Grant Writing DO's and DON'Ts

Disclaimer: Following these do's and don'ts does not guarantee that your grant application will be approved, as funding decisions are ultimately at the discretion of the grantor.

DO's
1. **Research Thoroughly**
   o Understand the funder's mission, values, and priorities.
   o Read all guidelines, eligibility requirements, and deadlines carefully.
2. **Align Objectives**
   o Ensure your project aligns with the grantor's goals.
   o Tailor your application to highlight shared priorities.
3. **Be Clear and Specific**
   o Clearly articulate the problem your project addresses.
   o Include measurable goals, outcomes, and a realistic timeline.
4. **Follow Instructions**
   o Format your application as required (e.g., word count, attachments).
   o Submit all required documentation on time.
5. **Demonstrate Impact**
   o Use data and testimonials to show potential impact.
   o Explain how you'll measure success.
6. **Budget Responsibly**
   o Provide a detailed and realistic budget breakdown.
   o Justify each expense with a brief explanation.
7. **Proofread**
   o Review for typos, errors, and clarity.
   o Have a colleague review your application before submission.
8. **Communicate Professionally**
   o Follow up politely if needed.
   o Send a thank-you note or email after receiving the grant (or even if declined).
9. **Track and Report**
   o Keep track of grant requirements and deadlines for reports.
   o Share progress and results transparently with the funder.

DON'Ts
1. **Submit Without Understanding the Grant**
   o Avoid applying to grants you don't fully understand.
   o Never assume your project will "fit" without tailoring it.
2. **Use Jargon**
   o Skip overly technical or vague language.
   o Be accessible to all reviewers, even those without technical expertise.

3. **Overpromise**
   - o Don't inflate your goals or capabilities.
   - o Avoid unrealistic timelines or budgets.
4. **Ignore Guidelines**
   - o Don't miss required components (e.g., signatures, letters of support).
   - o Avoid adding unnecessary attachments or exceeding word limits.
5. **Be Vague**
   - o Don't leave out specifics like measurable goals or success metrics.
   - o Avoid general statements like "This will help the community."
6. **Forget Sustainability**
   - o Don't ignore how the project will continue after the grant ends.
   - o Avoid appearing overly dependent on one funder.
7. **Miss Deadlines**
   - o Never submit late or incomplete applications.
   - o Don't rush the process and risk errors.
8. **Exclude Collaboration**
   - o Don't forget to highlight partnerships or community involvement.
   - o Avoid presenting the project as a solo effort when collaboration is possible.
9. **Neglect Follow-Up**
   - o Don't ghost the funder after receiving a grant.
   - o Avoid skipping required progress or final reports.