

Sample Narrative Responses for Professional Development Grant Application

Below are three sample responses from grantees for each of the two narrative questions found on the Professional Development grant application form.

1. Explain how attending this education program will benefit the applicant and the credit union.

Sample Answer A

At the 2008 Marketing Conference, we hope to learn how to better reach out to our community. Neighborhood Trust FCU serves Washington Heights, Inwood and most of West Harlem. Washington Heights/Inwood is a New York City Neighborhood that is 75% Latino, 45% of whom are not proficient in English. The median income in this community is \$28,865, with 20% earning less than \$10,000 annually and 44% of the population receiving federal income support. Washington/Inwood and West Harlem have a population of more than 320,000, yet Neighborhood Trust has 4,360 members of 1% the population. As a CDCU, our goal is to reach out to all of the unbanked and under-banked people in our community in order to provide them with low-cost to free services.

Neighborhood Trust has recently implemented an initiative to recruit and retain members with the help of the NYC Financial Network Action Consortium and AmeriCorps VISTA. As the AmeriCorps Volunteer and Operations Manager spearheading this project at NTFCU, we hope to learn new techniques that will help us reach out to our community at-large. A large portion of this population still relies on predatory financial services. Although we have made great progress since our establishment in providing financial literacy and low-cost financial services to a substantial part of the population, there is still much work to be done. Our goal is to break barriers of social mobility and wealth creation in these low-income neighborhoods.

Sample Answer B

As manager and board member of the credit union, it is my fiduciary responsibility to ensure that the credit union operates soundly. Conferences like this provide some of the knowledge needed to accomplish this. The topics always deal with current situations and trends as well as solutions to some of the problems credit unions are facing today. Being able to interact with other managers has always opened my eyes to additional cost cutting measures and the pros and cons of considering offering a particular service. I also think gatherings like this provide a more personal connection to the staff of the CU Association of New York and what it has to offer us as members.

Sample Answer C

We began our Risk Based Lending program on August 15, 2007. By attending, I will hopefully gain a further understanding of how to handle certain situations. What are the key elements that need to be looked at on a loan application and credit report in regards to RBL. I will also gain the knowledge of trends in the lending, specifically risk based, field. I will also gain input into what changes need to be made to our current program to make it better for the credit union, as well as the member.

2. Explain why your credit union needs financial support to cover the registration fee(s).

Sample Answer A

Our credit union has spent over two years trying to recover from years of losses. While we are slowly accomplishing this goal, the cost of attending this conference is a luxury we cannot afford at this time. Receiving a grant to attend this conference would certainly provide an opportunity to gather more tools to advance this goal.

Sample Answer B

My credit union needs this grant to allow us to attend as many important conferences as possible. In this year of a shrinking bottom line, as interest rates decline, it is going to be more difficult to attend the conferences that are truly important. This conference is one of those I do not want to miss.

Sample Answer C

As with all others, our credit union is experiencing a downturn due to the economy. We have experienced a net loss throughout the year and are now just turning that around. We would like to continue with our professional development but need to monitor as many expenses as possible.

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