

# 6 TIPS TO MAKE YOUR APPLICATION STICK

1.

## USE QUALITY IMAGES

Don't cut corners with your images. Remember, "Every show and every piece of artwork is only as good as the images you take of it." It comes down to this: take high resolution, well lit, true to color and form, no glare images and bask in the glory of your own self as seen through the eyes of an appreciative review panel. It's amazing how many panelers have gone gaga over strong images when they were otherwise thinking "meh" about an application. **Images speak a thousand words. So don't studder or slur!**

2.

## A CLEAR STATEMENT

If the panel doesn't know what you are about in the first two sentences, they are likely to just skim all the rest of it. **Get to the point and do it with elegance.** Would you like to talk to them as if you were discussing the ins and outs of the project itself? Please rethink yourself out of that paper bag and into the light of clarity and concision! If you can say it with fewer words, please do.

3.

## FOLLOW THE GUIDELINES VERY CAREFULLY

Many panels will immediately throw out any application that does not comply with the clear guidelines for submission. Simply said: follow directions! Don't feel like making your project plan clear? Never did well in spelling as a kid? And for budgets or funding requests, is math just not your thing? Then find another vocation, because these waters are swimming with pros. **Get your basics down first and refine your projects and concepts as you go along.** This is a highly competitive process, and messing up on the written word can save a panelist a ton of time, not to mention money, by not even looking at your project or materials. Get all of your ducks in a row and keep your materials updated for future applications. Remember, this is a marathon, not a sprint.

4.

## PANELISTS ARE PEOPLE, TOO

Typically, panelists will have a large number of applications to review in a short period of time. After application number 157, they can easily lose concentration and miss key points of your proposal. Do not bury any detail that is key to the project in an overly lengthy or difficult-to-read explanation. **Get to the point, son.** Also, bear in mind that it is a skill to capture the interest of experts as well as non-experts. Persuasive, vivid, concise, yet imagery-producing writing is key. Unlike an academic paper, historical perspectives, human interest, and humor should be used judiciously and sparingly in your application.

5.

## USE FORMATTING TRICKS FOR EFFECT - BUT BE CAREFUL

For Example: underlining, bolding, center spacing can work to catch the weary eye of an overworked panelist, but don't go overboard. Narrow down your main points and focus on those. It can also help to restate, using different words, your key points in the project at least once.

6.

## BECOME A GRANT REVIEWER YOURSELF

Being on review panels will help you write better applications, hands down. Understanding why grants get ignored, how a panel reacts to a proposal, learning how much discretion a panelist actually has, and seeing what the role of the support staff play in the process can help enlighten any artist who is looking to write successful applications in the future. Learn from the inside and bring that knowledge home to your own proposals.