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