Grant Writing Made Easy

Through your commitment to project and dedication of your talents...

Tillie Harris, Ph.D.

This presentation is the sole property of the Grant Training Center
All rights reserved
No part of this presentation may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, without the prior written permission of the publisher.
Author: Dr. Mathilda (Tillie) Harris, Director
granttrainingcenter.com
Workshop Goals:

- Increase knowledge of the grant writing process
- Experience in reviewing funding information to determine alignment with your institution’s needs/goals
- Develop a project outline/concept paper addressing a grant RFP
- Make an individual commitment to be involved in preparing a full grant proposal
Grant writing made easy…

“Where shall I begin?” He asked.

“Begin at the beginning,” the King said, “and stop when you get to the end.”

Lewis Carroll, Alice in Wonderland
The truth about writing grants...

- Developing a successful grant “system” takes work…
- Funders don’t care what you need or want to do…
- Better to write one grant and be awarded than use a “shotgun” approach…
- Ask for the specific amount of money you need…
- Good applications can be helped to the top…
The truth about writing grants...

- Best way to never get a grant:
  - Don’t write one!

- Best way to get a grant:
  - Follow the instructions!
Steps to Successful Grantsmanship

- Know who you are and what you want to accomplish
- Know what needs to be done and how you want to achieve it
Steps to Success

- Build a relationship with the funding source
- Write a winning proposal
- Follow through!
Funding Resources

Public Sources of Funding

Federal Agencies

Non-Competitive (Formula Grants, Entitlements/Block Grants generally awarded through states, counties or cities)

Competitive (Federal agency awards to a specific grantee in response to a request for proposals or notice of funds available)

State and Local Agencies
Types of Funding

- Private Sources of Funding

Foundations
  - General support, Endowments, Project Grants, Challenge (Matching) Grants, Fellowship, and Capitol Grants

Corporations
  - Direct Cash, Donations, (equipment, facilities, land, employee services, etc.), Marketing and Promotion Products (creating income)
Types of Funding

Professional and Trade Associations

Including groups such as fraternities, sororities, labor unions, etc. – generally smaller $ for a specific purpose

Fundraising Activities

Activities an organization sponsors to fund specific projects
Advantages of Funding Sources

**Public**
- Purpose set by legislation
- Most likely to award large contracts
- Most likely to pay all project costs
- Use prescribed formats for proposals
- Most likely to offer technical assistance
- Funds available to a wider array of organizations

**Private**
- Focus on “emerging issues”
- Wide range in size of available grants
- Willing to support start-up funds
- Complex proposals are not always required
- May provide alternative forms of assistance
- Often fewer applications because of specificity
Disadvantages of Funding Sources

- **Public**
  - More bureaucratic
  - Complex proposal requirements and compliance procedures
  - Sometimes difficult to sell new ideas/high risk approaches
  - Changing political trends…

- **Private**
  - Grants are usually smaller
  - Information on policy and procedures and must be researched
  - Limited staff, less opportunity for personal contact
  - Less likely to cover all project costs (often no indirect)
Decision Points for Government Grants

- Who is eligible?
- What is the deadline(s)?
- What is the CFDA number?
- What is the award amount per grant?
Decision Points For Government Grants

- How many projects will be funded?
- Is there a match requirement?
- Where do I get the full application?
- What are the format requirements?
Decision Points For Government Grants

- What forms are required and what/whose signatures are needed?

- Who is the program contact?

- Where do I submit the application and in what form?
Decision Points For Foundation Grants

- Research Foundations – select 5 to 10 related to project need
- Check annual reports – look for match
- Develop/draft proposal
- Make contacts and ask questions
- Revise proposal – meet deadlines
Decision Points For Corporate Grants

- Develop prospects through research
- Find and use a champion
- Determine match/prepare proposal
- Make contacts
- Follow proposal requirements (application, presentation, etc.)
Be Prepared

- What is the problem?
- What data demonstrate that need?
- What project idea do you propose?
- What are the goals and objectives?
Be Prepared

- How long will it take to implement your project?

- How will you know your project was successful?

- What resources (time, money, staff) do you need?
Be Prepared

- Ask others for advice
- Identify a funder and check your eligibility
- Obtain guidelines on procedures
- Ask questions of the funder
- WRITE – follow the instructions!
Factors Considered in a Grant Award

- Capacity of the Application and Organization
- Extent of the Need/Problem
- Balanced Approach/Clear Proposal
- Utilizing Available Resources
- Project Evaluation/Results
Proposal Details

“In language, clarity is everything…”

- Confucius
Proposal Summary/Abstract

A clear concise summary should contain:

- Identification of applicant and credibility
- Issue/problem to be met
Abstract/Summary

- Objectives to be achieved
- Activities to be conducted to achieve objectives
- Total cost of the project and amount requested
Needs Statement

- Interesting to read and accurate
- Related to purposes and goals of your organization
- Supported by evidence (data)
Needs Statement

- Is responsible – issue/situation you can really do something about over the course of the grant

- Stated in terms of the clients or beneficiaries
Objectives

- Describes problem-related outcomes (not methods) of your program (to increase, reduce, etc.)

- Measurable and demonstrates effectiveness
  “Who is doing what, when, how much, and it will be measured by…”
Objectives

- Defines the population served
- Includes the time involved
- Described in numerical terms (if possible)
Objectives

Specific
Measurable
Attainable
Relevant
Time-bound
Methods

- Flows naturally from problem and objectives
- Clearly describes program activities
- States reason for activities
Methods

- Describes staff and client selection
- Shows that time and resources requested will achieve objectives
Budget

- The budget should include all costs for all years of the grant.
- Read and understand the budget form(s).
Budget

The budget should demonstrate that grant funds are aligned with funding agency policies.

- Describe how costs are derived.
- Discuss necessity and reasonableness.
- Describe specific functions of personnel, consultants, purchases, etc.
Budget

- Match activities, resources, and staff to cost/budgetary items.

- Budget narrative and project narrative must match – referencing same activities, resources needed, etc.

- Triple-check mathematics!
Evaluation

Clarifies program objectives...

- Process evaluation – program has been conducted in a way that is consistent with plan/proposal
- Product evaluation – measures outcomes, impact, or summative evaluation
Evaluation

- Define evaluation criteria
- Identifies data gathering methods
- Explains any tests or surveys
- Describes process of data analysis and how results will be used
Describe your project in 2 to 4 pages

Identify the need the project addresses

Discuss what has been done to address the problem

Explain your solution
Concept Paper

- Report your baseline data
- Identify resources you have/need
- Develop a timeline for activities
- Define anticipated outcomes
Concept Paper Components

- One page cover letter
- Abstract
- Introduction
- Needs Statement
- Program Description
- Evaluation
Concept Paper

- Program Description
  - What you are doing and for whom?
  - Plan to address the need/problem
  - Install confidence to alleviate questions
  - What, how, for, whom, how many –
  - Staffing
  - Sites and timeline
Commonly Cited Proposal Weaknesses

- Problem is not one of interest to funder
- Reader cannot locate scoring information
- Missing or incomplete answers
Useful Tips

- Make the proposal structure clear
- Make proposals easy to skim and find answers
- Use active verbs and simple constructions
- Convey enthusiasm
Visual Aides

Charts, tables, maps, and graphs can:

- Maximize space
- Emphasize main points
- Allow for quick comparisons (make sure symbols are clear when copied!)
Accountability

Established financial procedures and protocols must be followed!
Weakness

- Problem Statement is not well defined, documented, or understandable

- Objectives are too vague or not measurable

- Objectives do not match problem statement(s)
Weaknesses

- Budget is not substantiated by the narrative (items not explained) and/or costs for budget items are inaccurate or inflated

- Use of jargon, abbreviations, and/or buzzwords (readers may not know)
Weaknesses

- Staff responsibilities are not explained (time commitment)
- Evaluation is only summative
- Evaluation lacks details
Accountability

- Be able to identify costs by program and type of service (itemized)
- Keep track of program properly
Accountability

- Differentiate between types of property
- Document in-kind and cash match
- Document payroll
- Participant records
Accountability

- Monitor progress on project objectives

- Complete evaluation process REPORT!
Audit Process

- Technical assistance can improve accountability

- Citations
  - Non-compliance with requirements
  - Inappropriate expenditures (usually requires repayment)
  - Lack of documentation
Partnerships

A cooperative arrangement
Where each entity keeps his/her identity and the group works together towards a common goal.
Partnerships/Networking

- Local community (individuals)
- Agencies (federal, state, local)
- Providers of services (organizations)
- Businesses
Build Credibility

- Governmental connections
- Fiscal/Accounting
- Law/Legal Issues
- Data Collection
- Research Analysis
Results

- Focus on project goals

- If awarded – celebrate and then get to work

- If not selected – ask why and write again!
Master the Techniques of Writing Superior and Winning Proposals

- Following the discussed procedures:
  - You can master the techniques of writing superior and winning proposals.

- The End

This presentation is the sole property of the Grant Training Center
All rights reserved
No part of this presentation may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, without the prior written permission of the publisher.
Author: Dr. Mathilda (Tillie) Harris, Director
granttrainingcenter.com