Writing a Successful Grant Proposal
Breaking Down the Mystery of Preparing a More Competitive Grant Proposal

Ensuring a Good Fit

- Agencies award funding to solve problems or address issues that are important to them.
- To maximize success make sure that your proposal addresses a problem or improves a situation the agency funding the grant thinks is important.
- Are your goals consistent with the agency's goals?

Ensuring a Good Fit

- Check the call for proposals to see if the objectives of the grant meet with your objectives.
- If not a good fit, look for other funding sources.
Proposal Preparation

• List Goals and Objectives of the Program
  • Determine the priority areas of the funding agency
    • Gather background information to identify the goals of the agency

Proposal Preparation

• Proposal Evaluation Criteria
  • Specific criteria used by reviewers to evaluate proposals.
  • Pay careful attention and evaluate your proposal according to each criterion.

Proposal Preparation

• Seek Clarification
  • Getting past the jargon
  • Write down your questions
    • Make sure that they are well thought out
  • Contact the funder
Proposal Preparation

- List Tasks to Be Accomplished
  - Preparing a grant proposal is an involved process
  - Develop a plan of attack

Writing the Proposal

Funding is competitive!!

Writing the Proposal

- Attributes of a top-quality proposal
  - Delivers a logical and consistent message that matches the evaluation criteria
  - Involves a well-qualified team with a good track record
  - Appropriate budget for the work proposed
  - Easily understood and convincing message
  - Follow the format in the call for proposals
Writing the Proposal

- **Priority Problem**
  - You are asking for $$$
  - Make sure that your proposal addresses the problems that the agency/organizations deems important

- **Partnerships**
  - Most projects require partnerships to complete the work outlined in the proposal
  - Identify the weaknesses in your team and seek new team members to fill those “holes”
  - Partners bring matching funds and/or expertise
  - Letter of support from each partner stating the intended contribution(s)

- **Draft, Review, Edit, and Repeat**
  - A happy reviewer is usually a more positive reviewer
  - Make appropriate use of headings/subheadings and make sure that they correspond to the sections identified in the RFP
  - Plan in writing and rewriting your proposal several times...easy to read is your goal!
  - Get feedback from others
Writing the Proposal

- Well written text is free from spelling and typographical errors. It flows easily and is a pleasure to read.

Writing the Proposal

- Developing the Budget
  - Critical piece of the grant proposal
  - Be sure to satisfy all criteria laid out in the RFP
  - Budget requests must be reasonable and calculated/estimated – DON’T GUESS
  - Most proposals will require a specific budget form and a budget narrative

Putting It All Together

- Several components to your grant proposal
  - Some are simply filling in the blanks on different forms
  - Others require a written narrative
  - Pay careful attention to components that you are responsible for but have no control over
    - Letters of support
    - Partnership commitments
  - Be aware of deadlines
Putting It All Together

- **Documents**
  - CFP gives detailed instructions about the packet you need to put together for your submission
    - Important to get this packet correct
    - A missing or incomplete element may cost you being considered for funding
  - Grant announcement identifies required components
    - Program administrators use this list to sort and rank proposals

Putting It All Together

- **Matching Funds**
  - Some grants require this, others do not
    - Read the instructions
    - If you have any questions, make sure to contact the program administrator

Putting It All Together

- **Letters of Support**
  - It’s your job to solicit and submit these letters
    - You can develop a draft letter that can be edited to assist in this process. Make sure that you contact people in advance.
Putting It All Together

• Meet the Deadline
  • Consider developing an application package checklist
  • Develop a plan of work
    • Back schedule from the final deadline and determine your own deadlines for specific tasks
  • Pay close attention to the date and time of the deadline

You Can Do It

• Applying for a grant can seem like a mysterious process. If you are willing to put in the time and work, you can write a successful grant proposal.

For More Information

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