



Grant Proposal Development

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In preparing this presentation, Yumi Sera, used her expertise as a grant maker and grant writer. Having reviewed thousands of proposals from around the world and locally in her community in California, she has gained a sharp focus and keen intuition of successful proposals. Yumi also brings to this process her skills in program management, project development, and evaluation which are critical to developing a realistic proposal that is relevant to the needs and aspirations of communities. Her motivation to develop this presentation is so that those with compelling ideas can articulate and plan an effective project, attract private or public funds, and do the work to benefit the greater good.

ABOUT YUMI SERA

Objective of Module

After completing this module, program or technical staff should be able to understand the steps to writing a grant proposal and the basic elements of a grant proposal.

The module is developed for people who are relatively new to grant proposal writing.

The content can be applied to private or public funding opportunities.

Some Caveats

- Not all funders' requirements are alike so read the guidelines carefully. This module presents typical elements of grant proposal requirements.
- There are many ways to think through an issue or problem. The framework presented in this module is just one way and not the only or necessarily the right way of addressing an issue.
- This module uses common terms used by government and private funders to clarify these terms. Many words such as results – goals – outcomes are used interchangeably by different people and entities.

Module Sequence

This module
will take you
through
4 main steps

1

- Assessing your situation

2

- Thinking through the project

3

- Writing the proposal

4

- Communicating with the funder



1

Assessing Your Situation

Preparing for your Grant

Before you start applying for grants, you should lay the groundwork for a capable organization.

- ▣ Vision and mission
- ▣ Program that will yield results
- ▣ Effective management and leadership
- ▣ Financial systems that will safeguard the resources





Assessing your Situation

Your organization or program should have a plan in place so that you are able to take advantage of opportunities

- Identify and prioritize needs / issues to be addressed
- Describe what should be changed
- Assess your organization's strengths

TIP: Don't take on more than you can handle



Key Questions - Grant Requirements

Once you have identified a potential funding opportunity, key questions to explore are:

- What are the requirements to apply for a grant?
- What are the procedures?
- What is the eligibility criteria?
- What are the funder's priority area of interest?
- What is the award amount per grant?
- Is there a matching requirement?

TIP: Review information on projects that have received grant awards to see what is considered a desirable project



Key Questions - Process

Some organizations, especially larger agencies, require internal approvals prior to proposal submission.

- What is my organization's internal review process?
- How do I submit the proposal?
- When is the deadline?
- What forms or other materials are required?
- Is there a page limit or formatting requirements?
- Who is the program contact?

TIP: Check updates on funder's website for FAQs and dates for conference calls with the funder



Plan Your Proposal Development

- Recipe: 2/3 planning and 1/3 writing
- Research project well in advance
- Assemble your team for the development of the proposal
- Identify technical reviewers to provide feedback on your draft proposal
- Complete or assemble all necessary paperwork or registrations, especially if submitting on line
- Plan to submit proposal at least 48 hours prior to deadline



Proposal Review Criteria

Funders base their reviews and decisions based on specific criteria and / or priorities. Below are some examples of the criteria and questions funders may use to review, rate, and evaluate your proposal:

1. **Relevance and Effectiveness**
2. **Feasibility and Efficiency**
3. **Impact**
4. **Sustainability**
5. **Capacity**



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Thinking through the Project

Thinking through the Project

The proposal is a reflection of the planning that you have conducted to develop your project. Funders are increasingly concerned about **results**.

Ask yourself:

- ❑ What difference will the proposed project make?
- ❑ What is the change that will occur as a result of the project?
- ❑ How is this project significant?
- ❑ How will you know if the results have been achieved?

The Power of Measuring Results

Measuring results is critical for the following reasons

- ❑ If you do not measure results, you cannot tell success from failure
- ❑ If you cannot see success, you cannot reward it
- ❑ If you cannot reward success, you are probably rewarding failure
- ❑ If you cannot see success, you cannot learn from it
- ❑ If you cannot recognize failure, you cannot correct it

Osborne, David & Ted
Gaebler. 1992.
Reinventing Government.

Framing Your Project



Purpose



- The project purpose is the overall reason or rationale for the project.
- It answers the question – *Why should this project exist?*
- It is often based on an identified need(s) or an aspiration(s).
- Evidence (e.g. data) of the need is usually required.

Goal



- A project goal(s) is a broad or big picture statement of *what is to be accomplished*.
- It is expressed in terms of improvement(s) in the capability or conditions of the situation or beneficiaries.
- The goal should be verifiable at the end of the project.

Objective



- Objectives are the final results which together achieve the project goal. They provide a more detailed picture of *what is to be accomplished*.
 - Similar to goals, but are more specific, and more focused on time frames and measurement.
- TIP:** Federal grant proposals typically require measurable objectives that also tie into their stated priorities.

Formulating SMART Objectives



Objectives should be SMART

- ▣ **S**pecific statements of what the project will accomplish
- ▣ **M**easurable or observable
- ▣ **A**chievable
- ▣ **R**ealistic in recognizing the concrete results a project can actually accomplish
- ▣ **T**ime-bound



These are not objectives

TIPS

✓ Use words, such as increased, decreased, enhanced, improved, or action verbs

✓ Determine how you will collect and analyze the data and information

- ❑ Develop report [this is an output]
- ❑ Conduct workshop [this is an activity]
- ❑ Understand how milk comes from a cow [does not state the significance]
- ❑ Cooperate with local organizations [too vague]
- ❑ The project will meet food supply need [too global]
- ❑ Provide food to hungry [this is an input]
- ❑ Increase participant achievement by 10% [if no baseline is established, this is falsely quantified]
- ❑ Double the planting and production of broccoli [lacks specific references to people and expected benefits to them]

Linking Purpose – Goal - Objective

A common pitfall in proposals is that there is no linkage between the purpose, goals, objectives, activities, and budget. Focus on developing the logic of your project.

Purpose	To conserve hillside land and water resources and increase income of farm families in Lewis County
Goal	To improve hillside resource management and increase the crop productivity among 85% of farmers in Lewis County by a minimum of 15% over the current average production levels within 6 years
Objective	By the end of the project, 85% of farmers in Lewis County will practice appropriate farming and conservation methods

Milestones



- Milestones are short term indicators of progress toward meeting project objectives.
- They help explain what is to be accomplished and when.
- They may reflect products or services that are a result of the activities.

TIP: Indicators are used to build a monitoring system. Funders often require a mid-term report to determine whether you are reaching your milestones.

Activities



- Determine what activities are required to reach the milestones
- List the activities in a work plan

WHAT	WHO	BY WHEN
Develop work plan	Suzie and team	Oct. 1
Identify trainers	Suzie	Oct. 5
Design workshop modules	Minnie	Nov. 8
Coordinate logistics	Angie	Oct. 11 to Nov. 30
Workshop conducted (Milestone)		

Resources

- Project resources include items such as funding, staffing, equipment, materials, etc.
- While developing the project, allocate resources to each of the activities and ask:
 - ▣ What are the human requirements, i.e., technical expertise, training, supervision?
 - ▣ What are the financial requirements? What is available, what needs to be raised?
 - ▣ What materials are required and when?
 - ▣ What other services are needed? From whom?

Monitoring & Evaluation

Purpose of M&E

- Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) allows organizations to answer:
 - ▣ What interventions make a difference?
 - ▣ Is the project reaching the planned milestones?
 - ▣ Is the project having the intended results?

Tips for M&E

- Select qualitative or quantitative indicators to provide a means of measuring achievement, to help assess performance, or reflect changes
- Devise data collection methods, such as surveys or testing
- Interpret findings and apply lessons to improve program management and increase benefits

Budget

□ Funders typically ask for a budget that reflects the total cost with separate columns to indicate the:

- Amount requested

If required:

- In kind contribution from the applicant
- Matching funds from donors or partners

TIP: The budget must link with the activities, objectives, and goals of the project. Make sure expenses are allowable according to regulations and/or guidelines.



3

Writing the Proposal

Funder Procedures

- Read all the eligibility requirements, guidelines, procedures, and instructions FIRST!
- The grant process is COMPETITIVE
- Federal grants applications require an extensive on-line process including registration and make take several days to complete
- Some funders require an initial 2-3 page concept paper that is an outline of your goals and objectives

Elements of a Concept Proposal

- Introduction or cover sheet
- Organization-program description
- Statement of need-problem
- Methodology and impact
- Financial information

Elements of a Grant Proposal

Contact Information	Responsible person's name, organization, address, email, telephone.
Abstract	Summary of proposal, including a statement on the purpose of the project, expected results, and why funds are being requested.
Needs Statement	Description of critical issues and why project is necessary. Focus this section on what your intended project is addressing, not on broad contextual remarks.
Project Description	How project will be implemented, including: measurable goals and objectives, activities, impact on beneficiaries, anticipated results, sustainability, timeframe, and collaborating organizations.
Monitoring & Evaluation	How project will be monitored and evaluated to ensure that the project is on track and that the results are being achieved.
Budget	Costs for project, amount requested, in-kind contributions, and other sources of funding.
Organization Information	Background, mission, past accomplishments, staff qualifications, internal controls, and legal status.

Budget

BUDGET ITEMS

Personnel (salary, percentage of time, benefits)

Contractual (technical expertise)

Travel

Equipment

Supplies

Other costs

Indirect Costs (overhead)

□ Budget

- ✓ Reasonable and accurate
- ✓ Allowable
- ✓ Corresponds with project objectives
- ✓ Addresses matching requirements



Don'ts of the Proposal Process

- Don't submit a proposal without a third-party review
- Don't submit a proposal without an edit for grammar and spelling
- Don't submit a proposal intended for another funder if it does not meet the guidelines
- Don't think that you are entitled to the funding for whatever reason
- Don't wait until the last minute to plan and submit the proposal
- Don't go unprepared for a meeting (phone or in person) with the funder



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Communicating with the Funder

Reporting to Funders

The relationship with the funder does not end with the receipt of the grant award. Funders usually request periodic reporting depending on their own guidelines. Some funders may also request site visits, audits, or an evaluation. The frequency and type of reporting relationship is usually detailed in the grant agreement letter.

How responsive you are to the funder and accountable you are to the achieving the intended results could determine the continuation of additional funding.

Resources

Foundation Center

<http://foundationcenter.org/>

Proposal Writing Basics – Foundation Center

<http://foundationcenter.org/getstarted/training/free/pwb.html>

Proposal Budgeting Basics – Foundation Center

<http://foundationcenter.org/getstarted/training/free/pbb.html>

Nonprofit Guides

<http://www.npguides.org/index.html>

Catalogue of Federal Domestic Assistance

<https://www.cfda.gov/>

Federal Grants

<http://www.grants.gov/>

Questions and Comments

