

Letter of Transmittal

Dear Dr. Eakman,

I'm please to present you with my plan of work. I am working with Deeds Not Words, a non-profit that trains young women to become activists and change-makers in their community for women's issues. This past year, they have been focusing on specifically targeting the issues of sex trafficking and sexual assault. By having roundtable discussions and training sessions at high schools and universities across Texas, Deeds Not Words has been able to train nearly 500 young women to become activists. These efforts have manifested change in the local community, as seen with the passing of seven legislations related to sex trafficking and sexual assault, due largely in part by the Deeds Not Words change-makers. If not for the training received by Deeds Not Words, these women may not have come forward with their stories—stories which pathos quality lent in passing laws for the better of future communities. This is currently the only program that Deeds Not Words is pursuing; however, they told me that in 2018 they'd also like to start a program focusing on motherhood mortality.

Because they only currently have this singular program, Deeds Not Words was previously writing all grants to just go towards the organization or capacity building. I believe that they would like me to help them get money in order to grow the number of women they can train, but have not outlined any specifics as of yet. They did not say how much money they want, nor did they say what specifically said money would go towards besides just vaguely their training program. I will need to ask them very pointed questions so as to find out what exactly they need and how much that particular thing will cost and how it fits into their program as a whole.

From what I gathered, their grant writing department consists of one woman who just moved over to the organization after helping Wendy Davis with her gubernatorial campaign, and has neither experience as a grant writer nor as a writer in general. The proposal that she had sent me to look over was very generic, neither mentioning the foundation that they were reaching out to nor anything related to how much money they'd need and what it would go towards. Instead, a six to eight sentence memo was written by Wendy and attached before the proposal acknowledging the foundation and mentioning the monetary amount being asked. Again though, it was very impersonal in that it did not try to tie the foundation's ideals to the problem or the program and did not specify what the money would go towards. This made it feel very cut-and-paste to me.

From speaking on the phone with the current grant writer, it seems that they are not creating that many grants due to only having one grant writer and having a slow turn-around time. She said one just got approved that she wrote over a year ago. I think that if I am able to find a better fit foundation and create a directed, personalized grant towards them seeking a specific amount of money for a specific purpose, I will be successful. The foundations they are currently reaching out to are just ones that have the goal of creating better communities, but I think that if they were to find something more specific than that, and related to their mission of working

with women, they would be far more likely to win a grant. It worries me a bit that the staff are working remotely all across Texas, but I don't think this should be too much of an issue as they were very excited for me to work with them and have been prompt to respond to my emails.

Best regards,

Marji Dzenko

Marji Dzenko
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October 3, 2017

Beth Eakman Re
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Dear Professor Eakman,

I am writing to outline my plan of work for the ran proposal I am writing on behalf of Deeds Not Words and submitting to a foundation of which I have yet to research. I am confident that I will accomplish this project in a timely manner, as I am a driven individual and both this cause and my academics are very important to me.

Introduction

The foundation's \$50,000 investment in the capacity building of Deeds Not Words will help grow the number of young women who can become change-makers for women's issues, helping fulfill the foundation's goal of "improv[ing] the quality of life of all members of our community [and] promot[ing] human dignity."

Background

Deeds Not Words was founded in 2016 by former Texas state senator and 2014 Democratic gubernatorial candidate Wendy Davis. The name comes from a turn-of-the-century suffragist motto. Davis created the non-profit to help give young women the resources they would need to become advocates and activists making change in their communities. Deeds Not Words aims to turn women's passion into actionable skills, focusing on engaging, empowering and activating millennial women around issues important to them such as equal pay, reproductive autonomy and sexual assault. Deeds Not Words creates networks both online and in the communities of Millennial and Generation Z women so that we can best reach our audience. We directed our focus towards the issues of sexual assault and sex trafficking this year. In this past year, Deeds Not Words has hosted panels with millennial women at five universities in Texas and launched advocacy training programs with four high schools. We center these training panels on the belief that sharing one's story is the best way to drive real change. We approach this by giving lessons in communications training, civic education, political training, and community organizing. So far we have trained nearly 500 women, and by the end of 2018 we are hoping to train over 1,000, also expanding to 10 universities and 10 high schools. In that same timeline, we are also looking to take on the issue of motherhood mortality.

Project Overview

We are asking for funding to help expand the reach of our organization, so that we may be able to train more young women on becoming change-makers who are actually making a difference in their communities. What makes Deeds Not Words unique is that so many young women are inspired by our founder, Wendy Davis, and because of her, have decided to make their passion a reality through taking action. In fact, our change-makers went on to advocate for nine pieces of legislation in the 2017 Legislative Session focused on sexual assault and sex trafficking reforms. Seven of these nine pieces of legislation were passed, largely in part due to advocates using the skills they learned through our training. They helped in drafting the legislation, providing real world context for its implementation, testified in front of committee members and organized their peers to do the same. Because of the legislation they helped pass, college campuses, high schools, and other communities will be safer and more equitable for generations to come.

Plan of Work

I expect to do this project in a few stages:

1. Visit Austin office of Deeds Not Words to seek any more specific information I can get. This will be something to be done as soon as possible, but will also likely be on-going. I will check in with them throughout the project for questions I may have.
2. Research: My non-profit only provided me with two foundations so far, so I'm going to try to visit the University of Texas Foundation Library at some point next week (Oct. 8-14). I'd like to find at least one more foundation that is perhaps more closely related to my non-profit's work. My non-profit has already given me a good amount of information on sexual assault and sex trafficking, but I will likely research this more as well to find any new statistics that I could use in my proposal. This would be on-going.
3. Drafting: I want to have a rough draft by the progress report on the 19th of October.
4. Writing/Revising: When writing, I like to have an outline and then fill it in more and expand on ideas, etc. This will start, ideally, in late October and I'm hoping to have a fully written draft done by early November. I like to continuously revise as I write, but once I have written the proposal in its entirety, I will certainly go over it again multiple times with a fine-toothed comb.

Constraints and Resources

The biggest constraint I see now is that my non-profit doesn't seem to have any experience writing grants (or being a writer, in general.) Because of this, the information that they gave me wasn't as specific as I'd hope it would be and reading the documents they sent me was confusing. Another issue is that, while there is an Austin office, most of the staff work remotely and the grant writer is located in Dallas. To resolve this, I'm going to just have to try my best to ask pointed questions when visiting them and to not be afraid of bothering them constantly. The resources I have in place to help me achieve my goals are my determination to win a grant,

my drive as a writer, the personal importance of the issues this non-profit is tackling, my straight-forward writing style, and my trusty Keurig to help me stay up late writing and revising.

Conclusion

With my plan of work in place and my determination, I feel confident in my ability to do well on this project. I will check in with you regularly to show that I am keeping with the planned schedule or to ask for assistance that I may need. I look forward to working with you on this important project.

Sincerely,

Marji Dzenko