

Budget Planning

The budget included in a private grant proposal is typically a projection of your estimated costs, and not necessarily a fiscally binding document. Be as specific as possible with your budget figures; budget numbers that are obviously rounded do not demonstrate accurate planning. It is common for subtle changes to occur with your actual expenditures during program implementation. Most grantmakers welcome open communication when budget or other program adjustments occur throughout the grant period.

Work closely with your unit's business office; they will support your planning, particularly if done in advance, and ensure that your budget follows UA fiscal policies.

Remember that typically, unless the funder specifies otherwise, the program budget is an annual picture of the entire program, and not just for the requested funds. Grantmakers expect and appreciate a comprehensive overview of your work, particularly dollars that demonstrate committed resources and funding from other sources. Demonstrating a diverse range of resources committed to your program will greatly strengthen your proposal. Other funding sources can include UA resources, foundations, individual donors, and governmental resources.

Again, you should rely on the expertise and financial policies of your business office to be sure the sources of funding are clearly defined.

This demonstration of diverse support can sometimes be confused with UA cost sharing. The distinction is that most often charitable grant budgets illustrate program stability by merely showing all resources committed to the proposed program, and it is not considered a binding document that requires future reporting involving University and financial management systems. However, do use caution when you include other funding sources in your charitable grants budgets, and do rely on the expertise and financial policies of your business office.

Within the budget and in your narrative, make sure to clarify which portion of the expenses you are requesting in your proposal. For example, your proposal might request funds for the printing and publications portion of a public awareness campaign, but also shows that the University or an existing funding source has committed associated staff time. Clearly define what expenses you are requesting funding for and which expenses already have committed funding from another source. A helpful tool is the three-column budget, which demonstrates your expenses and the income sources that will fund those expenses.