

Clark University

Clark Digital Commons

Undergraduate Student Research Festivals

Winter Fest 2021

Jan 7th, 12:00 AM

Nonprofit Grant Writing: A Summer at Fund 17 in New Orleans, LA

Eleanor Eaton

Clark University, eeaton@clarku.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://commons.clarku.edu/asdff>

Eaton, Eleanor, "Nonprofit Grant Writing: A Summer at Fund 17 in New Orleans, LA" (2021). *Undergraduate Student Research Festivals*. 22.

https://commons.clarku.edu/asdff/winter_fest_2021/winterfest2021/22

This Open Access Event is brought to you for free and open access by the Conference Proceedings at Clark Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Undergraduate Student Research Festivals by an authorized administrator of Clark Digital Commons. For more information, please contact mkrikonis@clarku.edu, jodolan@clarku.edu, dlutz@clarku.edu.

Nonprofit Grant Writing: A Summer at Fund 17 in New Orleans, LA

Eleanor Eaton '20 MA '21 – (Sponsor: Michelle Flint)



CLARK
UNIVERSITY

Fund 17 Overview

This summer, I worked virtually as a Grant Writing Intern at Fund 17, which is a nonprofit organization based in New Orleans, Louisiana. Fund 17's mission is to expand opportunities for under-resourced entrepreneurs in the 17 wards of New Orleans and Greater New Orleans region by providing radically accessible business services, education, and funding opportunities. Fund 17 envisions a New Orleans where everyone gets business support regardless of their life circumstances, where business capital is invested equitably, and entrepreneurship is an accessible means to building a sustainable livelihood. All of Fund 17's work is completed in New Orleans and the Greater New Orleans region, and is primarily in the areas of economic development, financial literacy, capital access, and legal and other assistance. Each year, Fund 17 hosts trainings for local entrepreneurs who are at various stages of their business journey, which is made possible by grants awarded to the organization.



Fig 1: Fund 17 logo.

Grant Writing & Development Process

My responsibilities as a Grant Writing Intern at Fund 17 this summer were primarily tasks of research, organization, drafting, and other projects as necessary. Some grant opportunities had already been identified and needed to be evaluated, some were new opportunities. For each potential grant opportunity I would evaluate whether Fund 17 was qualified through the basic eligibility standards, whether our upcoming projects would match the foundation's funding priorities, and make a determination of whether we should consider applying or not. Either way, I would then gather information such as the deadline, amount of money offered, application link, and other information to input to the Airtable page which held all of the grant information. Later in the summer I also began making a Google document for each grant opportunity, which had a lot of the same information as the Airtable page, but was able to hold more notes and serve as a collaborative place for myself, the Executive Director, and our contracted fundraiser.

Following the organization of grant application questions in a document, I would begin to draft the relevant information that the foundation was looking for. Sometimes, I would write some notes about what I thought the question was asking and how I would begin to answer it. Other times I would pull existing language from older grant applications, grant reports, or internal materials that were relevant to the question and would begin drafting the answers from that language. The drafting process was the most difficult for me because I did not feel confident enough about all of Fund 17's programs and future plans to draft grants independently. However, I learned that foundations do not need to read extremely specific details about the organization, so by writing more generally I was communicating in a way that foundations would best understand.

FUND 17 CORE PIPELINE PROGRAMS

In order to take community members from an informal, micro stage of business to a full-time, sustainable enterprise, Fund 17 offers three opportunities which are all customized to the individual's needs. All programs include this tailored, 1-on-1 assistance to better ensure entrepreneurs successfully reach their business goals.



Fig 2: Overview of Fund 17's Core Pipeline Programs, which are primarily supported by grants which the organization has been awarded.

Conclusion

My time at Fund 17 this summer provided me with a well-rounded understanding and experience in the grant writing, development, and fundraising portions of nonprofit work. I was able to develop my technical writing skills, expand my experience with research, and become proficient in remote work. I am grateful for the support of Clark University in the form of the Barth Summer Internship Award, which allowed me to complete this opportunity. In the future I plan to apply these skills that I developed at Fund 17 in any role that I take in an organization.