Proposal Development:
Intro to Grant Writing

Key Elements

Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research
Common Proposal Elements

- Cover page / Face sheet
- Table of Contents
- Abstract / Summary
- Project Description
- Introduction
- Problem / Needs Statement
- Goals Objectives Activities
- Evaluation
- Dissemination
- Long Term Plans
- Budget and Justification
- Other Support
- Curriculum Vitae
- Appendices
COVER PAGE / FACE SHEET

- Granting Agency’s Name
- Program Name or Number
- Applicant / Organization Name
- Contact Information
  - School/Dept/Division
  - Address
  - Phone Number
  - Fax Number
  - Email Address
COVER PAGE con’t

- Submission Date
- Project Title
- Project Period
- Amount Requested
- Project Director’s Name, Title and Signature
- Organization’s Authorized Representative Name, Title and Signature
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Should be included if the proposal is over 10 pages.

- Major Proposal Sections
- Section Numbering Systems
- Accurate Page Numbers
ABSTRACT / SUMMARY

- Problem
- Significance
- Objectives
- Methods
- Anticipated Outcomes

- Write the abstract last
- Provides the critical initial impression
- Possibly the only part some reviewers will see before a decision is made

250 words or less!
PROJECT DESCRIPTION
(Overview of Components)

- Introduction
- Problem Statement / Needs Statement
- Goals Objectives Activities
- Personnel and Facilities
- Evaluation
- Dissemination
- Long-term Project Plan
INTRODUCTION

- Establish credibility of applicant and institution in the area for which funding is being sought
- Provide a brief biography of board members and key staff
- Indicate the organization’s goals, grant history, and success stories
- Information should be relevant to the funder’s goals and should lead to the problem
PROBLEM / NEEDS STATEMENT

- Identify the nature of the problem (sufficient hard evidence)
- Indicate the importance of solving the problem
- Indicate what is currently being done
- Identify gaps
- Identify the beneficiaries
- Indicate how they will benefit
Problem Statement

Use Statistics for Support. Example:

*Weak*: In today's society, many youth are disrespectful and violent.

*Strong*: Washington County high schools experienced their highest suspension rate in 12 years with an average of 32 suspensions each month. At one school, more than 1,200 referrals were made for discipline issues in a three-month period (Washington County School District Discipline Report, 1999).
Goals – Objectives – Activities

Goal

- Objective 1
  - Activity 1
  - Activity 2
  - Activity 3

- Objective 2
  - Activity 1

- Objective 3
  - Activity 1
  - Activity 2
Goals / Objectives

- **Goals**
  - Broad
  - General intent
  - Intangible
  - Abstract
  - Can’t be validated

- **Objectives**
  - Narrow
  - Concrete
  - Precise
  - Tangible
  - Measurable outcomes
OBJECTIVES / SPECIFIC AIMS

- State in **measurable** terms the project's desirable outcomes
- Relate directly to the problem statement
- Relate to the goals to be met and methods to be implemented
- Make sure one specific aim is not dependent on another
- Brief, focused and limited in scope
- Present 2-5 at most
- BE REALISTIC - could be used by the funder to evaluate potential and progress
ACTIVITIES / METHODOLOGY / ACTION PLAN

- Describe activities to be implemented to meet the objectives and who will perform the activities
- Separate by the objective/specific aim
- Include the expected outcomes and re-emphasize their importance
- Indicate areas where things might not go as planned and offer an alternative plan
- Provide a timeline of various tasks and measurable results
Goals Objectives Activities

State your broad goal, your measurable outcome and what you will do to get that outcome. Example:

**Goal:** To reduce high school suspension rates in Washington County.

(broad idea)

**Objective:** To reduce the suspension rate from 30% in 2000 to 20% in 2002.

(measures from-to levels and date-date time frame)

**Activity:** Conduct 12 attendance programs for at-risk students targeting 300 students in 5 high schools by May 2001.

(each objective should have at least one activity)
EVALUATION

- Process Evaluation
  - Shows how the project will be implemented in terms of the stated plan of action
  - Indicates effectiveness of various activities within the plan

- Procedure Evaluation
  - Shows results that can be attributed to the project
  - Indicates how well desired objectives have been met

- Indicate who will conduct the evaluation (internal or external)
- Indicate when the evaluation will take place (beginning, middle, or end of the project)
- Revise the evaluation plan if needed
Evaluation

Show Accountability. Examples:

**Qualitative:** Of the high school students served by the program, 90 percent will express satisfaction with the content presented in the conflict resolution workshops. An administrative team of counselors and teachers attending the workshops will positively assess the presentations using a five-point evaluation scale that the Washington County School District has developed to rate outside presenters.

**Quantitative:** In the 2000-2001 fiscal year, 300 students will attend conflict resolution workshops. In addition, 28 teachers and counselors will attend three workshops, and will train an additional 84 school staff members on de-escalating violence and conflict within the classroom.

**Outcome:** The number of suspensions at Washington County high schools will decrease by 30 percent. Approximately 60 percent of students who were previously suspended will improve their school attendance or academic performance.
DISSEMINATION

Include a clear statement / plan to explain what will be done with the project results

- Systematic change
- Policy change
- Publications
- Presentations
- Larger studies
LONG-TERM PLANS

- Describe a plan for continuation beyond the grant period
- Indicate other available resources
- Indicate future funding for the project to show sustainability
BUDGET

- Be Clear
- Be Consistent
- Be Correct!
First Steps

- Examine the agency guidelines
- Review and understand institutional rates and policies regarding specific costs (i.e. indirect costs, fringes, travel, equipment, and consultants)
- Establish a format (normally provided)
- Review the project needs (ex. If meeting attendance is required, include travel, lodging, etc.)
BUDGET con’t

Categories
- Senior Personnel
- Other Personnel
- Consultants
- Supplies and Expenses
- Equipment
- Travel
- Space and Remodeling
- Other
- Totals and Specific Amounts of the Request
BUDGET EXPLANATION / JUSTIFICATION

- Consistent with the proposed activities
- Arranged by budget categories
- Explain any fiscal items that are not readily apparent
- Explain vulnerable categories to avoid cuts (i.e. consultants, equipment, and supplies)
- Avoid “TBA” for personnel
OTHER SUPPORT

- Show both current and pending
- Include granting agency key information
- Only include brief project description, if required
- May be presented in a list format
CURRICULUM VITAE

- Two to five pages \textit{or as specified}
- Project Director and other key personnel
- Highlight relevant experience
- or publications, \textit{specific to this proposal}
APPENDICES

- Only if allowed
- Possible inclusions:
  - Vitae
  - Facilities Description
  - Supplementary Data
  - Work Plan
  - Timeline Table
  - Letters of Support
  - Endorsements
  - Illustrations and Photographs
PROPOSAL DEVELOPMENT

TIPS

✿ Common Mistakes to Avoid

- Long sentences
- Unnecessary words
- Unsubstantiated claims
- Technical jargon
- Complex design and layout
- Handwritten
- Small type and margins
- Fancy fonts
TIPS con’t

Tips for Success

- READ THE GUIDELINES!
- Follow the guidelines
- Know the funding priorities
- Know the review criteria
- Write, rewrite, seek input
- Contact Program Officer
- Define unfamiliar terms and symbols
TIPS con’t

- Re-read for typos
- Submit on time
- Get others to read and comment
- Get reviewer comments
- Revise and resubmit
- Be persistent
- HAVE FUN, take chances, enjoy the experience!
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