, even on the copies  
A brightness of “92” stands out as extra white.

13) Good to have a photo on the cover – kids are good for trail grants

14) Put extra documentation in an appendix.

15) Everything should be made as simple as possible to review but not simpler.