Part I - Preparation

1. Reach out to departments that fund areas in alignment with your organizational focus. Be sure to get on their mailing lists so you receive information on upcoming funding opportunities.
2. Plan to attend any public meetings the department may hold regarding funding opportunities. This is a great chance to ask direct questions and make personal connections, and normally the Project Manager will be present.
3. Speak with your colleagues about successful applications they have made to the department in the past. You can learn a lot from your peers.
4. Be sure to ask all project related questions before the question and answer period listed in the RFP or grant solicitation closes. However, technical and procedural questions will always be answered.

Part II – Content Creation

1. Read the application thoroughly. Pay careful attention to the instructions and guidelines presented.
2. Determine if your agency meets the Minimum Qualifications listed in the RFP, and is qualified to perform the services solicited. Will the requirements pose an excessive burden to your organizational capacity? No money is free and will require commitment and responsibility over a specified period of time.
3. Make sure you are providing all the information asked for, including support documentation.
4. Don’t simply take a proposal prepared for another application and cut and paste it into the template required by the City RFP. Every RFP is unique.
5. The evaluation section of the proposal is important. Review your proposal to ensure it meets all the evaluation criteria noted.
6. Make sure that the budget you submit for your project clearly matches up with the program and staffing described in your proposal.
7. Once you are done writing, give the application to a friend or colleague to read. You’ll get honest feedback that will likely improve your submission. Check for spelling or grammatical errors.

Part III – Submission

1. Submit your proposal on time, if not early. Late proposals, no matter the circumstances, cannot be accepted.
2. Be responsive to any questions you receive from the department about your application.