



What should be included in a Letter of Inquiry (LOI)?

A well-written letter of inquiry can be crucial to securing funding for your project. Many foundations now prefer that funding requests be submitted first in letter format instead of a full proposal. Others are using preliminary letters of inquiry to determine if they have an interest in a project before accepting a full proposal.

An effective letter of inquiry is often more difficult to write than a full proposal. The letter of inquiry should be brief—no more than three pages—and must be a succinct but thorough presentation of the need or problem you have identified, the proposed solution, and your organization's qualifications for implementing that solution.

Like a grant proposal, the letter of inquiry should include the following sections:

The introduction serves as the executive summary for the letter of inquiry and includes the name of your organization, the amount needed or requested, and a description of the project. The qualifications of project staff, a brief description of evaluative methodology, and a timetable are also included here.

The organization description should be concise and focus on the ability of your organization to meet the stated need. Provide a very brief history and description of your current programs while demonstrating a direct connection between what is currently being done and what you wish to accomplish with the requested funding. You will flesh this section out in greater detail if you are invited to submit a full proposal.

The statement of need must convince the reader that there is an important need that can be met by your project. The statement of need includes: a description of the target population and geographical area, appropriate statistical data in abbreviated form, and several concrete examples.

The methodology should be appropriate to your statement of need and present a clear, logical, and achievable solution to the stated need. Describe the project briefly, including major activities, names and titles of key project staff, and your desired objectives. As with the organization description, this will be presented in far greater detail in a full proposal.

Other funding sources being approached for support of this project should be listed in a brief sentence or paragraph.

The final summary restates the intent of the project, affirms your readiness to answer further questions, and thanks the potential funder for its consideration. Note: Attachments should be included only at the direction of the potential funder and should be specific to its application guidelines.

Source: Grant Space <http://grantspace.org/tools/knowledge-base/Funding-Research/proposal-writing/letters-of-inquiry>