Grant Project Basics

January

Avera Rural Health Institute

Goals and Objectives Browning Style

Simple tips from the "Doctor" of grant writing, Dr. Bev Browning, which will help you learn how to quickly and easily improve your odds of success.

Goals that pack a punch:

- Should bring vision to a program
- Should not be drawn out or boring
- Do not begin with the word "To"
- Use plenty of action verbs:

Accelerate, Advocate, Bolster, Broaden, Conceptualize, Cultivate, Devise, Disseminate, Enlighten, Extrapolate, Familiarize, Foster, Generate, Guide, Highlight, Host, Individualize, Interface, Join, Justify, Launch, Litigate, Manufacture, Modernize, Narrate, Nurture, Orchestrate, Originate, Pioneer, Propose, Quantify, Quote, Rehabilitate, Revamp, Streamline, Systematize, Theorize, Transpose, Utilize, Upgrade, Vitalize, Verify, Witness, Win

A goal is NEVER more than 1 sentence!

Objectives that paint a picture:

- Use Smart Objectives

  Specific
  Measurable
  Achievable
  Realistic
  Timely

- Never use the words "our," "we," or "my" in a federal grant - this will breach the psychological barrier with the complete stranger reviewing the application

A SMART objective is NEVER more than 1 sentence!

Please contact the Avera Rural Health Institute Staff with your questions and concerns

Grant Project Basics
February

Avera Rural Health Institute

Researching a Funder/Grantor

When searching for a funder who could provide support for your organization or project, there are a few key things to keep in mind.

Is it a mission match?

Does the mission of the funding agency align with what your project is trying to accomplish?

An organization's mission is a statement of where it wants to be in the long run. An agency is more likely to fund your project if it involves the same issues the organization has involved in its mission, or if your project aims for the same overall impact that the organization wants.

Is it a geographic match?

Does the funder distribute funds to your area?

Often, a funding program or agency, espcially small, private foundations, only award grant projects in certain parts of the country or to areas with certain demographic features.

Other important points to keep in mind when looking for a funding agency:

- Are there deadlines for the applications? Can you meet that deadline?
- Is there a cost match? Can your organization provide matching funding?
- What are the post-award requirements?

Useful websites for searching for grant funding:

- Grants.gov - www.grants.gov (for Federal opportunities)
- State Department of Health web sites
- Norris Consulting Group - www.norrisconsultinggroup.com
- Rural Assistance Center - www.raconline.org

Please contact the Avera Rural Health Institute Staff with your questions and concerns

Grant Project Basics
April

Common Terminology from the Grant World

Grants have enough acronyms, abbreviations, and special terms to make your head spin. Here's a few of the most common:

CFDA - Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance. Online database of federal programs, projects, services, and activities that provide assistance or benefits to the public.

Drawdown - The method used by a grantee to request money from the funding agency. A draw is the frequency (i.e. weekly, monthly, etc.) of the request.

DUNS Number - Unique nine-digit number for each phsycial location of your business provided by Dun & Bradstreet. The D-U-N-S Number is assigned for free to all businesses required to register with the US Federal government for contracts or grants.

Grant agreement - Usually sent by the funding agency when grant funds are awarded. The grant agreement generally details the terms and conditions of the grant award including the amount awarded, the award time frame, and reporting requirements.

LOI - Letter of Intent/Interest. Many funders ask for LOIs before full applications. The LOIs are usually a few pages in length and provide basic details about the proposed project to be funded. Based on the LOI, the funder will then invite (or not) the applicant to submit a full application.

MOA - Memorandum of Agreement. Document outlining components of a project. By signing, each partner is stating that they understand what their role in the project is and agree to the duties and responsibilities outlined in the document.

MOU - Memorandum of Understanding. Virtually the same as a Memorandum of Agreement.

Grant Project Basics
April

Common Terminology from the Grant World, Cont'd

NOFA - Notice of Funding Award. The NOFA is a legally binding document serving as notification to the recipient and others that a grant or cooperative agreement has been made. The NOFA contains or references all terms and conditions under which the project will be conducted.
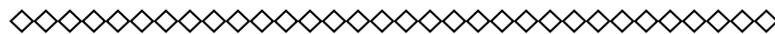
OMB - Office of Management and Budget. This agency assists the President in overseeing the preparation of the Federal budget and in supervising its administration in Federal agencies. The OMB also oversees and coordinates the Administration's procurement, financial management, information, and regulatory policies.

Peer Review - Grant applications that are peer reviewed are reviewed and scored by other grant writers across the country. The unbiased and objective reviewers are given a copy of an application and score it based on the funding agency's criteria.

Pro Forma - an anticipated, proposed or hypothetical set of numbers for a project; generally the budget.

RFP - Request for Proposals. Granting agencies issue RFPs when funding opportunities open. RFPs ususally outline important information about the funding opportunity.

Work plan - The work plan outlines goals, objectives, and activies of a project as well as the timeline during which each activity will be completed, the person(s) responsible and the desired outcome.

◇◇◇◇◇◇◇◇◇◇◇◇◇◇◇◇◇◇◇◇◇◇◇◇◇◇◇◇◇◇◇◇◇◇◇

References:
- Free Grant Terms - Reference Dictionary. www.//grants-government.com/GrantTerms/
- Dr. Bev Browning. *Grant Writing for Dummies*.
- Grants.gov - Glossary. http://www.grants.gov/help/glossary.jsp
- The White House - Office of Management and Budget. http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/gils_gil-home
- D&B DUNS Numbers for US Government Contractors & Grantees. http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform

Please contact the Avera Rural Health Institute Staff with your questions and concerns.

Avera Rural Health Institute

The grant review process

Once a grant application has been painstakingly written, proofread, and submitted, it has to be reviewed by the granting agency for award of funding.

How do funders decide what projects to fund?

- Competitive grant awards by either private foundations, or federal and state agencies are made through review processes particular to the specific program. Private foundations, especially small foundations managed by smaller boards of trustees, generally have more flexibility in funding their programs. This means that private foundations are able to fund, and sometimes do fund, projects that may not meet all of the established criteria for particular programs.
- Government agencies and many private foundations use formal review processes to evaluate proposals submitted to grant programs.

Meeting requirements:

The first step of funder proposal reviews is to ensure that applications meet basic eligibility and technical requirements. Funders use staff, or sometimes consultants to evaluate whether applicants and project proposals meet basic eligibility criteria and technical requirements which include:

- Basic eligibility:
    Is the applicant a legal and formal organization?
    Is the applicant organization the type of organization the funder seeks or is required to fund (nonprofit, for-profit, school, etc.)?
- Technical Requirements include reviewing applications for: adhering to font or page limits specified in requests for proposals, and whether the proposal includes specified components indicated as mandatory such as budget forms, a project narrative, or letters of support.

Avera Rural Health Institute

Typical review criteria includes:

- **Need:** description of unmet needs the project will meet and description of who will benefit
- **Response/Methodology:** description of project goals, objectives, activities, and target dates
- **Evaluation:** description of program outcomes, how they will be measured, and staff and consultants who will engage in collecting and analyzing data and completing reports
- **Impact:** qualitative benefits to the target population and description of how you will promote replication of the project to garner a bigger impact
- **Resources:** description of staff, consultants and partners who will complete activities and description of facilities and administrative supports for the project
- **Budget:** description of program budget, description of costs and benefits, and program sustainability plans

Grant reviewers

To evaluate how proposals meet criteria, and to help decide which proposals to fund, most funders use peer review or grant review panels, committees, or teams to evaluate and score proposals based on the review criteria. Some funders use staff, but the majority of government agencies, and some private foundations, use external reviewers. **External reviewer**s are professionals unaffiliated with the funding agency that have expertise and/or experience in the particular program area. Reviewers score and evaluate the proposals based on the review criteria.

It's not all about reviewer scores

Most funders consider additional factors when deciding what proposals to award funding. Although some funders simply fund the highest scoring applications based on the funding available, many consider additional factors when making awards.

Additional factors might include: geography (many funders way wish to fund proposals from diverse parts of the country, or target particular areas); special populations (whether the service area include populations of particular interest to the funder, or historically underserved populations); and preferences of priorities.