Writing a Successful Grant Proposal

Tuesday, May 15th, 2012
2:00 PM EST

Call-in number: 1-888-237-9331
Participant code: 833809

Presented on behalf of the Florida Bureau of HIV/AIDS
Dianne Perlmutter and Elena Thomas Faulkner

About Today
This webinar will be interactive
We also hope to learn from you
Additional webinars are offered in this series
JSI Research & Training Institute, Inc.

Public health consulting company
  – Involved in HIV prevention and care since the beginning of the epidemic

Capacity Building Assistance provider for Community Based Organizations, funded by the Centers for Disease Control
  – Monitoring and evaluation
  – Organizational infrastructure

Learn more at www.CBA.jsi.com

Webex Housekeeping

- Mute phone when you are not speaking
- WebEx functions
  - Chat
  - Annotate tool
  - Polling
  - Raise hand
- Open lines
  - Keeping comments concise and focused will help us maximize participation
Webinar Objectives

- Identify components of a grant proposal
- Understand how to assess fit for your organization
- Describe proposal planning & preparation process
- Describe grantsmanship techniques

Answer the Poll

How would you describe your grant writing skills?

- Just being developed
- Basic
- Strong
- Expert
Four Sections to Our Discussion

1. Deciding whether or not to apply
2. Planning your response
3. Writing your response
   – Each section of a typical grant
4. Questions and Resources

Grantsmanship tips included throughout

Deciding Whether to Apply
Navigating an RFP

• Start with the Table of Contents

Are you eligible?

• Eligibility requirements
  – Type of organization
• Minimum Funder Requirements/Expectations
  – Geography, population focus
  – Scope of work
    • For example, High Impact Interventions
Chat Check

• Chat to “everyone”....
  – When is a funding opportunity a good fit?

Is Funding a Good Fit?

• Consistent with mission
• Appropriate for organizational capacity, experience
• Funding sufficient for proposed scope of work
• Matches level of readiness
• Feasible to develop competitive response
Best Practice

Get as much information as you can
• Participate in pre-application call
• Submit written questions
• Review funder responses

Proposal Team Chat Check....

• Chat to “everyone”
• In one or two words, name one type of expertise you need on a proposal team
Managing your Team

- Familiarize the team with the RFP
- Use a proposal checklist
  - Assigned tasks
  - Timelines
- Check in regularly to monitor progress, adjust as needed
Sample Planning Tool

Team Lead
NOW can we get started???

First...
PLAN YOUR RESPONSE

Plan your Response

• Don’t start writing until you are clear on what your proposed scope of work will be
• Understand the relative weight of each grant section in the evaluation criteria so you can allocate resources appropriately
• Plan your programmatic approach
Define Your Programmatic Approach

• Do some hard thinking about:
  – What you can realistically propose
  – Your relative strengths
  – Your approach at program/intervention level

Define Your Programmatic Approach (continued)

• Understand funder’s framework/approach
  • CDC shift to High Impact Prevention
• Develop a logic model (if appropriate)
  • Graphical representation of what an intervention does, how/why it works, and its results
Logic Model Example

PROJECT RESPECT LOGIC MODEL

Assumptions

- Project Respect has been shown to reduce risk behaviors associated with HIV infection
- If Project Respect is replicated with fidelity by CDC-funded grantees, similar impact can be expected. Using Care elements:
  1. Prevention of new individual counseling sessions following protocol
  2. Identification of specific risk behavior and support
  3. Negotiation of realistic, achievable risk-reduction step
  4. Identify sources of support and provide referrals as needed.
  5. Prioritize clients’ need as part of intervention (optional).

Inputs

- Counselors
- Confidential Counseling Space
- Referral Relationships
- Resources for Training
- Program Manager
- Monitoring and Evaluation Tools

Activities

- Intervention:
  - Staff training
  - Provision of two individual counseling sessions following protocol
  - Referral activities
  - Training
  - Quality Assurance
  - Monitoring/Evaluation
  - Develop evaluation questions and monitoring/evaluation plan
  - Data collection, management, and utilization for program improvement

Outputs

- Intervention:
  - Agency staff implement Project Respect with fidelity
  - Agency staff make referrals to appropriate resources
  - Monitoring/Evaluation
  - Data sent for program improvement and reporting

Immediate Outcomes

- Client identifies specific risk reduction step
- Clients have increased motivation and intent to practice risk-reduction steps
- Client identifies sources of support for implementing steps
- Clients acts on risk-reduction steps

Intermediate Outcome

- Clients have increased self-efficacy

Long-Term Outcome

- Clients decreased risk-taking behaviors

Impact

- Reduction of HIV/STI transmission in agency target population

We’ve been there... have you?

- Propose to double program reach with same staff and resources
- Current staff aren’t trained in the new intervention, but it must start now....
- The new budget can’t support the promised activities
- The timeline for a new program doesn’t allow for ramp-up
### Answer These Questions Early-On

- Who are you?
- How does this opportunity fit for your organization?
- What are you asking for, including $?
- What problem will you address and how?
- Who will benefit and how?

### Answer These Questions Early-On (continued)

- How will you measure your results?
- How do your plans meet the funder’s purpose, goals, objectives and requirements?
Questions?

Writing Your Response
Typical Grant Components

• Cover Page/Form
• Narrative
  – Abstract or Introduction
  – Need/Problem Statement
  – Organizational Structure and Capacity
  – Project Description Approach
  – Monitoring/Evaluation
  – Partnerships/Collaboration
  – Sustainability

Typical Grant Components (continued)

• Budget
  – Forms
  – Narrative
• Appendices
Writing Tips

• Now that you’ve started writing
  – Include relevant concepts and language from the RFP, BUT:
    • Use RFP language appropriately, and in context
  – Refer to evaluation criteria as you write
  – Make it easy for the reviewer
    • Use format, order, and headings required by RFP
    • Assume the reviewer does not know about your organization

Write Clearly and Succinctly

“Politics and the English Language” - George Orwell, May 1945

• Never use a metaphor, simile, or other figure of speech which you are used to seeing in print.
• Never use a long word where a short one will do.
• If it is possible to cut a word out, always cut it out.
• Never use the passive where you can use the active.
• Never use a foreign phrase, a scientific word, or a jargon word if you can think of an everyday English equivalent.
• Break any of these rules sooner than say anything outright barbarous.
Narrative

- Proposal Introduction/Abstract (sometimes)
  - Brief summary of the proposed project
  - The first thing a reviewer reads
- Succinctly describes
  - The ultimate goal of the project/program
  - The steps to be taken to achieve that goal

“Agreed. We fund only those proposals we can understand.”
Documentation of Need/Problem

- Illustrate the need/problem using existing resources and data
- Discuss why the problem is important
- Describe how the need is experienced/manifested in your service area and/or target population
  - Geographic area
  - Risk or demographic groups impacted
  - Gaps in service
  - Social determinants of health associated with the problem

Activity

- Our community has been hard hit by HIV.

- Latina women in our community experience twice the prevalence of HIV than women statewide.¹ No culturally appropriate programs are currently offered for Latinas in our community.
Organizational Overview

- Describe mission, vision, scope and objectives
- Past experience with similar projects
- Governance
- Organizational Infrastructure
- Management Capabilities
- Monitoring and Evaluation Capabilities
- Relevant Recognition/Awards

Proposed Program

- Brief introduction to proposed approach
  - Address need
  - Overview of proposed program
  - Organizational capacity
- Program goals
  - What you hope to accomplish
Sample Goals

- Expand our testing program to reach high-risk youth
- Improve linkage to care for individuals who are newly diagnosed
- Expand resources to support client adherence to medication

Program Description

- Proposed intervention(s)
- Target population
  - Recruitment plan
- Partners
- Staffing Plan
  - Roles
  - Recruitment
  - Training
Program Objectives

• Write SMART Objectives
  – Steps, actions taken to achieve project goals

SMART Objectives

SPECFIC
M EASURABLE
A CHIEVABLE
R ELEVANT
T IME FRAMED
Work Plan

• Include all required tasks and timelines
  – Program start up and implementation
  – Funder’s requirements
    • Progress and data reports
    • Grantee meetings

Sample Work Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Person Responsible</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hire and train 3 staff to implement intervention</td>
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<tr>
<td>Develop Job Descriptions</td>
<td>Month 1</td>
<td>Project Manager</td>
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<td>Human resources office</td>
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<td>Distribute job announcement through existing networks</td>
<td>Month 1-2</td>
<td>Human resources office</td>
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<td>Interview candidates</td>
<td>Month 2</td>
<td>Project Manger</td>
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<td>Project Director</td>
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<td>Hire staff</td>
<td>Month 2</td>
<td>Project Director</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provide internal training</td>
<td>Month 3</td>
<td>Project Manager</td>
<td>Will utilize proven training system established in past</td>
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<tr>
<td>Staff attend CDC intervention training</td>
<td>Month 4</td>
<td>Intervention Staff</td>
<td>Training available in month 4 through FL DOH</td>
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### Sample Time Line

#### Project Period (2010-2011)

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<tr>
<th>Tasks</th>
<th>Aug</th>
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### Monitoring and Evaluation

- Describe plan for monitoring and evaluation
  - Process and outcome monitoring
- Type of required M&E activities vary by funder
- Identify data collection sources and methods
- Utilization of data:
  - Program planning, improvement, advocacy
  - Submission of required data to funder
- Affirm participation in any funder evaluation activities
Collaboration

- Description of partner organizations
- Roles and responsibilities
- Inclusion of Memorandums of Understanding

Describe how collaboration will help with:
- Reaching target population
- Provision of services
- Community input, etc.

Letters of Support/Collaboration

- Address RFP collaboration requirements
- Can provide key talking points
  - NOT a full letter
  - Partner to use own language
- Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs)
  - Both parties sign
Budget

• Follow the required budget form and format
  – Include allowable costs only
  – Do not exceed maximum amount allowed

• Budget Justification
  – Must reflect activities with associated costs in narrative
  – Costs should be reasonable and necessary
    • Document how costs were calculated
Line item narrative examples

$464 – Facilitation session logistics and materials

1. Cost of room rental and materials for facilitation sessions
2. $200 for community center room rental ($25/per session for 8 sessions) + $24 for flip pads (2@ $12 each)+ $240 copying costs ($2 copying cost per participant, 120 participants (15 at each of 8 sessions) = $464

“Fred, rumor has it you’re closing in on some profound, elemental truths about the universe, and I wanted to remind you that our research funding specifically prohibits that!”
Sustainability

- Discuss plan for continuation of program beyond funding period
  - Potential funding sources
  - Strategies for sustaining program activities

Required Attachments

- Review RFP for requirements
- Typical attachments include:
  - Organizational chart
  - Board of Directors roster
  - Proof of 501c3 status
  - Resumes
  - Job descriptions
Additional Grantsmanship Tips

- Respond to ALL criteria and questions in RFP
- Follow formatting and delivery instructions exactly
- Review of final draft by editor/someone who is NOT on writing team
  - Assess response to evaluation criteria and technical specifications
  - Edit document for clarity, consistency

Webinar Objectives

- Identify components of a grant proposal
- Understand how to assess fit for your organization
- Describe proposal planning & preparation process
- Describe grantsmanship techniques
Additional Webinars


- Logic Modeling and SMART Objectives: May 22, 2012
- Jenny Pace, Statewide Training Coordinator
  Bureau of HIV/AIDS, Prevention Section
  (850) 245-4444 ext. 2588
  jennifer_pace@doh.state.fl.us
Florida Resources

HIV/AIDS Trends and Statistics:
http://www.doh.state.fl.us/disease_ctrl/aids/trends/trends.html

HIV Testing Data:

Monitoring and Evaluation Resources:
http://www.preventhivflorida.org/Data_Eval/Monitoring_Evaluation.html

2010-2011 FL HIV Prevention Plan & Community Planning Guidance, Bureau of HIV/AIDS, Prevention:
http://www.preventhivflorida.org/Community_Prevention.html
Federal Websites

Diffusion of Effective Behavioral Interventions (DEBI) Website: www.effectiveinterventions.org
AIDS.gov: http://www.aids.gov/

Writing Resources

• HHS Tips for Writing a Strong Application
# Writing Resources

## Published literature:

- Williams, Joseph M. *Style: Ten Lessons in Clarity and Grace*
- Truss, Lynne. *Eats, Shoots, & Leaves: The Zero Tolerance Approach to Punctuation*

## Online resources:

- The Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL): [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/)
- Writing@CSU: [http://writing.colostate.edu/guides/](http://writing.colostate.edu/guides/)
- Garble’s Writing Center: [http://garbl.home.comcast.net/~garbl/](http://garbl.home.comcast.net/~garbl/)
- University of Illinois: The Center for Writing Studies: [http://www.cws.illinois.edu/workshop/writers/](http://www.cws.illinois.edu/workshop/writers/)

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# Grammar and Punctuation Resources

- University of Ottawa: [http://www.uottawa.ca/academic/arts/writcent/hypergrammar/](http://www.uottawa.ca/academic/arts/writcent/hypergrammar/)
Evaluation

• Please click on the link in the chat box to complete an evaluation of this webinar
• Your feedback is very important to us!

Questions?
Thank you for your time and participation!

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a project of

JSI Research & Training Institute, Inc.

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