FREE LETTER PACK

Funder Email Templates for Grant Seekers (Free PDF)

Six short fill-in email structures for writing to funders, each with a subject line, what to include and what to leave out, plus rules for respectful contact.

Angel Reyes, DrPH(c), MPH, MCHES, PMP, PMI-ACP | grantwritingconsultant.com | Updated November 18, 2026

This pack gives you six short email structures for writing to a funder, from a first introduction to a reply after a decline. Each has a subject line to fill in, what to include and what to leave out. Funders differ on whether and how they want to be contacted, so the funder's stated contact preferences and instructions come first.

Rules for every email

- [ ] Check the funder's website and guidelines for how they want to be contacted. If they say no contact, do not write
- [ ] Use the contact route the funder names, such as a general inbox or an inquiry form
- [ ] Keep it brief: one screen, one purpose, one clear question or request
- [ ] Do not ask a question the guidelines already answer
- [ ] Be accurate. Do not overstate results or imply a relationship that does not exist
- [ ] Never pressure. Do not ask for a decision, a meeting or a reply by a date of your choosing
- [ ] One follow-up after a reasonable wait is enough. Silence is an answer
- [ ] Keep a record of what you sent and what you heard back

Funder contact record

Funder:

Contact name and role:

What the funder says about contact (copied from their site or guidelines):

Preferred contact route:

1. Introduction

Use only when the funder says it accepts contact before an application. If it asks for a letter of inquiry or a form, send that.

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Subject line:

Include	Leave out
Who you are and what your organization does, in one sentence	Your full history and mission statement
The funder priority your work matches, in their words	A request for money or a meeting
One fact that shows the work is real and current	Attachments they did not ask for
One question, or an offer to send more if useful	Praise for the funder or urgency

Who we are, in one sentence:

The funder priority we match:

Our one question or offer:

2. Question before applying

Use when the guidelines leave a real question open, such as eligibility or fit, and the funder accepts questions.

Subject line:

Include	Leave out
The program and deadline you are asking about	Background the question does not need
What you have already read	Several unrelated questions
One specific question that can be answered briefly	A request to review your draft, unless offered
Thanks for their time	Anything that asks for an advantage

What we have read:

Our question:

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3. Thank-you after a meeting or call

Send within a day or two.

Subject line:

Include	Leave out
Thanks, with the date of the conversation	A new pitch
One or two points you took from it, in your own words	A long recap of everything said
Anything you promised to send, attached or with a date	Assumptions about a decision
The next step, only if one was agreed	A request they did not invite

Points we took from the conversation:

What we promised and when it will arrive:

4. Thank-you after an award

Send promptly, in addition to any formal acceptance the funder requires.

Subject line:

Include	Leave out
Thanks, naming the grant and what it will make possible	A request for more funding
What happens first and when	Promises beyond the proposal
Who their contact is on your side	Publicity plans the agreement has not cleared
Confirmation that you have seen the reporting dates	Generic wording used for every funder

What the grant makes possible:

What happens first:

Our contact person for this grant:

5. Mid-grant update

An informal update between required reports. It does not replace a report, and changes that need approval go through the process in your agreement.

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Subject line:

Include	Leave out
One or two results so far, with numbers	Results you cannot support with records
One thing that did not go to plan and what you did	Problems presented as a surprise request
A short story or quote, shared with consent	Details that identify people without consent
What comes next, and an invitation to visit if suitable	A renewal request, unless the funder has invited one

Results so far:

What did not go to plan and our response:

What comes next:

6. After a decline

Short and courteous. Ask for feedback only where the funder offers it.

Subject line:

Include	Leave out
Thanks for considering the application	Disagreement with the decision
A request for feedback, if the funder offers it	A request to reconsider
Interest in future rounds, if you mean it	Disappointment or pressure

Whether this funder offers feedback, and how:

Our message in two or three sentences:

Example: question before applying

This example is fictional. The organizations do not exist.

Subject: Question on eligibility for the Example Community Foundation youth grants, spring round

Dear Program Officer,

I am the program director at the Example Riverside Literacy Project, which runs after-school reading clubs for children aged 6 to 10. We have read the spring guidelines and the questions and answers on your site.

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One point is unclear to us. The guidelines say applicants must serve young people in the county. Our clubs meet in the county, but about a quarter of the children live just over the county line. Would that affect our eligibility?

Thank you for your time. We are glad to send more detail if that would help.

Program Director, Example Riverside Literacy Project

> **Want help with this?** The Complete Grant Architect is a free 16-week grant writing course, and you can hire a grant writer for your next proposal. Both are at subthesis.com.

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