Grants are a great source of potential funding for your project, but getting a grant can be difficult. Your idea has to be well thought out and articulated with clearly stated outcomes and impacts. Keep in mind the following as you write your grant:

1. Read through all of the grant instructions. Grant reviewers are looking for specific information. The instructions give you important information such as word limits, writing specifications, and important terminology that the grant reviewers look for to determine who is awarded. Make sure you conform to the rules exactly or you may be dismissed as a candidate for funding, no matter how great your idea. If the grant specifies a 100-word limit, do not submit 101 words.

2. Read previously funded proposals, if available, or at least look at the projects the organization has funded in the past. Some grants have an online database of successful grants. Those examples allow you to become familiar with the prose that is used in grant writing as well as the kinds of activities the organization generally funds.

3. Limit jargon. The people reviewing the grants are not always experts in your area. For instance, someone on the grant committee might be a small business owner and interested in sustainability, but have no idea what composting is. If you need to use a technical term, be sure to define it. Do not leave your reviewers guessing—if they do not understand it, they will not fund it.

4. Proofread. If commas are in the wrong place and words are misspelled, why would the grant team take your project seriously? You want your proposal to stick out in their minds. It needs to be free from distracting typos. Read and re-read your proposal, have multiple friends review it, and read it out loud to avoid typos.

5. Describe how your project will build collaborations and partnerships.

6. Highlight what makes your project unique and innovative compared to others.

7. Discuss the ways in which you will promote their fund’s involvement in your project.

8. Use language that you find on the grant funder’s website or brochures. Speak to their mission statement, their objectives, and the impacts they want to make in the community they work in.
9. Know how you are going to measure the impact that you want your project to have. If you want to spread sustainability throughout the community through art, discuss how many people you are going to get involved, how many talks you are going to give on the subject, the amount of art installations that will occur because of the funding, etc. (but be realistic—don’t promise anything you can’t produce!). Granters like to know how their funding is reaching people and what the direct result of funding your project will be.

If you are interested specifically in how to write a University of Arizona Green Fund grant, check out the guides for writing a Mini Grant, a Preproposal for the Annual Grant, and the Annual Grant. You can submit your University of Arizona Green Fund Grant documents here.