



Tips For Writing & Submitting Good Grant Proposals

Grant Writing: The Basics

Presented By:

Darren S. Buckner, Jeannie Davis & Sarah Hammond

HRSA Office of Federal Assistance Management (OFAM)

May 19, 2010

Philadelphia, PA



The Beginning

- There are many first things to do in writing a grant proposal.
- This is a suggested list of recommendations, and should be considered key in your planning, design and execution.



The Top Ten “To Do’s” of Grant Writing/Proposal Submission

10. Read the funding opportunity announcement completely.
9. Have a conversation with other stakeholders (persons involved with the project), look at your organization, and ask if the capacity exist in your organization to accomplish your potential proposal. (*Can you really do what is being asked?*)
8. Evaluate whether this is worth your effort? *Not the need, but your group’s ability.*



The Top Ten “To Do’s” of Grant Writing/Proposal Submission

7. Look at your fiscal house. Do you have the fiscal infrastructure and or capacity?
6. Go to the mirror, your Board and your team and ask if and how will you not only submit a quality proposal but what will and how will you gauge the quality of your work?
5. Get a full understanding of the sponsor’s request?

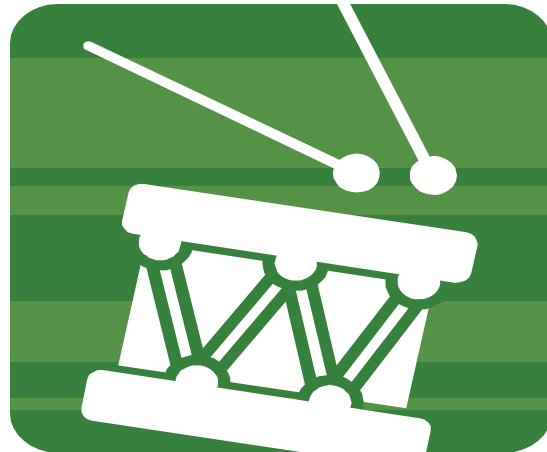


The Top Ten “To Do’s” of Grant Writing/Proposal Submission

4. Ask questions of the funder. The contact information is there for your assistance. HRSA proposals would normally include Program contact information and Grants Management contact information.
3. Make yourself available for any Technical Assistance opportunities presented by the funder.
2. Review your proposal prior to submission. Have someone read the potential proposal

The Top Ten “To Do’s” of Grant Writing/Proposal Submission

.....and now the top “to do”



- 1. Re-read & amend the proposal**



Grant Writer

To Hire or Not To Hire???

That is your question

The first impression of a funder, a reviewer, or a program official is the submission presentation. There are advantages and disadvantages of outside Grant Writers.

Grant Writers and their products:

- can be a real commodity
- may not speak to the organization, because they don't have enough information about the organization.



Grant Writer

To Hire or Not To Hire???

That is your question
(cont'd)

- are successful in proposal submission, rating, and scoring , but the true success is in the implementation
- can be costly; A funding opportunity may or may not pay the pre-award cost. Check with funder



Grant Writer

To Hire or Not To Hire???

That is your question

(cont'd)

A note of caution if you go that route, be sure:

- to have the people in place to carry out the proposal;
- to have the systems in place;
- to know that you-the customer, are in control;
- the plan to execute or implement the written, (or sometimes spoken) activities.



Grant Writer

Inhouse Functionality

If the effort is home grown or within the organization there exists advantages and disadvantages as well.

The in house proposal functionality submission:

- can be costly to overhead;
- is based on your organization structure;
- provides a team approach to the effort;
- involves others;



Grant Writer

Inhouse Functionality

(cont'd)

- involves diverse areas of expertise;
- matches skill sets with tasks;
- can have a system of checks and balances incorporated in the process;
- Provides a level of accountability



Reading & **Re-reading** the Proposal

Kipling's Six Honest Serving Men:

*I keep six honest serving-men
(They taught me all I knew);
Their names are What and Why
and When and How
and Where and Who*

1. What

.....is being asked?

.....is the need?

.....is the funder's proposed target population?

.....are you actually going to propose to meet the goals & objectives?



2. Why

.....this project?

.....this target population?

.....do I want to do this?

.....do I think my organization
can handle the funding
or level of reporting that is required?





3. When

.....is this (the proposal submission, letter of intent, etc, etc) due?

.....will we find time to coordinate the effort in pulling the proposal together?

4. How

.....will you do this work/project

.....will you pull together the effort to write
the proposal

.....will you pull together the players to
implement the project



5. Where

.....will this project take place

.....will you get the Matching funds (if required)



6. Who

.....is asking for the submission

.....is in the target population





The Narrative

In writing proposals, important parts include:

- Goals & Objectives
- Need
- Response
- Evaluation
- Impact
- Budget

Your application will be rated and scored on the above criterion



The Goals & Objectives

Goal - The purpose toward a specific endeavor.

Objectives – Broadly defined action targets that are needed to attain a specific purpose.

Task » Activities » Objectives » Goals



The Goals & Objectives

Clearly defined Goals and Objectives can greatly aid in the development of a proposal.

The Goals and Objectives (of the organization and the proposal) should be widely known by any party involved in proposal submission, or project implementation/performance.

Goals are Intangible, while Objectives are Tangible.



Need

This is the need of the Announcement or FOA, *not* the need of your organization.

Speak directly to what the funder's is requested service.

Don't tailor your organization to the proposal just for assistance. You're submitting a proposal because you are familiar with the work in question.

Demonstrate through your proposal that you understand the task at hand. If you have a track record:
SHINE!!!!!!!!!!!!!!



Response & Impact

Provide detailed information on how your proposal will affect the targeted population or study area.

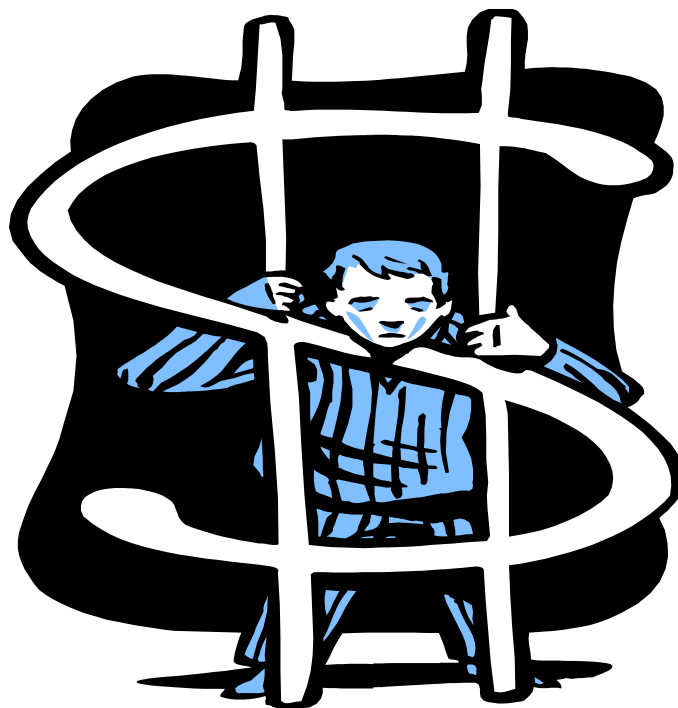
Think like a Reviewer. Reviewers rate and score many applications—make your proposal stand out.

Provide statistics (when possible)

Don't gold plate, pad or over emphasize. Speak truth and facts

Show how valuable and necessary your project will be

The Budget



Free Yourself



The Budget

Things to consider

- Match the budget with the goals and objectives.
- Include a narrative to justify the numbers
- Use a calculating program to perform mathematical processes
- Breathe!!! Remember that a budget is a plan.



The Budget

Things to consider (cont'd)

- Review the cost effectiveness of the project in relation to the organization's overall budget.
- If it is a Federal Proposal, only use the line items on the federal forms.
- If a Matching or a Cost Sharing project, the guidance will state accordingly. Be sure to include any relative budget information where and when appropriate.



The Budget

Things to consider (cont'd)

- Consider only costs that are significant to the proposed project. Don't inflate.
- Review the proposal for cost or budgetary limitations
- Familiarize yourself with the Cost Principles



The Budget

Things to consider (cont'd)

- Work with your fiscal staff (if within your organization or outside your organization)
- Pay attention to the theory and principles of allowability, reasonability, and allocability
- Negotiate a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) or Indirect Cost Rate for indirect costs



Final Steps

- Check spelling. *You will be surprised*
- Check calculations. *Use a calculating software tool*
- Check the due dates....watch the calendar. *Time flies, when you're having fun*
- Check the package submission for all required forms and necessary attachments. *The words "required" and "necessary" really means required and necessary.*



Final Steps

- Create a check list or follow the recommended check list
- Register early (Electronic Handbooks (EHB)/Grants.gov)
- Submit early!!!! *You will rest better*
- Follow the order of the guidance



Final Steps

- Adhere to page and font requirements. *Please, please, please*
- Edit Edit Edit Edit. *Did I say Edit?*
- Review the scoring criteria of each section. *You really want the top number in all criterion correct??*
- *Celebrate*



Contact Information

Darren S. Buckner
Lead Grants Management Specialist
Division of Grants Management Operations (DGMO)
301-443-1913
dbuckner@hrsa.gov

Jeannie Davis
Review Administrator
Division of Independent Review (DIR)
301-443-4767
jdavis@hrsa.gov

Sara Hammond
Policy Analyst
Division of Grants Policy (DGP)
301-443-9022
shammond@hrsa.gov