

NASW Peggy Girshman Idea Grant Do's and Don'ts

The NASW Grants Committee will consider worthy proposals from individual applicants. However, we strongly encourage collaborations.

The project, if applicable, should be accessible to all U.S.-based science writers, and open to members and non-members. The project should not be for individual works, such as underwriting a single investigative piece. But it could, for instance, underwrite a study of the state of the science writing field in the United States, or a handbook for science writers.

Here are some guidelines for successful applications:

- DO ensure the project/effort supports the professional lives of science writers or advances the field of science writing.
- DON'T forget to consider possible overlap with existing projects/websites/resources/etc. What makes this project unique and worthy of funding?
- DO think both locally and nationally. How will you raise awareness of your event or other deliverables both in your event's location and more widely?
- DO consider project persistence. Knowing that Idea Grants are rarely if ever renewed, how will you ensure your project can continue once NASW funding runs out? What plans (if any) do you have for continued funding?
- DO be sure to emphasize why you are best suited to carry out this project. Consider adding co-applicants who can provide necessary expertise, if applicable.
- DO be sure to list possible financial offsets, such as registration fees or comp'ed services.
- DO consider the reach of your proposed project. How many people will it impact, both within NASW and beyond it?
- DO be conscious of the mandate to benefit U.S.-based science writers or advance the field of science writing in the United States. (We are unable to support projects that primarily benefit a foreign constituency.)
- DON'T propose projects that serve mostly to advance your own career, such as a reporting trip, book, equipment, or blog.
- DO carefully consider your budget. Budgets should be feasible and detailed. (And don't reflexively request the maximum funding, either; budget-conscious proposals tend to be viewed more favorably)
- DON'T forget to present a workable alternative budget.
- DON'T neglect your deliverables. State what these will be, how they will be made available to NASW members and propose an estimated timeline for distributing or publishing each item. Also consider: how will you ensure their continued availability over time?