Grant Writing Basics

Topics of This Session

• Matching funding to your objective
• Telling your story
• Writing the budget

Match Funding to Your Objective

Avoiding Mission Drift

• The Funding Dilemma
  • Settle for best fit
  • Hold out for exact fit

• Funding should help the effort become...
  • Sustainable
  • Focused
  • Productive

Two Sources: Broad Strokes

Federal and State
• Awards based on strict guidelines
• Objective evaluations
• Formal reporting
• Check with your state agencies
  • http://grants.gov/

Private Foundations
• Tend to be more relational
• May be more subjective in evaluations
• Reporting tends to be less formal
  • http://foundationcenter.org/

Checking the Fit: Quick Steps

• Goals and priorities
• Eligibility requirements
• Deadlines
• Amount of funding available
• Limitations on funding
• Cost sharing or matching
• Application procedure
Taking Time to Examine the Details

- Read the entire guidelines – with a highlighter – and not at bedtime!
- Pay close attention to:
  - Overall project timeline (start and end dates)
  - Evaluation criteria
  - Expectations on collaboration
  - How payments will be received
  - Reporting expectations
  - Any other detail that might impact your project’s successful fit with the funding.

Telling Your Story

Using the Data to Tell the Story

Facts:
- Tell compelling stories
- Demonstrate knowledge of the issue
- Assist in measuring impact
- Can validate eligibility for funding

Sources for Demographic Data

Start at home:
- Governmental agencies (town, county, state, federal)
- The closer to the project the better

Describe the Past and Future

Be able to tell:
- What you have already done
- Who participated
- Who benefited
- Why this was important
- How the funder’s contribution can increase success

Plan SMART So Impact Evidence Is Easy to Collect.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specific</th>
<th>Measurable</th>
<th>Attainable</th>
<th>Relevant</th>
<th>Time Framed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What do you want to achieve?</td>
<td>How do you plan to measure progress toward the goal?</td>
<td>Are you sure you can achieve the goal?</td>
<td>Is this important for your region?</td>
<td>When do you want to achieve your goal?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where will you focus your efforts?</td>
<td>Is the end result and milestones along the way?</td>
<td>Do you have the resources to achieve the goal?</td>
<td>Does this matter or bring benefit to the region?</td>
<td>What is the target date for accomplishing the goal?</td>
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Measure Impact: Motivation

- If you measure results...
  - You can tell success from failure.
- If you can see success...
  - You can reward it.
  - You can learn from it.
- If you can recognize failure...
  - You can correct it.
- If you can demonstrate results...
  - You can win public support.

Sustainability through Partnerships

Who else in your region cares about what you do?

Do it Now.

Writing the Budget

- Use the budget to show how the grant fits into a larger plan.
- Most grant forms offer very few categories for expenses.

  - Examples:
    - Personnel / Fringe
    - Travel
    - Equipment
    - Supplies
    - Operational

Budget Tips

- Don’t be tight!
- Do your research on costs.
- Pay attention to limits and allowable expenses.
- Be clear with in-kind and matching funds.

Matching Funds

- Funders may sometimes allow in-kind matches but at other times cash.
- Use fund raising to find matching funds.
- Be creative with fund raising activities.
- Donations can be a source for matching funds.
Features of a Strong Proposal

- Well organized **proposal sections**
- Well researched and documented **statement** of the problem
- Innovative **strategies** for addressing the need / problem
- Feasible **goals**
- **Measurable** objectives
- A sound evaluation **plan**