Reports for Madison Trust are due in mid-June, mid-October, and mid-February following the funding event. Your report is a formal way to update your funders on what you've accomplished with their grant money.

A HEARTFELT "THANK YOU"

Make your funder feel appreciated by expressing your gratitude at the beginning of your grant report. A common way of doing this is by adding a cover letter just like you would do with a grant proposal.

If you're designing your grant report to include photos, you can include a thank you page at the beginning. Add in some photos on this page, and your funder will be able to immediately see the difference their support has made.

GRANT ACTIVITIES

The grant activities section is the heart of your grant report. In this section, you'll highlight what you originally proposed to do with the grant money and the activities you've completed so far.

For example, let's say you're writing a six-month report for a grant in which you proposed to develop a youth mentorship program. In this proposed program, you said you would recruit and train 10 mentors within the first six months. In the grant activities section of your report, you'll share the process you went through to accomplish each of these major milestones. You'll also highlight areas in which you exceeded your expectations, as well as areas in which your organization has not been successful.

You'll also want to include details on any volunteers or partner organizations that have supported your grant activities so far. For volunteers, provide the number of people who supported the grant activities, their total hours, and what they contributed to the project. For partner organizations, state the names of the organizations and how they supported the project.

OUTCOMES & IMPACT

After you've outlined your grant activities, share data that show the difference this project has made in your community. This section will vary greatly, depending on how far along you are in the grant period, as well as the type of project you're implementing. The easiest way to get started with this section is to revisit the goals and objectives you included in your initial grant proposal.

Going back to our youth mentorship example, in the six-month report, you might share the number of mentor recruitment events you held, the number of potential mentors you interviewed, and any changes in mentor knowledge and skills following the training. By the time you submit your end-of-year grant report, you'll likely share data on the number and demographics of youth who participated in your program, the percentage of youth who completed your program (if time-limited), and any changes the youth experienced after participating.

Keep in mind that your data don't have to be all numbers! The outcomes and impact section is a great place to share participant quotes, testimonials, or stories of transformation that are a direct result of your project.

CHANGES TO THE INITIAL GRANT PROPOSAL

It's rare that project implementation goes exactly as planned, especially if it's a new project. If you've changed your project plan since the initial grant proposal, use this section to discuss changes, why they were made, and how the changes have improved your project.

An important note: If you need to make major changes to a project plan or budget, it's best to discuss those changes with your funder before you make them. Also, if you're way behind schedule, speak with your funder directly to let them know.

CHALLENGES & LESSONS LEARNED

There will always be unexpected factors that affect your ability to meet proposed goals and objectives. Use this section to share:

- Details on the factors that presented a challenge
- How these factors affected your project plans
- The lessons you learned from these experiences
- How you will (or did) incorporate these lessons to improve current and future efforts

This can be one of the hardest sections of a grant report to write. Many organizations worry they'll ruin their chances of continued or future funding if they admit to challenges, or even failure. This fear is understandable. But keep in mind that none of your funders expect your projects to run smoothly all the time. Plus, sharing your challenges and responses to those challenges can highlight your organization's resilience and creativity. This insight can also help your funder advise other organizations who are implementing similar projects.

FUTURE PLANS & SUSTAINABILITY

Funders like to know the successful projects they've supported will be around for a while. If you're writing an end-of-year grant report, use this section to share information on your plans for future iterations of the project and how you will sustain it (e.g., other grants, earned income, fundraising).