



How to calculate the matching percentage for a grant application (without losing your sanity)

Many grantors require that applicants demonstrate in their budgets that they will raise a certain percentage of the funding amount they are requesting from the grantor as a “match.” Some grantors, particularly public grant programs, will require that your match equal a certain percentage of the TOTAL of grant funds AND matching funds (if you’re unsure whether the match required for a grant is a percentage of the amount you’re requesting, or is a percentage of the amount you’re requesting plus the match, be sure to ask the funder for clarification). This can be confusing.

Let’s consider a simple example. Say you’re asking a grantor for \$10,000. They require a 25% match of the total of grant funds and matching funds. You probably assume that since 25% of \$10,000 is \$2,500, that the match amount they require will be \$2,500. While that’s certainly simple and easy, it’s unfortunately incorrect.

You see, the grantor is requiring that the match be at least 25% of the TOTAL of grant AND matching funds. So, if you want \$10,000 from the grantor, you’ll have to raise at least \$3,400 in matching funds. When you add \$10,000 + \$3,400, you get a total of \$13,400. 25% of \$13,400 (the total of grant and matching funds) is \$3,350. See the example below:

Grant Funds	Matching Funds	Total funds	Match % of Total
Amount of \$ you’re requesting from the grantor	Amount of \$ you’re promising to raise by other means as a match	Total of grant funds (column 1) and matching funds (column 2)	Percentage match is of the total—Calculate this amount by dividing the match (column 2) by the total (column 3)
10,000	3,400	13,400	25.373%

The easiest way to calculate the amount you’ll need for matching funds is to use the formula below:

Grant funds (\$10,000) x .34 = matching funds (\$3,400)

To verify the accuracy of your calculations, add grant funds (\$10,000) + matching funds (\$3,400) to get total funds (\$13,400). Then divide the matching funds (\$3,400) by the total funds (\$13,400). You will get a total (.25373...) indicating that your match is 25.373% of the total funds, in other words it’s at least 25% (don’t worry about the fact that it doesn’t come out exactly 25%...it’s close enough).