

Tips for a Successful Grant Proposal

Video Lottery Facility Local Development Council

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General Tips

- ▶ Follow the guideline/rules exactly
 - ▶ Guidelines/rules can be found on the LDC website
 - ▶ Be compelling but avoid overselling
- ▶ Avoid industry terminology
 - ▶ Remember— the LDC is composed of volunteers with various backgrounds. The body as a whole are not experts in any particular domain. Explain industry specific terminology and acronyms.
- ▶ Do not be verbose
 - ▶ Be compelling and to the point.

Standard Proposal Elements

- ▶ Cover Letter
- ▶ Executive Summary
- ▶ Need Statement
- ▶ Project Description
 - ▶ Objectives
 - ▶ Methodology
 - ▶ Budget
 - ▶ Evaluation

Cover Letter

- ▶ Succinct and to the point
- ▶ Introduces your organization
- ▶ Shows understanding of the LDC and its mission
- ▶ Identifies amount requested
- ▶ Has full endorsement from the organization's board of directors

Executive Summary

- ▶ Most important proposal element.
 - ▶ Clear and concise
 - ▶ Usually determines the priority of proposals
 - ▶ Summarize all key points of proposal: Need Statement, proposed project, funding requirements, organizational history
- ▶ Keep to one page
- ▶ Write last
 - ▶ Avoids including information not included in the proposal
 - ▶ Helps capture project evolutions that may have occurred.

Need Statement

- ▶ Brief statement of problem/ Need
 - ▶ Must focus on the people the organization serves, NOT on the need of the organization.
- ▶ Avoid circular reasoning
 - ▶ (In other words, the problem is not the lack of a solution: “The issue is we don’t have a community health center. Building a community health center will solve the problem.” *Approximately 75% of our community residents are on fixed incomes and do not have ready access to medical care. Building a community health center, would increase access to medical care and encourage preventive care, improving their quality of life.

Project Description

- ▶ Goals
 - ▶ Broad and overall expected outcome
- ▶ Objectives
 - ▶ Not goals! (Goals are general and not measurable)
 - ▶ Follow SMART Method:
 - ▶ Specific
 - ▶ Measurable
 - ▶ Attainable
 - ▶ Relevant
 - ▶ Time Bound
 - ▶ Rest of proposal ties directly to objectives
 - ▶ Only need one or two good objectives for a proposal

Project Description

- ▶ Methodology
 - ▶ Describes the HOW
 - ▶ Detailed description of how each objective will be met
 - ▶ Should be logical and viable
 - ▶ Expert approval
 - ▶ Feasibility Studies
 - ▶ Market Analysis
 - ▶ Surveys / Data Collection

Project Description

- ▶ Budget
 - ▶ Justification Narrative
 - ▶ Detailed line by line of all cost elements
 - ▶ Includes all funding streams
 - ▶ Based on Empirical Data
 - ▶ Historical Data (normally 3 years)
 - ▶ Actuals
 - ▶ Basis of Estimates
 - ▶ Market Research
 - ▶ Competitive Quotes

Project Description

- ▶ Evaluation and Reporting
 - ▶ Narrative on method of measuring progress, completion and success.
 - ▶ Documents how significant issues will be tracked and resolved
 - ▶ Tracking and Projection of expenditures
 - ▶ Outlines reporting format and schedule

Tips on Proposal Presentation

- ▶ Presenter is well prepared
- ▶ Presenter is an effective communicator
- ▶ Address key areas of proposal
- ▶ Do not introduce new items or costs not covered in proposal
- ▶ Try to limit to ten (10) minutes with five (5) minutes for questions and answers
- ▶ *Note: This is your time to make a compelling argument and impression