



Step 3 Tips for a Great Submission
Read Third
29 November 2016

purposeful profitable partnerships

TIPS FOR A GREAT SUBMISSION

Each time Cavill + Co seeks submissions from the NPO sector for our corporate clients, among the consistent trends we notice is the varying quality of submissions. Some are excellent, some are very good and unfortunately, some are of a poor standard.

We know you're time poor but if you rush it, it will negatively impact whether your organisation is considered for the shortlist, so please read these instructions which will assist you to avoid some of the pitfalls and help you to put in the best submission possible. After all the stakes are very high!

Attributes of excellent submissions

The author of an excellent submission understands that they are not writing a detailed proposal, rather, they are crafting a submission which clearly conveys a partnership concept with some specific examples. An excellent submission will always:

- ☺ Come from a not for profit that meets all stated criteria (if your organisation does not meet the criteria and you put a submission in anyway, that is not useful to us and it presents your organisation in a poor light. If the fit isn't there, don't force it!)
- ☺ Answer questions concisely and within the specified length
- ☺ Provide specific answers to questions that include relevant examples and avoid general motherhood statements, statements with internal jargon and non specific, meaningless words - common ones are 'programs' and 'services' that don't tell us anything. Assume we are from Mars (or Venus) and know nothing about your organisation - write from that perspective

Attributes of poor submissions

- ☹ Writers of poor submissions often make two mistakes: either they simply do not directly answer the questions and / or they include excessive and irrelevant detail which confuses us – the result is that we waste our client's time going back for more information or, more often, we reject that organisation's submission because we cannot make sense of it
- ☹ Do not directly or specifically answer questions and include irrelevant fluff or overly complex detail
- ☹ Answer with general or 'motherhood' statements cut & pasted from a government submission (or so it sounds like)



- ☹️ Include spelling or grammatical mistakes (yes it's hard to believe it, but about 10% of all submissions we've received in the past have had errors in them)
- ☹️ Come from non-profits that do not meet criteria e.g. our Brief says that we want a partner that serves 18-55, and an Alzheimer's charity puts a submission in

Real World Sample answers

Tell us about your national employee volunteering capabilities (Good Submission)

NPO X currently has innovative national employee volunteering opportunities in all states and territories except in the Northern Territory and Tasmania - although we would be open to developing volunteering opportunities in this state and territory. Our national volunteering opportunities range from rattling money tins in CBD streets on our annual fundraising day, to professional mentoring of our staff at all levels (i.e. from CEO to junior marketing staff). We also require volunteers to assist in our retail operations; in particular, we require assistance with customer service (e.g. operating cash register) and store merchandising (e.g. creating visual displays in store windows) duties. We can engage a corporate partner's staff with all these opportunities for 1 day per p.a. per employee but would be open to discussing more regular durations of employee engagement.

Tell us about your national employee volunteering capabilities (Poor Submission)

There is huge opportunity to work with your HR department to explore your organisational and staff development priorities in order to facilitate their professional & personal development. Your staff contribution is vital to our programs which have a major impact on Australians and their life choices and hence, the future of our nation. Around 5,000 volunteers annually play a vital role in assisting our NPO to individually support tens of thousands of people who use our services. We need employee volunteers all around Australia to help run our events and fundraise for us. We would love the assistance of your employees our current fundraising efforts in addition to new innovative events we would like to create.

AS YOU CAN SEE THIS TELLS US NOTHING THAT WE CAN TAKE TO OUR CLIENT!

Why do you consider your organisation to be innovative? (Excellent Submission)

Innovation is one of our values. We were the first organisation in the world to launch an on-line counselling service, which has now been replicated by our overseas colleagues in 15 countries. Our advertising campaign in 2014 won an AFA Award and was commended for its innovation. Our partnership with xx company won a Prime Minister's Award. As Innovation is one our values it is instilled in our organisation and drives everything that we do

Why do you consider your organisation to be innovative? (Poor Submission)

NPO XX is innovative because it provides the community with services and programs which are designed and managed by experts and implemented by a large group of passionate and committed volunteers. Although our volunteers work on a nationally consistent and standardised programs designed by experts in our field of service delivery, there is flexibility to adapt and bring local innovation to the approach, delivery and specific content. We would love the opportunity to implement our ideas nationally as part of a corporate partnership with your company!

AS YOU CAN SEE THIS NPO WITH THE GOOD SUBMISSION TRULY UNDERSTANDS THE DEFINITION OF INNOVATION AND HAS PROVIDED TANGIBLE EXAMPLES OF HOW THEY ARE INNOVATIVE. THE POOR SUBMISSION IS FLUFF.