

Introduction to Writing Funding Applications Quick Hints and Tips!

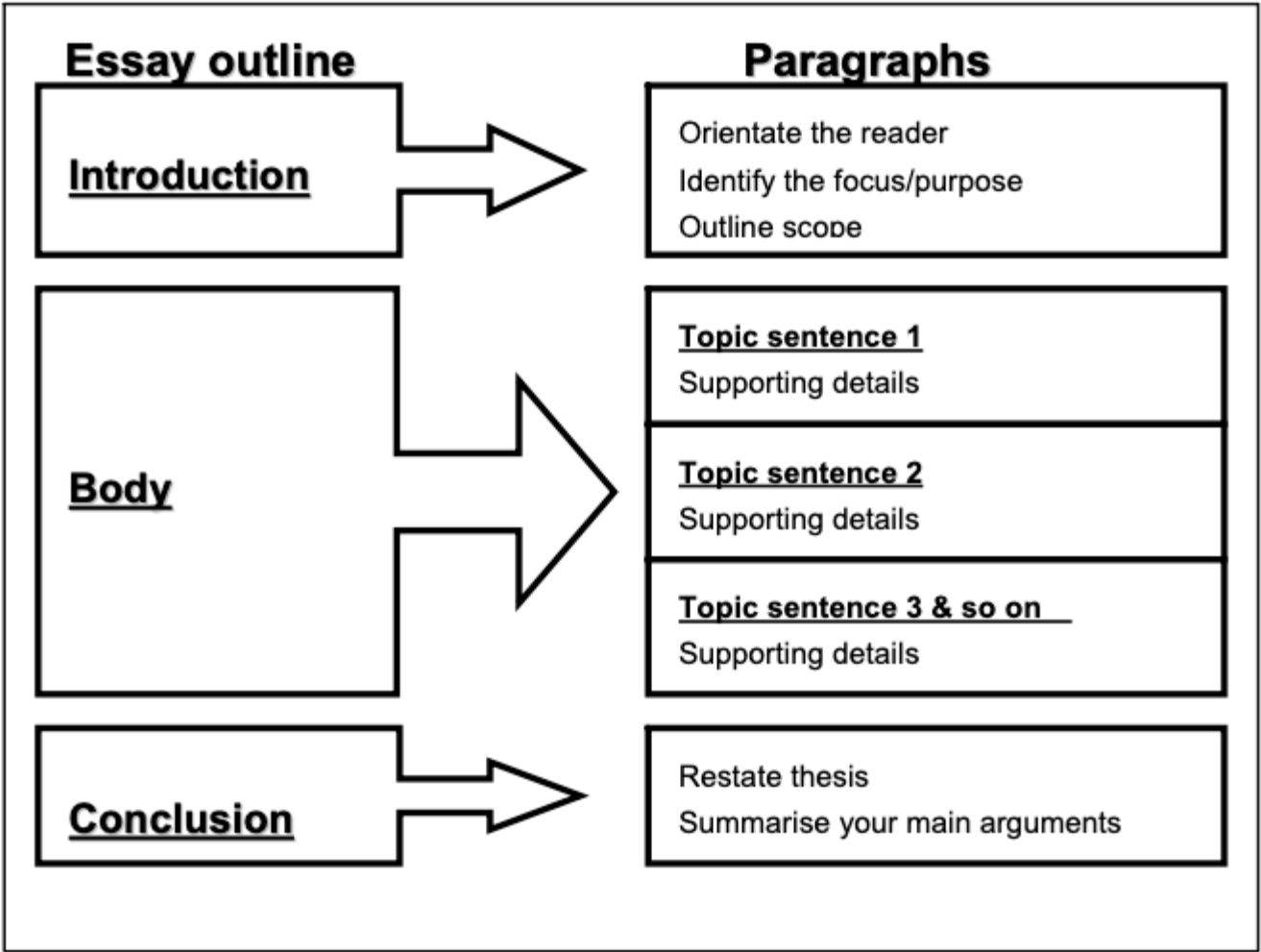
Writing Funding Applications – Quick Hints and Tips!

Planning – Typical Questions

- What is your project or services?
- Who is your target user? Who are your beneficiaries?
- Why is your project/services needed?
- What will your outcomes be?
- How will you measure the success of your project?
- Where will the project/services take place?
- ***Use these questions to help create some case studies for your organisation – Sector Support have a useful project template you can use**

Structuring Your Responses

- Take the time to read the questions (multiple times)
 - Produce a brief bullet point 'Answer Plan' which captures the main content and structure of the finished response
 - Ask a colleague to peer review this and feedback on the structure and content
 - The more complex or multi-faceted the question, the more important this process is
 - * this can be as simple as half an A4 to plan
- Optional – Consider using a basic essay structure – (see example):
 - Chunking your response into sections
 - Front load key content
 - Be concise
 - Back up your proposals with evidence – quotes/data/images



Structuring Your Responses

When drafting your response, consider:

- First person, active voice
- Positive affirmative language
- Be specific about your project
- Adopt the client language
- Speak in 'plain' English

Overcoming Writer's block

- Very common experience – especially when looking at a blank page. It's important not to stress – remember:
- Follow the Answer Plan
- Work on one section at a time
- Use 'just write' technique – Once on the go – let it flow!

Reviewing & Finalising

- Peer reviews on drafted content part way through the writing process is hugely beneficial. It can be hard to check your own homework and identify opportunities for improvement.
- Proof-reading – at final stage – ideally done by someone else to spot minor errors (spelling, grammar, formatting)
- Remember SSNEL offer a FREE ‘review and check’ service!
- Submission – check the content and format of your submission against your ‘submission checklist’
- * **Don’t hit send at the last possible opportunity**

Following up on your submissions

- Understand award timescales – so you can prepare for any follow-up questions
 - Save your submission – create a folder (see SSNEL's example!) include historical submissions & resources, case studies, objectives, budgets etc) to make subsequent bids quicker and easier
 - Seek meaningful feedback
- *Implement a tracker for all live funding opportunities that might be of interest to your organisation and review it regularly
- *If possible have a co-ordinator who monitors all available funding opportunities in the pipeline
- *Drafting and then re-wording content isn't just useful for maintaining progress. It allows you to come back to your writing with 'fresh eyes' allowing you to spot opportunities for improvement

Quick Hints and Tips

Do's

- Research the funders/attend webinars/book 1:1s when available....who do they fund, what themes and causes are important to them?
- Ensure your project fits the opportunity
- Use positive language and showcase your story
- Define what your outcomes will be – how do you measure success? Have methods in mind for evaluating these outcomes
- Have case studies, testimonials and evidence
- Write clearly and keep it simple – be mindful of word count limits

Quick Hints and Tips!

Do Not's

- Assume that the funder knows you already
- Undersell yourself
- Copy and Paste content
- Answer the question you wish you'd been asked
- Call funder by the wrong name
- Forget to proof-read
- Forget your supporting documents

Any Questions?



What can Sector Support NEL help with?

- ★ Capacity Building - Supporting community groups to grow and develop
- ★ Supporting charities and social enterprises to thrive and succeed
- ★ Funding searches, support with application content and 'review and check' service
- ★ Facilitation of partnerships, introductions and networking opportunities
- ★ Funder 1:1's (National Lottery, Clothworkers, Grantscape) Annual Funding Fair
- ★ Governance reviews/organisational health checks
- ★ Training and workshops