Grant Proposal Development
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**
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
- 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.
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
Thinking through the Project
Framing Your Project

- Purpose
- Goal
- Objectives
- Activities
- Monitoring & Evaluation
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]
- 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]
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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>To conserve hillside land and water resources and increase income of farm families in Lewis County</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Goal</td>
<td>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</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective</td>
<td>By the end of the project, 85% of the 100 farmers in Lewis County will practice appropriate farming and conservation methods</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Activities

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHAT</th>
<th>WHO</th>
<th>BY WHEN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop work plan</td>
<td>Suzie and team</td>
<td>Oct. 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify trainers</td>
<td>Suzie</td>
<td>Oct. 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design workshop</td>
<td>Minnie</td>
<td>Nov. 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>modules</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordinate logistics</td>
<td>Angie</td>
<td>Oct. 11 to Nov. 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshop conducted</td>
<td></td>
<td>(Milestone)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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
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.
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 Proposal that provides a snapshot of the projects
Elements of a Concept Proposal

- Statement of need/purpose
- Impact on beneficiaries
- Expected outcomes
- Methodology and activities
- Financial information
## Elements of a Grant Proposal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contact Information</th>
<th>Responsible person’s name, organization, address, email, telephone.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>Summary of proposal, including a statement on the purpose of the project, expected results, and why funds are being requested.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needs Statement/Purpose</td>
<td>Description of critical issues and why project is necessary. Focus this section on what your intended project is addressing, not on broad contextual remarks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact/Measurable Outcomes</td>
<td>How project will be implemented, including: measurable goals and objectives, activities, impact on beneficiaries, anticipated results, sustainability, timeframe, and collaborating organizations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring &amp; Evaluation</td>
<td>How project will be monitored and evaluated to ensure that the project is on track and that the results are being achieved.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budget</td>
<td>Costs for project, amount requested, in-kind contributions, and other sources of funding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization Information</td>
<td>Staff qualifications and internal controls.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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’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 budget with mathematical errors
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
4 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