

1. Meet with Foundation Relations.
2. Target the Right Foundation – research their funding priorities first.
3. Write a quality Letter of Inquiry/Interest (LOI) – requirements differ per Foundation, sometimes just a letter, sometimes an on-line form, sometimes not accepted at all (cheat sheet below).
4. Interact with the Funder – meetings, events, conference calls.
5. If invited, a full Proposal should include:
 - ▶ **Executive Summary**
 - ▶ **Statement of Need:** Sets the stage. Why is your project necessary? What is the problem and/or opportunity? Who is affected? What are the relevant facts/statistics? Answer “why now?”
 - ▶ **Project Description:** Goals and Outcomes, Who, What, When, Where and How? What are the activities? How will progress be measured? How is the solution sustainable?
 - ▶ **Organizational Information:** The Organization, Mission, Board, Staffing, who is involved and who is responsible for which tasks? Why is this the best team to accomplish this work? Collaborations and partnerships?
 - For RIT researchers, this may include a reference to RIT’s strategic plan or college-specific goals. Staffing may include your partners on campus. Board may be less relevant as our Trustees do not supervise or advise on research; however, you may have a group of advisors that help with your work.
 - ▶ **Budget:** personnel, students, travel, supplies, equipment, other.
 - ▶ **Conclusion**
 - ▶ **Attachments:**
 - Audited Financials:
<https://www.rit.edu/fa/controller/accounting/auditstatements.html>
 - Form 990:
https://www.rit.edu/fa/compliance/compliance/statutes/Form_990.html
 - Other helpful information:
<https://www.rit.edu/research/srs/proposalprep/standardinfo>
<https://www.rit.edu/research/srs/formsagreements>
 - 501(c)3 and Trustee list: Contact Foundation Relations.
6. Steward the Relationship – campus events, share progress on your project, share exciting things happening on your team or in your college or center.
7. Report Results – often a requirement at milestones during the grant period and/or at the conclusion of the grant period.

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ELEMENTS OF A HIGH QUALITY LETTER OF INQUIRY/INTEREST (IN 2-3 PAGES):

*What is it? The LOI captures the essence of your full proposal briefly but powerfully!

1. **Introduction:** A brief and catchy project title
2. **Describe the Need:** strike a tone suitable to that Foundation's mission
3. **Describe the Project:** goals, outcomes, methods (How it works and who it serves)
4. **Organization's Background Information:** leadership, readiness to meet the stated need
5. **Budget and Funding Request:** personnel, students, travel, supplies, equipment. How much is the total project, how much are you asking from the Foundation, and over what time period
6. **Conclusion**

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