Lutheran Foundation of St. Louis
Grant Report Form User's Guide

Purposes of Grant Reporting

Lutheran Foundation of St. Louis is committed to investing in programs that achieve measurable results and organizations that are committed to continuous learning and improvement. Lutheran Foundation firmly believes that sound, realistic, and ongoing evaluation is essential to ensuring that programs are effective, relevant, and continuously improving. Evaluation includes not only data collection, but also the ongoing processes of reviewing that data to determine project progress and then acting upon that information to ensure ongoing organizational learning. The Grant Report template and grant monitoring process at Lutheran Foundation are tools intended to reflect, inform, and strengthen evaluation and learning efforts both within Grantee organizations and the Foundation itself.

Just as organizations invest significant thought, discussion, and energy into carefully preparing clear, compelling, and accurate Grant Applications, we encourage Grantees to invest similar energy and thinking into grant reporting. This is how you tell your story and demonstrate the value of your program/ministry; and this is one of the sources of information the Foundation uses to make future funding decisions.

Why a User's Guide

This User's Guide provides recommendations for how to complete each section of the Report Form using information that is appropriately specific and meaningful. Providing clear, thorough, and reflective grant reports contributes to an organization's own learning and provides the Foundation with the information it needs in order to effectively monitor and administer its grants.

When and How to Submit Reports

To simplify the reporting process, all reports, regardless of what type of report they are (i.e. Interim, Annual or Final), now use the same Grant Report Form. The type of reporting required and corresponding due dates ("Scheduled Date") are specified on the front page of your Grant Agreement (see example below).

Requirement Schedule (see *Special Conditions* regarding reports)**:**

Scheduled Date	Type	Notes
3/1/2014	Grant Agreement	
9/1/2014	Interim Report	
4/1/2015	Final Report	

If your program experiences challenges or setbacks that will prevent you from submitting a required report on time, please contact Sada Lindsey, Grants Manager, as soon as possible at 314-231-2244 x 111. Unless extensions have been requested and approved in writing, all reports are due on the date specified in the Grant Agreement.

If your grant award is divided into two or more payments, the receipt and approval of an Interim or Annual Report is typically the condition for releasing the subsequent payments. ***No Payments will be released until all past due reports have been received and approved; this is true even for previous grants within the same organization.*** For example, if your organization received a grant from Lutheran Foundation the previous year and you have not yet submitted your Final Report, no payments will be issued on *new* grants until the required reporting for previous grants has been received and approved.

Reports should be submitted in hard copy via US Mail. Reports should be addressed to the attention of Sada Lindsey, Grants Manager. Submission instructions are provided below the Report header in the Report form.

Organization of the User's Guide

First, the User's Guide provides overall tips for writing a strong grant report. Thereafter, the Guide follows the sections of the Grant Report Form in order. For each section or question within the Grant Report Form, the Guide provides the rationale for the question as well as examples of appropriate answers.

General Reporting Tips

1. **Be specific.** Lutheran Foundation is committed to learning and improvement, and the information you provide is our primary source of data for our own evaluation and learning efforts. We also use information from grant reports to inform our grant-making decisions and overall strategy. Providing specific information and thoughtful insights also demonstrates organizational strength and health. Providing generic and vague information may result in a phone call or a site visit to get clarification and a possible delay in the release of scheduled payments.
2. **Be honest.** We understand the realities of non-profit service delivery, and we strive to extend grace and support in order to ensure that our Grantees can learn and improve. We want to understand your challenges, setbacks, and shortfalls so that we can provide the right type of support and identify best practices.
3. **Report on what was approved in your Grant Application.** We use grant reports to learn but also to monitor compliance. Report on each aspect of the project according to what was outlined in the various sections of your Grant Application and/or Agreement.
4. **Avoid surprises.** If your project experiences significant setbacks or changes, please contact Sarah Buek or Melinda McAliney as soon as possible to inform us and to discuss any necessary revisions to the project or the Grant. Don’t wait until you submit a report.
5. **Demonstrate Learning.** Use the sections of the report to demonstrate how your organization has learned, responded, adapted and improved. As much as we like success stories, we like learning stories just as much.

Report Header

The report header information identifies the report and provides context for the information provided. Please be sure to complete each section of the header.

Organization Name:	
Project/Program Name:	**Grant Number:** (found on Grant Agreement)
Contact Person who Prepared This Report:	**Contact Person for this Project/Program:**
Name:	**Name:**
Title:	**Title:**
Phone:	**Phone:**
Email:	**Email:**

Grant Number

Your **Grant Number** is located on the first page of your Grant Agreement (see below). This is the primary identifier the Foundation uses to track all grants. Including this will greatly help Foundation staff process your report and any pending payments in a timely manner.

Project Title: Counseling Services for Immigrants

Grant Number: 12-13-R-XX **Funding Focus Area:** Foreign-born Populations

Name, address, and telephone number of grantee:
ABC Sample Organization
1234 Elm Street
St. Louis, MO 63124
314-231-2244

Contact Person(s)

The Grant Report Form header asks you to identify two different contact people. We recognize that, in many organizations, Grant Reports are prepared by staff or volunteers with grants management responsibilities, not by the people with the responsibility for program implementation and oversight. If these roles are fulfilled by two different people in your organization, we ask that you identify both. If we have questions about the details of program implementation, activities, or outcomes, we will contact the person responsible for the program/project. If we have questions about the report itself, we will contact the person who prepared the report.

Time Period Covered in this Report

After completing the header, please identify the type of report you are submitting and the time period covered in the report. Again, reference your **Grant Agreement** to determine your **Grant Period** and which type of report is due and on which date. You can find this information on the first page of your Grant Agreement. (see example below)

Grant Amount:	$84,000.00	**Award Date:**	2/18/2014	**Grant Period:**	3/1/2014 - 3/1/2017

Requirement Schedule (see *Special Conditions* regarding reports) – continued on page 2:

Scheduled Date	Type	Notes
3/1/2014	Grant Agreement	
9/1/2014	Interim Report	
3/1/2015	Annual Report	
9/1/2015	Interim Report	
3/1/2016	Annual Report	
9/1/2016	Interim Report	
4/1/2017	Final Report	

In the case of the example above, this Grantee would submit an Interim Report covering 3/1/14 – 9/1/14 (the first six months of the Grant Period), and then an Annual Report covering 3/1/14 – 3/1/15 (12 months since the start of the Grant Period), and so on until they submit a Final Report Covering 3/1/14 – 3/1/17 (which is the entire grant period).

For **One Year Grants,** the Interim Report is typically due halfway through the grant period and no Annual Report is required. For **Multi-Year Grants,** Interim Reports are typically due halfway through *each* grant year, and Annual Reports are due at the conclusion of *each* full grant year (every twelve months, starting from the first day of the grant period).

We understand that some data is only available at month's end, so up-to-the date information might not be available at the time you're preparing your report. For example, an Interim Report due March 1 might not include all of February's program and financial data, if the report is submitted on time, and those numbers aren't prepared until March 15. If this is the case, your reporting time period would be 9/1/2014 – 2/15/2015, or something similar. Provide whatever dates correspond to the program and financial data that was used to prepare the report. This will help us accurately interpret your data and understand the project's progress.

However, **Final Reports** are typically due one month <u>after</u> the grant period has ended. This is to ensure that Final Reports include program and financial data <u>for the entire grant period</u>. This is also true of multi-year grants. **Final Reports** for **Multi-Year Grants** should summarize all years of the project, not just the data since the last Annual Report.

Project Summary to Date: Proposed vs. Actual

The largest section of the report asks Grantees to summarize what has been accomplished by the project to date. This section is arranged with side-by-side tables so that Foundation staff can clearly see how the project's progress and achievements compare to what was originally promised and approved in the Grant Application. Below are two examples of how this format appears in the Grant Report Form.

1. **Activities**

PROPOSED - List all of the **activities/services as proposed** in your Grant Application's Logic Model.	ACTUAL – List the **activities/services** you **actually implemented/delivered** **<u>during the *time period covered in this report*</u>**.

4. **Outcomes**

PROPOSED – List all of the **Outcome Statements** you agreed to measure in your Logic Model (for grants awarded before 2015) or Evaluation Plan (for grants awarded in 2015 and beyond).	ACTUAL – Using the same format for Outcome Statements, report on **actual outcomes achieved** **<u>during the *time period covered in this report*</u>**.

The left-hand column should represent *exactly* what was promised in your **approved Logic Model and/or Evaluation Plan**. The Report Form includes individual rows within each table, so that each activity or outcome can be easily compared side-by-side between "Proposed" and "Actual."

It is understandable that projects submitting **Interim Reports** will not yet have achieved all of what was proposed and approved in the Logic Model and/or Evaluation Plans, so some variance is expected. However, if you are significantly ahead or behind, please provide an explanation in the space provided. For **Final Reports**, please explain all variance between "Proposed" and "Actual" accomplishments.

TIP: *Even if your project has gone exactly according to plan, do not simply copy and paste information from the "Proposed" column into the "Actual" column. When you proposed your activities, you described generally what you expected to happen. Now that (at least a portion of) the project has actually been carried out, you can and should describe with more specificity.*

Activities

In this section, please reference the Logic Model and the narrative activities sections within your Grant Application. If the project included additional activities that weren't originally planned or expected, please also include those and describe the rationale for adding them, using the section provided. See the example below:

PROPOSED - List all of the **activities/services as proposed** in your Grant Application's Logic Model.	ACTUAL – List the **activities/services** you **actually implemented/delivered <u>during the *time period covered in the report*</u>.**
	Although we did not plan on this, we conducted several information sessions and outreach events during this period in order to increase referrals. We presented at 3 schools and 2 churches. From this we received 15 new referrals.
Provide phone screening, intake and referral services	We received 56 referral phone calls from families, but we also received a number of calls from teachers. We ended up providing phone support to the teachers as well as the families.
Conduct individualized, comprehensive assessments with each family enrolled.	Each family completed an assessment, except 1 which dropped out of services before the assessment was finished.
Develop Service Plans within the first four home visits.	Each family that completed an assessment completed a service plan within four visits.
Explain the **reasons for any differences** between your proposed activities/services and those you actually accomplished. Include an explanation for how you addressed any barriers you encountered and how you plan to address them in the future. We hadn't anticipated providing phone support to the teachers, however, we found that many were calling in order to refer families that turned out to be ineligible for our services. Since we could not enroll the families, we instead provided the referral sources (the teachers) with other community resources and tools.	

Target Population

In this section, please reference the target population section of your Application. Describe the *characteristics* of the people you served as well as the *number* of people served. If your program contains multiple components or if you experienced attrition (drop out), please specify those numbers as well. See the example below:

PROPOSED – Identify the **target population** you **proposed to reach** in your Grant Application's narrative.	ACTUAL – Identify those you **actually reached <u>during the *time period covered in the report*</u>.**
50 families of children ages 0 – 13 who live in St. Louis City or County and are at-risk for child abuse or neglect	So far, we've enrolled 22 families. 15 families reside in the county and 7 in the city.

Outputs (ONLY Grants Awarded in 2015 and Beyond)

If your Grant was awarded in 2015 or beyond, your **Logic Model** included a section to describe **Outputs**. These describe the number of activities/services you provided. This helps us understand if services have been delivered at the level anticipated and if the project is on schedule. *If your Grant was awarded prior to 2015, you do not need to complete this section.*

PROPOSED – List the **outputs** you proposed to deliver in your Grant Application's Logic Model, including numbers of people you planned to serve.	ACTUAL – Identify the **outputs** you actually delivered, including **how many were served, <u>during the *time period covered in this report*</u>.**
Enroll 50 families	So far, we've enrolled 22 families.
Retain at least 32 families for 4 or more home visits	18 of those 22 families have completed at least 4 visits so far.
Provide a total of 1000 home visits	So far, for these 18 families, we've provided 180 visits, which is on track with the average of 20 visits per family in the full year.

Explain the **reasons for any differences** between your proposed outputs and/or numbers served and actual outputs and/or numbers served. Include an explanation for how you addressed any barriers you encountered and how you plan to address them in the future. We have experienced some families dropping out of services, so far, which was expected. Three withdrew from the program when they re-located outside our service area and one withdrew from the program with no notice. We believe that we are still on track, though, to reach our goal.

Outcomes

While each section of the report is meaningful and useful to the Foundation in understanding your project and evaluating your (and our) success, this section is arguably the most critical. As with each preceding section of the report, the "Proposed" column should include exactly the outcomes you described in your Grant Application. **However, which outcomes you include here will vary depending on the year in which your grant began.**

If your grant began **prior to 2015**, you should report on all of the outcomes outlined in your approved Logic Model. However, if your grant began **in 2015 or beyond**, you should only report on the outcomes included in your approved Evaluation Plan.

PROPOSED – List all of the **Outcome Statements** you agreed to measure in your Logic Model (before 2015) or Evaluation Plan (2015 and beyond).	ACTUAL – Using the same format for Outcome Statements, report on **actual outcomes achieved <u>during the *time period covered in the report*</u>.**
45 of 50 (90%) families who complete at least four home visits will gain knowledge of community resources.	17 of 18 (94%) families who have completed four home visits have gained knowledge of community resources.
30 of 32 (94%) families who complete the program will reduce parental stress.	Because our program is 12-months, at the time of this report, no families have completed the program yet.

TIPS:

- Reference your outcomes using the same language and format that you used in your Logic Model or Evaluation Plan. Do not re-word or change any Outcomes. If your grant was awarded in 2015 or beyond, please use the exact same Outcome Statement format that is required in Evaluation Plans to report actual outcomes here.
- Report your "Actual" outcomes using data from the Evaluation Methods you described in your Grant Application.
- Do not omit any outcomes from either the "Proposed" or "Actual" sections. If you have not (yet) achieved or measured an outcome, or if an Outcome has been discontinued, indicate that clearly in the Proposed vs. Actual table, and then explain the reasoning. (See example above)
- Provide actual percentages achieved, including your base (denominator = # served or included in measure) and achieved (numerator = # achieved the outcome) numbers. This is especially important on Interim and Annual Reports, because you likely have not yet had the chance to serve all those you planned to serve. By using your actual number served or measured to date as your denominator, we can see the actual percentage of achievement and compare that against your goal percentage. In the example above, the Grantee proposed to serve a total of 32 families for at least four visits by the end of the Grant Period. But since this is an Interim Report, so far only 18 families have completed four visits. By using 18 as their base (denominator), representing those who've been included in this measure so far in the grant period, we can still see that the project is exceeding its goal of 90% on this outcome. Whereas, if they had used 32 as their base or denominator, it would appear that only 53% of participants (17 out of 32) were achieving the outcome, which is far below goal.

Expenditures

In most cases, Lutheran Foundation's grant funds are restricted for the specific purposes outlined in the **approved Grant Application and/or in the Grant Agreement**. The approved uses of the funds will be outlined on page two of your Grant Agreement in either the "Special Conditions" or "Grant Terms" section.

When reviewing your report, Foundation staff will be looking to see if the reported expenditures were within the approved budget categories and if they kept pace with the overall project progress. This portion of the report has been re-formatted to also use a side-by-side format to show a comparison between what was approved and what was actually spent in the various categories.

Note: As indicated above in the "Time Period Covered in This Report" section of the Guide, we understand that up-to-date financial information is not always available to correspond with report deadlines. For example, Interim Reports should be reporting on the first six months of a grant year, and they are due precisely on the 6-month anniversary of the grant. This might mean that financial reporting only includes data for the first five months of the grant, for example, so that the information can be prepared in time to submit the report by the deadline. This is understandable and acceptable. If the time period covered in your financial summary is different than the "Time Period Covered in this Report" that you noted on the first page of your report, please indicate this in the narrative of your financial summary.

The table for reporting expenses has several columns, because we'd like to understand how our funds are used and how they factor into the overall expenses for the project. The first two columns are labeled "Lutheran Foundation Funds." The first column should indicate the total amount approved by Lutheran Foundation in each of the line items. Please reference your Grant Agreement and indicate those full amounts here (do not pro-rate the approved amounts on Interim Reports). The second column labeled "Actual Expenses" should indicate which expenses were paid to date using Lutheran Foundation funds. The other two columns to the right ("Other Cash Funds" and "In-Kind (Non-Cash) Funds") indicate what other funds were used to cover project expenses. This could include other grants, donations, volunteered or donated items or services, etc.

For example, in this sample Grant Agreement, the approved use of funds is outlined in the "Special Conditions" section. (Newer grants will have a "Grant Terms" section instead).

Lutheran Foundation grant funds are to be used as outlined in the organization's grant application.

- $49,000 for salary/benefits of a new full-time therapist
- $10,500 for various program-related expenses (supplies, printing, food)
- $10,500 for administrative overhead

In this case, their financial summary in their Grant Report could look like this:

9. Project/program **expenditures** – Please document expenses **<u>during the *time peri</u>***
those expenses. In the "Lutheran Foundation Funds" section, please indicate in the le

Expense	Lutheran Foundation Funds	
	Approved[2] Amount	Actual Expense
Salary & Benefits	49,000	23,258
. . . .		
Supplies	6,000	2,120
Printing, Copying, & Postage	2,500	1,250
. . . .		
Administration	10,500	5,250
Project Expenses - _food____________________	2,000	1,349
. . . .		
TOTAL EXPENSES	60,000	33,227

Variance

Beneath each Proposed vs. Actual table throughout the report and beneath the expenditures table, a section is provided to describe any variance. Lutheran Foundation anticipates and understands that projects do not always unfold as planned, so variance is common and acceptable. Explaining the variance and your response to it allows the Foundation to understand how your organization has learned and improved in response to unexpected events and developments. If there is any variance between what you expected to achieve/spend and actually achieved/spent during the reporting period, please provide a concise yet clear explanation of the following:

- What factors (if any) influenced the variance (i.e. a change in the target population, staff turnover, a characteristic of an evaluation tool or how it was administered, different costs, etc.)
- Whether or not you believe the activity/output/outcome/spending is on track to achieve your overall goal by the end of the grant period (if this is an Interim Report)

- What steps you have taken to understand the difference (e.g. reviewing files, interviewing staff or participants, researching best practices, reviewing evaluation tools, etc.)
- What steps you have taken to correct the difference or to adjust, if it's a shortfall. Be specific.

TIP: Oftentimes, the same event or factor will impact several aspects of a project's implementation. For example, staff turnover often impacts the number of participants served and the activities provided, which often impacts the timing of evaluation and the achievement of outcomes. If this is the case, you only need to explain those factors in detail once in the report. In each subsequent section where you're asked to describe variance, you can simply reference the previous explanation of the factors that influenced the project.

Additional Questions

Two of Lutheran Foundation of St. Louis' core values are Collaboration and Volunteerism. As such, all of our Grant Reports ask Grantees to describe to what degree the project implemented the collaborations and utilized the volunteers that were described in their Grant Applications. As with each section above, be specific when describing what occurred and when describing any variance between what was proposed and what actually occurred. Additionally, specific Focus Areas might have additional questions to answer that pertain to the Foundation's specific goals for that Focus Area.

Questions?

We welcome your questions! Please contact Sada Lindsey, Grants Manager, at (314) 231-2244 x111.