

Making Your Case: Best Practices in TWC Workforce Development Grant Applications



Meet Your Presenters: Commission Initiatives and Special Projects (CISP)

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 - Areas of Expertise: Veterans Programs, Youth Programs, Program Evaluation



What does CISP Do?

Program Development

- Request for Applications (RFAs)
- Application Development (Competitive and Non-Competitive)
- Interagency Agreement Design
- Program Evaluation

Program Areas

- Youth
- Foster Youth
- Veterans
- Adult Education and Literacy
- Apprenticeship
- Internships
- Other



TWC Program Initiation: Where do Program Ideas Come From?



Mandatory/Legislatively Determined Programs

- Programs required by state or federal legislation that must be implemented through competitive procurement processes.



Commission Programs

- Strategic initiatives approved by the Texas Workforce Commission to address identified workforce development needs.



Staff Programs

- Operational programs developed by program staff to support ongoing workforce development activities.



Partnerships and External Programs

- Collaborative initiatives with external stakeholders, including other state agencies and community organizations.



Federally Granted Programs

- Programs funded through federal grants that require competitive sub-award processes to local entities.

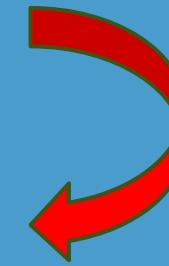


How TWC Builds Programs: Basic Steps

1. Program Approval



2. Program Concept Design



3. Public Posting and Application



4. Evaluation and Selection



Final stage.....





**Award
Formation!!!!**

Where do I find funding opportunities?

Public Posting Websites- “Let’s get this bread!”

1. TWC’s Grant Opportunities Page
 - <https://www.twc.texas.gov/agency/funding-opportunities/grant-opportunities>
2. TWC’s Euna Procurement Portal
 - <https://twc-texas-gov.bonfirehub.com/portal/?tab=openOpportunities>



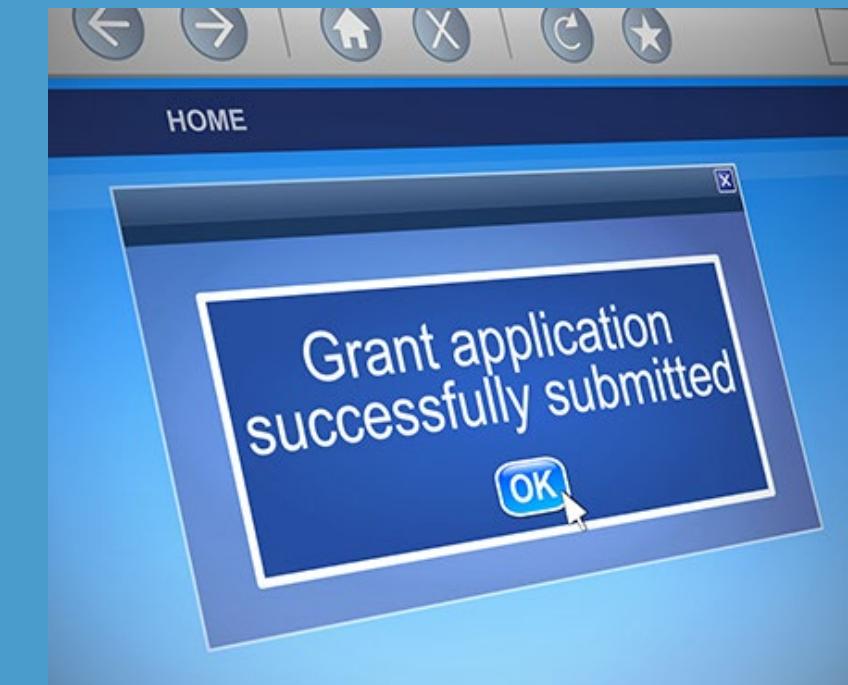
Public Posting- “I found the bread, but how do I secure the bag?” Questions to ask when researching applications.

1. First and most importantly, Read Everything!
2. Determine if you are eligible
 - a. Can my organization apply for this program?
 - b. Is the maximum amount allotted enough for what we need?
 - c. Is there a full understanding of what allowable and unallowable costs are?
 - d. Do I have a budget plan already established, and is my math correct?
 - e. *Can my organization execute the program in its entirety as designed from start to finish?*



Application Completion and Submission – “Asking for the Bag”

1. Make sure your signature is valid on the final submission;
2. Again, Read Everything!“;
3. Complete all required sections;
4. Enter all required data;
5. Check your grammer' and spellttings (grammar and spelling!);
6. Do not answer a question by repeating the question in the answer (happens more often than you think!); and,
7. Fully read and understand the submission instructions.



Application Completion and Submission – “Asking for the Bag” Cont’d

Application quality matters!

- Answer the questions in the format the application is in (you do not want your evaluator hunting or trying to decipher your response!).
- “Proof is in the pudding,” the greater the detail in your responses, the higher the score you should receive.



Application Completion and Submission – “Asking for the Bag” Cont’d

Budget Workbook Submissions

- DO NOT ALTER THE EXCEL FORMULAS! This will be an immediate disqualification of your application.
- Budget item name and justification are key, remember to more detail you have in your justification, the higher the score.
- Break down every line item, do not bundle! requests together.



Post Submission Questions & Answers – Ask Why, Or What, Or How, and most importantly When!

1. One more time (with feeling....) **READ EVERYTHING!**

Most questions will be covered in the solicitation.

2. There will be a fixed Q & A window on competitive applications (RFA) so take advantage!
3. There will be a rolling Q and A for non-competitive applications, so utilize the portal. Questions submitted by email will be requested to be submitted through the portal.



TWC Application Evaluation – The Waiting is the Hardest Part

How TWC Evaluation Works

1. Minimum Qualifications Screening
 - a. Clear signatures;
 - b. No document manipulation; and,
 - c. Submit on time, and with documents in correct format

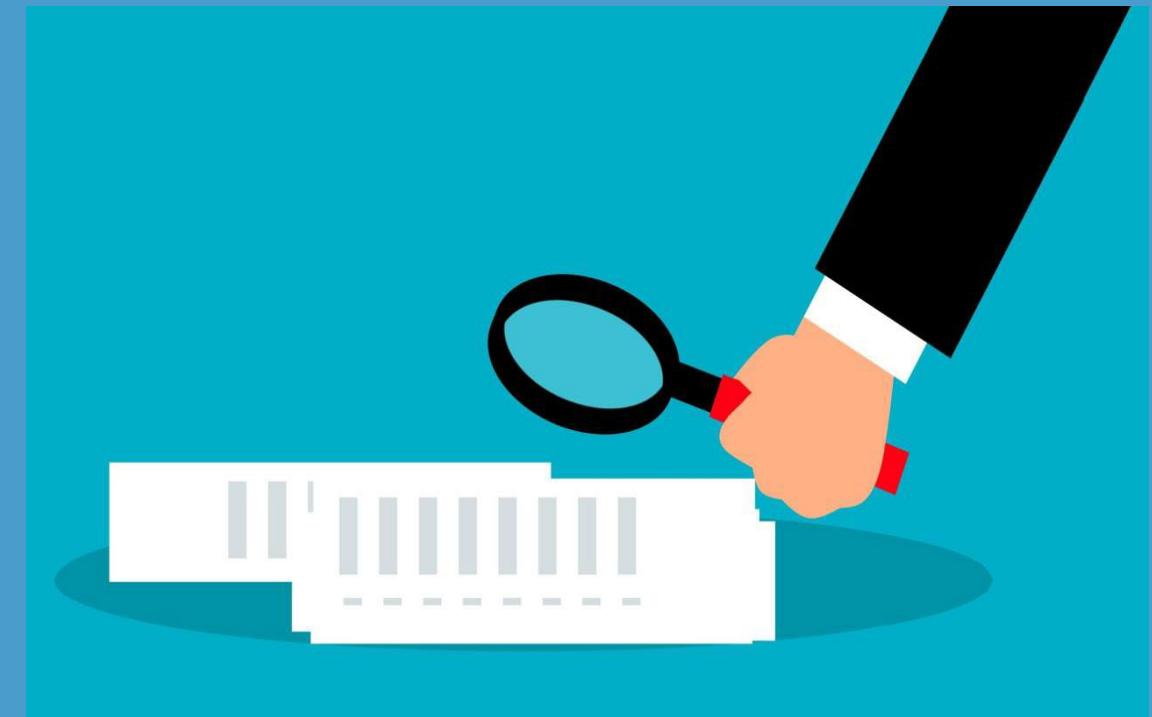


TWC Application Evaluation – The Waiting is the Hardest Part – Cont'd

2. Competitive Application Reviews

- a. Fixed window for evaluations; and,
- b. ***Remember, not all applications will be awarded*.**

Awards depend on funding amount, number of applicants received, and the quality of the submission.



TWC Application Evaluation – The Waiting is the Hardest Part – Cont'd

3. Non-Competitive Application Reviews

a. There is not a fixed time frame for evaluations. Since the applications are submitted on a rolling basis, the evaluation process will begin when it is received.

b. Awards will be given based on quality of application, and will only end when funding has depleted, or grant opportunity is closed by TWC.



TWC Evaluation – Judgement Day

What do evaluators look for?

1. Comprehensive Program Requirement breakdown (Remember: “Proof is in the pudding!”);
2. Complete all tables (deliverables, timelines, etc.);
3. Clean, clear writing (evaluators should be able to following along with your responses easily!);
4. **Follow the work plan!!!**; and,
5. Budget Accuracy – calculations are correct, and there is detailed justifications for all line items.



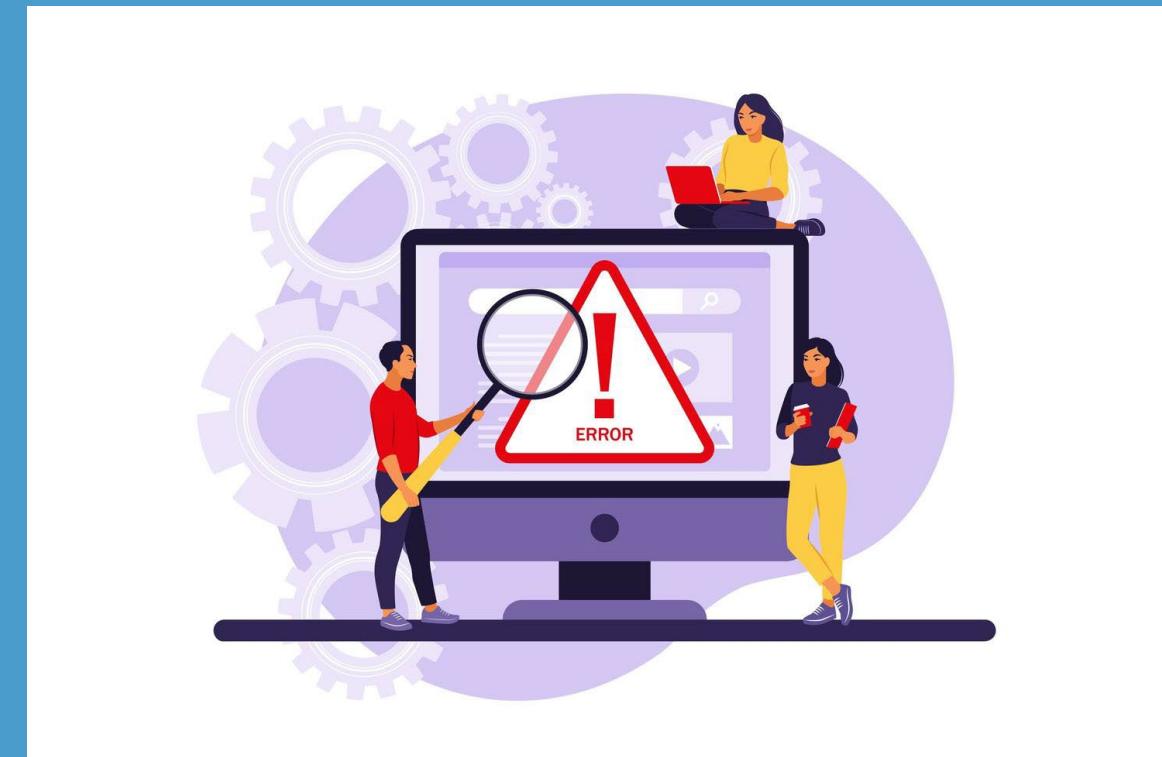
Common Application Errors

1. Application is not signed;
2. Missing sections;
3. Partial responses;
4. Lack of clarity (These are common in initiatives that require partnerships);
5. Requesting unallowable costs (*Read the solicitation and budget instructions which list all allowable and unallowable costs and ASK QUESTIONS during the Q and A period!*);
6. Lack of detail (All together now..... “The proof is in the pudding!”);



Common Application Errors - Cont'd

7. Answer repetition (applicants will sometimes provide a response that is repeating the questions or will repeat the same information in many different portions of their responses); and,
8. ***Explain the how!*** (Applicants will sometimes neglect to provide the overall picture that will show the evaluator that they are able to start AND finish the grant).



Audience Q and A

What else would you like to know?

