

Grant Writing Basics

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Basic Grant Outline

- Statement of Need
- Program/Project Description
- Evaluation
- Organizational Capacity
- Budget/Budget Narrative
- Sustainability

Or...

1. What is the problem?
2. How will you solve it?
3. How will you know how you're doing?
4. Why is your organization the one to solve the problem?
5. What resources do you need to solve the problem?
6. How will you keep your solution going when this funding is over?

Funding Research

Federal Grants: www.grants.gov

Foundation Grants

- GrantStation
- Foundation Directory Online by Candid
- GrantWatch
- GrantSelect
- RFP Bulletin on Philanthropy News Digest
- The Grantsmanship Center...
- Your favorites?

State Grants:

www.commerce.wa.gov/serving-communities/current-opportunities

Grant Calendars

- Work backwards from the deadline
- For federal grants, give yourself at least six weeks
- Include separate time for program/project development
- Include time for partnership development
- Schedule plenty of time for Letters of Support/Commitment (templates or samples help!)
- Set reminders
- Make it a living document

2015 GRANTS CALENDAR – PROJECT X

Activities	Work Period											
	Jan.	Feb.	March	April	May	June	July	August	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec
Check for release of X State grant		Check public notices										
Check for release of X Federal Grant				Check public notices								
X Foundation	Establish contact	Draft LOI		Submit LOI (no deadline)								
Y Foundation					Establish contact	Draft LOI		Submit LOI (Due 8/15)				
Z Foundation								Develop proposal			Submit proposal (due 11/15)	
Y State Grant Program	Define project	Establish partners; develop project		Develop proposal			Submit proposal (due 7/1)					
Z State Grant Program						Develop project		Develop proposal			Submit proposal (due 11/5)	
Y Federal Grant Program	Develop project		Develop proposal		Submit proposal (due 6/1)							
Adjust calendar based on completion/ next steps	Ongoing											
Set reminders	Ongoing											

Project/Program Development

Developing solutions for a clearly defined problem.

Understanding Problems

1. Define the problem and the environment surrounding the problem. What is the problem (specific negative situation related to well-being), what are the causes of the problem (existing factors that initiated the problem; may include attitude and behavior, current practices, existing conditions, awareness, etc. Assess underlying causes (why does the problem exist?) and root causes (core, entrenched, often social, political, cultural, religious, or economic).
2. Assess organizational capacity. What are your team/department/organization's strengths, weaknesses, resources, internal readiness, infrastructure, mission, etc.
3. Finalize the problem statement.

Designing Solutions

1. Project design – How will the project work? Who, what, where, when, why, and how?
 - a. Who? Assess what's already being done so you can enhance, not replicate/compete. Most funders love collaborations!
 - b. What? What actions are you going to take? What does the day-to-day of this project look like?
 - c. Where?
 - d. What is the timeline for implementation? Service delivery? Does the project have a start and end date or is it ongoing?
 - e. Why is this solution the best way to address the problem?
 - f. How will this project be implemented? Supervised?
2. Project evaluation – How will we know the project is working? Reduce, reuse, recycle.
3. Project budget – What will it cost to implement this project? Consider looking at typical grant required budget categories and use these as a guide to developing your project budget. Remember that a budget justification will be required; you'll need to show exactly how you arrived at each number and why each item is necessary. Make this part of your budget development process.
4. Project sustainability – How will this project continue when this round of funding ends?

Evaluation

Statement of Need:

Goal:

Resources	Activities/ Strategies	Outputs	Short Term Outcomes	Short Term Outcomes* Measurement Tools	Long Term Outcomes*	Long Term Outcomes Measurement Tools
<i>What is needed to accomplish the activities?</i>	<i>What activities will address the need?</i>	<i>What will these activities produce?</i>	<i>What positive changes will occur because of these activities over the next 1-3 years?</i>	<i>How will we measure short term impacts?</i>	<i>What positive changes will occur because of these activities over the next 4+ years?</i>	<i>How will we measure long term impacts?</i>
Goal 1:						
Goal 2:						

*SMART Outcomes – Specific Measurable Action-oriented, Realistic, Timed

Become an expert on the Funding Guidelines

- Know your funder. Read the website and annual reports, review IRS 990s (www.guidestar.org), talk to other grantees, FOIA successful proposals...
- Read, highlight, take notes, create a summary, use post-its...
- Sign up for notifications
- Participate in funder teleconferences and TA opportunities
- Read FAQs, Q&As, etc.
- Ask questions. Note that there may be a deadline for questions. Know who/if to contact.

Develop a checklist/timeline

- Every item, brief description, who is responsible for what, due dates, etc.
- Don't rely solely on the checklist provided.
- If working with a team, meet to clarify and confirm.
- Provide more time than you actually need.
- Ensure every item is included. Dig deep.
- Ask clarification questions early! **Ex. EIN verification, current W9...**

Item	Description	Responsible	Date
Line item budget	Template on www.grants.gov	Bob complete first draft by Mary review/respond by Bob complete final draft by Mary submit by	June 1 June 8 June 20 <u>July 1</u>
Job descriptions	See FOA page x or formatting	Mary send to Bob by Bob revise and send Mary by Mary submit by	
Resumes	One page limit. See FOA page x for formatting	Mary send to Bob by Bob revise and send to Mary by	
LOI	No more than 10. See FOA page x for requirements	Jane to	

Develop an outline

Key Points

- Make it easy for reviewers to give you a high score.
- Develop a word-for-word outline that follows the scoresheet exactly.
- Use language from the guidelines.

SECTION C. CRITERIA for PROPOSAL REVIEW (SCORESHEET)

Columns

A

B

C

[Shaded areas to be completed by reviewers - applicants complete column C]

4. Project Description 7 AAC 78.100(1) Criteria related to program policy, goals, outcomes, activities (refer to requested logic model)	Points Possible	Points Awarded	Page Number
1) Initial assessment of community conditions (see page 8)			
a. Proposal clearly aligns with the intent of this RFP as described in Section A(1)(a.)	10		
b. Proposal describes the community conditions as they relate to the overall impact of alcohol use and abuse.	10		
c. Proposal identifies what critical issues exist in the identified service area, related to youth alcohol abuse and adult heavy and binge drinking.	15		
d. Proposal describes how the community coalition will identify, collect and use local data to complete Steps 1-2 of the SPF.	5		
2) Community capacity			
e. Proposal clearly defines the service area identified for inclusion in this proposed project.	10		

4. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1) INITIAL ASSESSMENT OF COMMUNITY CONDITIONS

a. **Alignment with the intent of the RFP per Section A(1)(a.)**

The intent of the RFP is “...” XYZ Project aligns with this intent in the following ways: ...
[tables are great for this!]

b. **The community conditions as they relate to the impact of alcohol use and abuse**

The community conditions as they relate to the impact of alcohol use and abuse are...

c. **Critical issues related to youth alcohol abuse and adult heavy and binge drinking**

Critical issues related to youth alcohol abuse are...

Critical issues related to adult heavy and binge drinking are...

d. **How the community coalition will identify, collect and use local data to complete Steps 1-2 of the SPF**

The following table depicts how the XYZ Coalition will identify, collect, and use local data to complete Steps 1-2 of the SPF...

2) COMMUNITY CAPACITY

e. **The service area for XXX Project**

Add descriptive text from the RFP in another color so you know exactly what the funder expects from each item. Then create sub-headers that mirror the language of the RFP. So if the RFP describes letter d. like this:

d. How the coalition will identify, collect and use local data to complete SPF Steps 1-2

- What process will be used to identify community-level sources of the data, how will local data be collected?
- How will you relate that data to the identified risk and protective factors impacting youth alcohol use and adult heavy and binge drinking?

Your outline for letter d. might look something like this:

d. How the Coalition will Identify, Collect and use Local Data to Complete SPF Steps 1-2

- What process will be used to identify community-level sources of the data, how will local data be collected?
- How will you relate that data to the identified risk and protective factors impacting youth alcohol use and adult heavy and binge drinking?

The Process the Coalition will use to Identify Community-Level Sources of Data

How Local Data will be Collected

How the Coalition will Relate this Data to the Identified Risk and Protective Factors

Use clear, consistent headers,
sub-headers, etc.

MAJOR HEADER (ALL CAPS, BOLD, SHADED)

MINOR HEADER (SMALL CAPS, BOLD)

Sub-Header (bold)

Sub-Sub-Header (underlined)

Sub-Sub-Sub Header (italicized)

Make sure your proposal fits the required format

“At minimum, each page shall have top, bottom, right and left margins of one inch. The font used must be no smaller than 12-point proportional type, or 10 characters to the inch (pitch) for fixed width type. All pages must be numbered and single-sided.”

If no specific font is required, choose an easy to read font like Times New Roman.

7. Writing

Follow your outline. Give the funders exactly what they're asking for where they're asking for it. Your outline should mirror the review criteria and your proposal and table of contents should mirror your outline.

No baloney. If you are unclear about how a program works, it will probably be apparent to reviewers.

Start and end with the point.

Be objective. Avoid statements of opinion like “This program is amazing and it is having a powerful effect.” Instead, use statements of fact like “In a 2014 survey, 98% of JOY participants reported 90 days or more of sobriety following graduation.”

Budgets

- Accurate
- Realistic
- Ask for what you need, not for what you want
- Include in-kind with source
- In the budget narrative, walk reviewers how you determined amounts and why they are necessary. But remember the budget narrative should support the narrative without adding anything new.

Evaluation

How will you demonstrate success?

Heart, but no flowers. Try to give your proposal some emotional impact.

“By acknowledging teens who continuously face and overcome difficult obstacles, you have not only encouraged us to continue, but shown us that others care.” -JOY Program participant, age 14, Golovin, Alaska

The cost of underage drinking more than doubled from \$X in 2019 to \$X in 2024.

“The JOY Program continues to demonstrate it’s value to our state by consistently decreasing incidences of bullying statewide.” - Senator Soandso, Alaska

Follow the rules.

Formatting, required attachments, deadlines, page limits, what NOT to include, etc.

Cite Sources.

Enhances credibility.

Have someone else read your proposal.

- Ask for feedback from program people, colleagues, peers, partners, etc.
- Ask someone to proofread.

Add impact.

Text boxes with key data, powerful quotes, etc.

Do a side-by-side with the review criteria

Print out the review criteria and go through your proposal carefully to make sure every item is addressed.

Other tips

- Read successful proposals
- Stay current on trends and buzz words
- Sign up for grant notifications
- Read your reviews
- Become a reviewer
- Treat your funders like partners
- Save the outline, then v1, v2, v3, etc.
- Confirm version control

