THE FINE ART OF GRANTSMANSHIP

PREPARING YOUR TEAM FOR SUCCESS WITH GRANTS

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October 30, 2014
START BY BEING INFORMED

- Know **What Funders Want**
- Know **Yourself**
- Know **Your Environment**
- Know **Your Plan**
- Know **the Expectations**
KNOW WHAT FUNDERS WANT

• A few years of financial stability
  • Audited financials
  • Form 990s
  • Other revenue streams
• A history of accomplishments
• An active board of directors
• Well-developed programs
• Partnerships

Reality Check…new and start-up nonprofits may not be there yet
KNOW YOURSELF

- Mission statement, program goals, policies, procedures
- IRS tax exempt status
- Articles of Incorporation
- No compliance issues
- Insurance
- Technology
- Capacity
- Time to plan, write and review
KNOW YOUR ENVIRONMENT

• Board of Directors
• Partners
• Staff and volunteers
• Other stakeholders

And then there’s...
• Politics
• The economy
• The culture
• Infrastructure
• Financial outlook
• Priorities, trends
• Demographic shifts
KNOW (AND WORK) YOUR PLAN

- Stay focused: Mission, Vision, Values
- Make decisions based on your strategic plan
- Identify the skills needed and who will do the work
- Identify the resources needed for success
KNOW THE EXPECTATIONS

- EIN
- DUNS number
- SAM.gov
  - Organizations can’t move to the next step until this is completed
- Grants.gov
  - Get registered and create a user profile
- Establish your AOR(s)
  - Your E-Business Point of Contact (POC) must respond to the registration email and login at Grants.gov to authorize your Authorized Organization Representative (AOR)
HOW TO GET STARTED

• Brainstorm with others
• Develop a wish list
• Identify needs
• Write a case statement
• Examine funded programs
• Review publications
• Borrow good ideas
• Learn and network

“I think I have an idea.”
WHERE TO LOOK FOR GRANT FUNDING

- Federal government (agency web sites, grants.gov)
- State government (web sites, notifications, GIF)
- Foundations (corporate, private, family)
- Community Foundations
- On-line databases such as the Foundation Center
OTHER AVENUES

• Subscriptions through your affiliations
  • Chronicle of Philanthropy
  • Grant Station via Grant Professionals Association
  • Arkansas Nonprofit Alliance
• Free subscriptions and notifications
  • Grants.gov
  • Agency notifications & webinars
  • Sector-specific organizations and alliances
KNOW WHAT TO LOOK FOR

• NOFA – Notice of Funding Availability
• RFA – Request for Applications
• RFP – Request for Proposals
• CFDA – Catalogue of Federal Domestic Assistance
• Federal Register
DO YOU MEET THE FUNDER’S CRITERIA?

- Location
- Regional vs local impact
- Organization type
- Revenue threshold
- Track record
- Professional staff
- No conflicts of interest
- Capacity to fulfill the terms of the grant and the funder’s expectations
IS IT THE RIGHT GRANT FOR YOU?

- Does it complement your program goals?
- Is the funding limit an appropriate request?
- Can you comply with reporting requirements?
- If the grant is on a reimbursement basis, will your cash flow provide for needs?
- How does your proposal compare with recently funded projects?
- Does it match up well with the scoring factors the grantor will consider?
- Can you meet the required match?
- Can you leverage other resources?
- How competitive are you likely to be?
IMPROVE YOUR CHANCES

• Read the guidelines; hi-light important points

• Follow the instructions to the letter

• Plan it out before sitting down to write

• Call and ask for clarification

• Use the application guidelines as an outline for your work plan
WRITING TIPS

• Include all required components and attachments
• Know whether the due date is the “received by date” or “postmarked date”
• Weave a story into your narrative
• Repeat for clarity and impact
• Tie each activity to an objective
• Budget only for authorized expenses and be realistic
USE AN APPROPRIATE, READABLE STYLE

• Write in their language
• Use third person – NEVER first
• Write to inform and persuade
• Use bulleted lists
• Use action verbs, active voice
• Use graphics, tables, no solid text
• Use headings, bold and underline
• Write short sentences (Flesch Kincaid readability index)
• Use type faces with serifs
• Do not justify the text
OUTLINE YOUR WORK PLAN

- Cover Page
- Table of Contents
- Executive Summary
- Problem or Needs Statement
- Goals & Objectives
- Inputs
- Methods/Activities/Strategies
- Outputs
- Outcomes/Impact
- Key Personnel
- Timeline for Completion
- Evaluation Plan
- References
- Budget
- Appendices (resumes, letters of support, MOUs, etc.)
CELEBRATE!

Either....

1) You got funded! Congratulations! Now get to work!

OR

2) You survived and are now on the funder’s radar
   • Ask for feedback so you can prepare for the next round
   • Take advantage of webinars, workshops, technical assistance
   • Develop the new relationship
CONTACT INFORMATION

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