



The Nonprofit RFP Checklist

Tips to Transform the RFP Process

To ensure a successful RFP process, there are a few changes you can make that can yield better results in less time and for less money. Follow this checklist of what to include in your next nonprofit RFP and use our tips on how to select the best partner for your project.

Nonprofit RFP Components:

- Establish the scope and goals of the project.
- Determine which stakeholders will be involved.
- Work with stakeholders to agree on goals, budget, deliverables, and a timeline.
- Write the RFP. You may choose to develop a rubric or a system to score each proposal.
- Share the RFP. We recommend using [RFP databases](#) and sharing with your networks.
- Review and compare responses.
- Research vendors and proposed solutions. Look into their backgrounds, and study their solutions, and define success metrics.
- Select a proposal.
- Negotiate an agreement and get started!

The true key to success? Investing time into finding the right project partner:

1. Define what an ideal partnership looks like for your organization.
2. Consider the journey, not just the finish line. Instead of focusing on details like the budget, evaluate a potential partner's cultural fit, problem-solving ability, and agility.
3. Have a clear definition of success and how it will be measured – as a team.
4. Be curious and open to adjusting your approach based on what you learn.

Don't just look for a vendor who has experience in your specific sector. Investigate **how** they did the work. Consider if you want a more conservative approach or are looking to be an early adopter or innovator.

Give them **insights and information into** your program so vendors can provide accurate projections and empower them to recommend new ideas.

Similarly, **conduct an interview** – not just a two-hour presentation. Ask them how they might address a specific problem you have and how they overcome obstacles or develop a creative solution for a previous client.

Finally, **invite them to share something specific** about your organization and this project that interests them. This will allow you to evaluate if they are truly interested in working with your organization and aren't responding simply because they were asked.

