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How to Prepare a Grant Bid for Surveillance Cameras

1 Identify Your Requirements and Set Realistic Goals

A winning grant application begins with a clear outline of your requirements, and a detailed analysis of how grant funding will help your organization meet these requirements.

When bidding for surveillance camera funding, quantitative data such as crime rates, crime locations, types of crime, and the impact of crime is incredibly powerful information.

Where possible, you should reference any previous successes your organization has achieved by utilizing similar systems.

Your funding request should be realistic, calculate your required spend and bid for a grant that is proportionate to your needs.

2 Plan Your Time Effectively

Take note of the application deadline, and assess the volume of work required when deciding which or how many grants to apply for.

Creating a detailed written justification for grant funding can take time, so start as early as possible and don't apply for more grants than you can allocate time to.

Only apply for grants that you have a realistic chance of winning, and that are relevant to your requirements.

3 Get Registered

Your agency will need to have an active registration in the System for Award Management to receive any form of grant funding.

It's likely your state will also have specific registration requirements too, so begin this process as early as possible.

If you do not have these registrations, you will not be allowed to apply for any funding. Below are some of the most common registrations required:

- **DUNS (Data Universal Numbering System**: Provides a unique 9-digit identifier for your organization.
- **SAM.gov – System for Award Management**: Create a Grants.gov account and assign roles to your grant team.
- **FEMA Portal (i.e. FEMA GO)**
- **JustGrants**: Grants management system used across the Department of Justice (COPS, OJP, OVW).

Check your state government's website for specific grant programs managed by states (i.e. Homeland Security or criminal justice funding).

4 Involve All Stakeholders

Get input, ideas, and support from everybody who will benefit from a successful grant funding application. This might involve contacting other law enforcement agencies or departments to get their insights.

Consider forming grant-seeking partnerships to share knowledge, case studies, and best practices of where surveillance cameras have reduced crime rates and improved community safety.

5 Research Available Grants

The key to securing grant funding is identifying available opportunities that align with the specific needs you have identified.

There are several places online to search for available grants at both a state and federal level, including Grants.gov. It is recommended that you register to receive email alerts from these websites when grants matching your requirements are released.

Once you have identified a grant funding opportunity that aligns with your requirements, be sure to check all of the eligibility requirements to ensure you meet them before bidding. Eligibility may be restricted by the type of organization or geographic location.

6 Build Your Project Team

There may be a significant amount of work involved in identifying available opportunities, and creating a comprehensive submission that fully justifies your requirements within the required level of quantitative data.

Therefore, it is wise to share the load and play to the strengths of your teams. Key roles you may want to appoint within your department are:

Researcher: Somebody who actively seeks out grant opportunities. Once you are registered on the grant funding websites, this may become automated via email alerts.

Coordinator: Somebody responsible for ensuring all deadlines, eligibility checks, and administrative aspects of bid submission are under control

Bid writer: A person responsible for creating your written justification for receiving grant funding

Funding manager: Once funds have been allocated to you, you will likely be required to report on where the funds were allocated, and the effectiveness of your initiatives. Appointing someone to track this ahead of time is highly recommended.

7 Create and Submit a Fully Justified Bid

Once you have all of the above foundations in place, it is time to write and submit your grant.

When applying for surveillance equipment, it is important that you fully justify the requirements for the investment.

- What is the scale of the crime issues you are facing?
- How will mobile surveillance help you eradicate these issues?
- How will you track the success of implementing these systems?
- How will they improve community safety?

Without a comprehensive justification statement, it is unlikely any funding will be allocated to your department. Hence, it is important to spend as much time as possible building this element out.

Make sure your submission reads well, keep your text clear, concise and to the point. Make all of your statements easy to understand, present your need, how funding will assist, and how you will measure your successes and report back.

As previously mentioned, draw on real-life examples of how mobile video surveillance systems have reduced crime, whether it be examples from your own department or drawing on the experiences of others.

8 Provide Relevant Data and Research

To make the strongest possible case for your funding application, include as much quantitative and qualitative research data as possible.

This can be data from your own research of how surveillance cameras have helped reduce crime, data taken from other law enforcement agencies who have run similar projects, or be drawn upon from wider academic studies.

9 Attach All Required Documents

Although this should be common sense, several grant submissions get rejected every year because the bidder has forgotten to attach some or all of the documents that they have referenced in their application.

This is where ensuring you have planned your time carefully will pay off, as you won't be submitting your bid at the last minute.

10 Ensure that Your Budget is Reasonable

A common mistake with grant submission is providing a budget that is either too high, too low, or just not cost-effective. Make sure that you justify all requested costs by explaining them in your budget narrative, and absolutely do not exceed the amount allowed by the grant.

Where possible, provide evidence of the potential return on investment you would expect to receive if successful. For a surveillance camera project, this may include the cost savings against hiring more officers, borrowing equipment from other agencies, or the cost benefits that come with reduced crime rates.

11 Provide Strong Resumes and Points of Contacts

Provide resumes of the staff that will be responsible for the project, and describe in detail how they have the required competencies to handle such a project.

Also, designate stakeholders who are familiar with your program as points of contact for grant application reviewers who may reach out for verification of data or other information.

12 Make it Read Well and Look Good

Clear, concise writing is essential. Make your submission easy to read and understand, and avoid any unnecessary jargon or acronyms. If you must use acronyms, always explain them.

Keep your paragraphs and sentences short and to the point.

If it's called for and the rules allow it, include colors, graphs, or images to back up your statements and make your solicitation attractive.

13 Follow the Formatting Guidelines

If the proposal is limited to 20 pages, don't submit 21, either in the narrative or including additional documentation. Follow the guidelines on page limits, font size, line spacing, graphics, or any other requirement.

Also, clearly identify which area of the application or question you are addressing, labeling each part of your narrative to correspond to the headers in the application.

14 Check, Check, and Check Again

Even the best writers make mistakes, which is why we recommend asking two or three individuals, including at least one who has not been involved in the process, to double-check your proposal for writing quality, accuracy, consistency, adherence to guidelines, and ease of comprehension.

15 Get Research or Writing Help

If you still don't feel confident submitting a bid, help is available. You can hire a grant writer to help you work on a specific grant project, or seek out grant writing training courses to enhance the skills of your internal teams

There are several resources for this available online, but also reach out internally as their may already be experience or expertise amongst your wider teams.

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WCCTV has supplied its award-winning range of mobile video surveillance cameras to Law Enforcement in the USA and around the globe since 2007.

Our 4G LTE enabled pole cameras and surveillance trailers allow agencies to target crime hotspots - fight back against illegal dumping, gang crime, vehicular crimes, vandalism and provide public safety at mass events and in parks and open spaces.

Our experience, award-winning security cameras and ongoing US-based technical support make us the ideal partner for your surveillance requirements.

For added convenience, all WCCTV's mobile surveillance solutions are available for procurement via GSA Advantage!

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