

7 Things You Must Include in a Letter of Inquiry (LOI)

Writing a well-written letter of inquiry can be crucial to getting a grant and securing funding. Learn about the 7 things you should include in your letter of inquiry!

Introduction

Rob: We're going to try and create a discreet strategy for everything that's in your budget of how do you get money for that particular strategy.

Every strategy is going to have a fundraising budget of some sort.

So one of your strategies to accomplish your work is let's say to have an office, particularly the big ones like EFI and Sri Lanka where they've got hundreds of employees.

Yeah, you're gonna have to have an office. Well, that office is a strategy and you're gonna have to fundraise for that office.

You got to pay the rent, right? You've gotta pay the upkeep. You gotta buy it, if you have to buy it.

Some countries the only way you can have an office is if you buy them, either the landlords won't rent to you because you're Christians, that kind of thing.

Everything even the most minute details of your strategies are going to have a specific [letter of inquiry](#) that you can create.

I used to teach it that it would be in a book now it'll be in a website, but I also like physical book but that's cause of my age. I like to still read and hold something when I'm reading it. I'm one of those, I'm sure when I pass from this scene, reading will be done with in some way or another.

But in any case, so every one of your strategies should have a one page paper.

And these are the seven things that I believe should be on that page.



1. Project (How it Fits in Your Seven Outcomes)

It will be a project. How does this project figure into your seven outcomes?

And the seven outcomes that I'm referring to here are what is referred to as the National Alliance Health Indicators (unity, voice, service, vision, leadership, sustainable, and partnership).

Those are your seven outcomes. And so we're gonna be working from those all the way through.

So back to the letters of inquiry page.

So every one of the projects will have a paragraph that explains it, and that also shows which of the seven categories or which multiples of the seven categories that strategy supports, because will really be important.



2. Reason (Why Anyone Should Read This)

The next paragraph and these are all short, tightly written paragraphs is the reason why are we doing it?

Essentially why should anybody read this LOI?



3. Budget (Summary, Including Income to Date)

The third is budget.

To a grant maker and a giver that has any experience in a granting particularly those that make larger grants and are more, you know not a typical monthly supporter that gives you \$5 or \$10 a month.

But they're gonna wanna, budgets tell me stories.

And what's the first story that a budget tells me? It tells me what you find important, because it's where you're putting your money.

So I look at how you allocate funds and that always tells me what you're gonna do when the chips are down.

What do you do when there's no money? What do you do when you're under hard times? What are the core essentials of your work?

That's gonna show up in your priorities and in your budgets what I call groceries, and quite often, ministries and I can name a very prominent one right now that is chasing dollars from a major foundation here in the United States for a program.

And they're being driven by the donor, and the donors requirements for the program rather than what are the best requirements for the program. I'm intimately familiar with this one, and it's concurrent right now.

And the budget tells me that, but it's a summary budget it's not a detailed budget and it includes income to date.

So let's say it's a budget to put on a training seminar, and that training seminar is gonna cost you \$10,000.

And that's gonna be one of your strategies either training seminar is to teach fundraising to a cohort of NGOs in your country let's say.

So that's the project and why is it important? They need to do local funding. So that's your second paragraph.

The budgets gonna show how you're spending the 10,000 on hospitality, travel, renting a hall, developing curriculum materials, whatever is in there that you're gonna have there personnel, but it's also gonna show how much money have you raised towards that.

So let's say you already have \$3,000, so then the remaining budget is \$7,000 and I'll explain why that's important to know.



5. Time Frame

And then the timeframe.

How long is this project going? When will the project start? Something like that.



6. Who's Responsible

And then a key contact, who's managing the project?

Every project you have, every one of these pages needs somebody that's responsible for the page, and keeps it updated, and is the contact person for whatever that LOI is.

It could be one person manages every one of the LOI is in your office and their name is on here, or it could be different people and we'll get to that when we get the feedback loops.

Which is as you see the feedback loop is a plan, do, measure, change in an oval.

So you start with plan, you do some work that's the second step.

Third step you stop you evaluate how you've done. You change what you need to change because your evaluation shows you you're missed it in some

way or another, or you're really strong in this area and you get into pursue stronger there.

And then you start the whole process over again.

The key to feedback loop is having somebody responsible, they're useless as a piece of paperwork.

They only become useful when someone is responsible for making sure that the plan, do, measure, change process is scheduled and worked on.

In fact, I think you should have staff meetings with your feedback loops, it's the perfect way to do staff meetings in my way.



7. Art (Evocative Photo)

And then a piece of evocative art. This is just to make the page look a little interesting.

If you're doing a training session an evocative piece of art is not a photograph of 45 people standing on the stairs of a August looking building.

It's somebody that's going to be affected by the training perhaps. It's some kind of picture that draws you in and makes you feel active, and makes you wanna read the rest of the page, that's what art does.

Think about a newspaper you see a photograph, then you read the headline that's more of what I'm talking about here.