
Grant Writing: Tackling the \$100,000 Term Paper

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Background

- Responsible for the WCC Cluster Grant (federal) funded x 2yrs, one application pending
- CID Grant - local HDC Access/Redesign Support. Funded x 2 years, plus one five year continuation
- TIF – Developed 3 rounds RFP's for Health Care for a total of \$60 million (competing and Non-competing RFPs), \$25 million community network grants.

Objectives

- Understand how to proactively plan your Grant Strategy
- Understanding different grant types and how to approach funding sources
- How to read a grant/use agency information for clues to increase success
- Organization tips for successful grant writing
- Understanding typical grant components
- Assembly tips

Proactively Plan Your Grant Strategy: The Home Front

- Step 1: Have a clear and current understanding of the ongoing projects, capability, capacity and current needs of your center
 - What is your center involved in? HDC?
 - What's coming up on the horizon? JHACO?
 - Do you need staff? Technology?
 - Are there upcoming policy changes that you must adapt too? (HIPAA)
 - Physical plant needs?

Proactively Plan Your Grant Strategy: Understand Your Environment

- Step 2: Take an ongoing (Monthly, Quarterly) inventory of grant opportunities – when you don't need \$\$\$!
 - Two perspectives
 - Levels of the environment
 - Local
 - Community
 - Regional
 - State
 - National
 - Types of benefactors
 - Private, Faith Based, For-Profit, Not-For-Profit or Public, Individuals or Institutions

Proactively Plan Your Grant Strategy: Plotting Possibilities

- A simple way to graphically depict funding opportunities is through the use of an “Opportunity Target”
- Combine levels of the environment with benefactor types and you have a complete “Opportunity Target” that diagrams all of the potential in the CHC environment
- Add application or approach due dates for a complete picture

Proactively Plan Your Grant Strategy: Core Materials

- Step 3: Develop a core proposal (when you ARE NOT under pressure) include:
 - Key demographics (population served, federal or state designations)
 - Be able to depict information in several ways
 - History of organization/significant achievements
 - Current organizational chart
 - Current job descriptions
 - Current financial statement
 - Current summaries of all ongoing grants and projects
 - Current “special events”
 - Current Board Roster

Proactively Plan Your Grant Strategy: Keep it Front and Center

- Step 4: Grant seeking should be an organizational priority
 - Standard item in Management and Board meetings
 - “Hey, are you aware of any funding opportunities?” Ask this question during networking opportunities, meetings with stakeholders, special events, chance meetings
 - Use the “Opportunity Target” as a communication device
 - *Remember that Grant Funding as a sole source of income is a bad idea! Diversify and plan for sustainability.*

The Approach

- Two types of grant funds
 - Acts of God
 - Planned approach
 - (Solicited) Deadline known well in advance
 - (Unsolicited) Cold approach to foundations/private benefactors that don't necessarily have open postings

The Approach: Acts of God

- The “out of the blue, you will never believe it, just dropped in our lap” opportunity!
 - The benefactor specifically and intentionally approaches your organization with a predetermined sum for very specific reasons
 - Don't laugh, it happens!
 - Often have a tight turnaround (to make this happen, we need your proposal by 5:00 pm today to present to our board)
 - Look very carefully for strings attached

The Approach: Planned Solicited

- Solicited Grants (low hanging fruit)
 - Usually offered by City, County, State or Federal benefactors. Also offered by Foundations
 - Often a regularly scheduled offering
 - Will generally include details on program design and reporting requirements.
 - Publicly posted on agency website, or other public venue

The Approach: Planned Unsolicited

- Unsolicited Grants
 - Easy to schedule on a regular basis
 - Contacts within the organization very helpful
 - Research the organizations history, philanthropic interests
 - Short proposals, tightly focused, that include expected outcomes
 - Match requested funds with organizations interest, mission and scope if possible

Ok – You have the Offering in Your Hand, Now What?

DO NOT START WRITING!!

- Background research on funding organization:
 - Strategic Plan
 - Policy Announcements
 - New Initiatives
 - Previously awarded application or project summaries
- Understanding Your Audience is Crucial

Ok – You have the Offering in Your Hand, Now What?

DO NOT START WRITING!

- Read it! Once is not enough
- Give a copy to your management team (include finance officer) and to your board. You will need buy-in and assistance
 - Highlight:
 - Anything that has to do with money
 - Program Goals/key outcomes or key points
 - Dates (Share these, so you can track progress)
 - Application due dates (can have several key dates before the actual submission)
 - Reporting dates
 - Required Forms/Key forms that require signatures

Ok – You have the Offering in Your Hand, Now What?

DO NOT START WRITING!!

- Understand the Review Process
 - Crucial! Pay close attention to scored elements of the application BEFORE you write:
 - Phrasing
 - Point distribution
 - Review committee practices and configuration
 - Previously awarded grants
 - Make sure your organization can meet all the grant requirements

Insider Tip – A Word About Application Dates and Deadlines

- “I do not want to help you get my money, so I will happily render ineligible any applicants that...”
 - Do not submit a Letter of Intent (if required)
 - Do not participate on required pre-award calls or conferences
 - Overlook electronic submission deadlines (which can be different from paper submission deadlines)

Ready, Set, Get Organized!

Getting Organized

- Grant Writing takes longer than you think – plan accordingly
 - Appoint a “belly-button” -a key person to coordinate the grant application
 - Plot application process backwards from the deadline
 - Information gathering (reduced because you have created a core application and have facts and figures ready)
 - Drafts/Reviews
 - Finalizing – getting signatures

Insider Tip: Getting Signatures

- Believe it or not – grants get disqualified for not having the *proper* signatures, or not *having* signatures
- Reviewer will not buy your desperate “can I send a signature page separately?” story
- Get signatures as early as reasonably possible and keep the documents in a safe place – away from liquids, ashtrays, and animal feces

Getting Organized – Details, Details

- Develop a work plan
 - Identify necessary documents such as letters of support, MOUs and contracts
 - Define tasks and expected work product
 - Assign individuals responsible
 - Due Dates
 - Deliverables
 - Set regular checkpoints and meet them

Start Writing!

- Standard elements of an application
 - Overview of organization (BRIEF history)
 - Problem Statement (Short statement of issue)
 - Project Abstract (Short Summary of project)
 - Program Narrative
 - Description of need (what is the need in you center/community you are responding to)
 - Work plan (How you are going to achieve the program goals)
 - Evaluation measures (how you are going to demonstrate that you are making progress)
 - Support requested (budget)
 - Appendices

Overview of the Organization

- Brevity! Be concise
 - Key points:
 - Why started?
 - Expansion/development of mission
 - Key events and response (Hurricanes, org. shifts)
 - Critical statistics - how many served, type of population
 - Growth
 - Key individuals (be brief)

Problem Statement

- Proof that you understand the offering and that your organization can respond appropriately
 - This needs to be a tightly worded, short paragraph
 - “In an effort to eliminate health disparities and continue to improve the health status of underserved populations, this org. will develop a self-management patient support program using community outreach, provider training and the development of a multi-lingual self-management curriculum.”

Project Abstract

- Short summary of the application
 - Usually used to provide stakeholders with information about project
 - Needs to be clear and concise
 - Usually requires the disclosure of the amount requested, needs to be addressed, proposed services and population group to be served
 - Make sure what you say matches the rest of the information in the grant!

Program Narrative

- The heart of the application – multiple components
 - Use the grant to your benefit, make it easy to review
 - Here is where you tell your story
 - Be authentic
 - Excellent opportunity to directly speak to the program goals of the offering
 - Match the phrasing exactly, and highlight in bold
 - Do not include unnecessary information

Program Narrative: Example

- **PIN Program Requirement**
 - ***Applicant demonstrates an understanding of the role of Cluster-level leadership and activities in ensuring the success of the HDC program at improving quality at cluster health centers, by relating the specific objectives to the goal of eliminating health disparities.***
- Cluster Response
 - The WCC leadership bears the responsibility for understanding the complexities of the current environment and translating those complexities into measurable program performance that is understandable and replicable at the health center level. The successful leadership of the WCC has been and will continue to be contingent upon four factors, outstanding staff, strong PCA partnerships, the support of the WCC Steering Committee and the reliance on data to evaluate performance in relation to the goal of eliminating health disparities and informing cluster policy.

Program Narrative – Description of Need

- 2 elements – Narrative and Data
- Need described by the PIN:

The applicant demonstrates an understanding of the specific HDC needs within its cluster, including: (a) the number of cluster health centers that have not yet participated in Phase 1 (Initial Learning Year) activities; (b) the number of cluster health centers that have completed Phase 1 and are involved in Phase 2 (Transformation) activities; (c) the number of Phase 2 health centers that are ready for “scale-up” activities such as Prevention and Cancer screening; and (d) the number of health centers not yet ready for scale-up because of data systems difficulties or other issues.

Program Narrative – Description of Need

■ Applicant's response: Narrative

The following three tables demonstrate a detailed knowledge of the specific HDC needs within the cluster. This extensive understanding of the health center infrastructure can be applied with strategy and precision to spread the HDC as aggressively as possible. The total number of center participation demographics as of October 2005. This data was collected from 2003, 2004 UDS, BPHC master spreadsheets obtained in March 2004, state and PCA data.

Program Narrative – Description of Need

■ Applicant's response: Data

State	2003 Grantees	2004 Grantees	Participating Grantees	Non-Participating Grantees	Phase I	Phase II
UT	12	12	12	0	1	11
WY	4	4	3	1	1	2
OK	7	8	6	2	2	4
LA	17	18	18	0	4	14
AR	12	10	10	0	1	9
ND	5	6	4	2	2	2
SD	7	7	6	1	0	6
MT	12	12	10	2	3	7
NM	14	14	13	1	3	10
TX	40	51	34	17	5	29
CO	15	15	15	0	2	13
Total	145	157	131	26	24	107

Program Narrative - Work Plan

- Where the rubber hits the road
 - How you are going to implement
 - Take program requirements and match with action steps – again, making the reviewer’s job easy
 - Describe action steps concisely, but don’t be afraid of detail
 - Dates, positions responsible, outcomes, deliverables
 - Be consistent in your formatting

Program Expectation A: Transformation & Dissemination of Quality Improvements: Building the Collaborative Community •Work Plan Items that relate to the components described under Criterion 2, Response are identified under Action Steps and are indicated in bold. •Estimated budget percentages are assigned by general program expectation category.				
Objective	Action Steps	Deliverables/ Responsible Party	Time-line	Budget 35%
1. Develop a detailed project work plan for Readiness and Transformational activities and submit to HRSA as part of the application. Plan should include:		WCC Director		
a. Efforts to engage Senior leadership of other PCAs in the cluster and of all cluster Health Centers in Readiness and Transformational activities	The WCC will continue to sponsor a combined monthly PCA/SC call. This call occurs on the 3 rd Wednesday of each month at 2:00 CST. 1-800-416-8128, 196656#. Topics include updates on Readiness, Transformation and Implementation activities as well as summit planning.	WCC Director SC/PCA roster SC/PCA minutes	3 rd Wed 04/06 – 03/07	
b. Efforts to familiarize cluster health centers who have not previously participated in HDC with the models and approaches the HDCs use, and other readiness activities, with involvement of other cluster PCAs and of network teams in the cluster	WCC staff has been in contact with centers that have not previously participated (26 centers total). All prospective participants are provided with introductory materials that include the HDC website and a password for the e-learning courses at http://www.tachc.org/HDC/eLearning.asp New centers have been encouraged to complete the online courses in order to become familiar with the activities and methodology of the Collaborative. Centers that have delivery sites that have not participated in Phase II will be contacted and recruited. This work-plan item is linked to: Component C, item 2	WCC Staff WCC Recruitment materials Demonstrated increase in participating centers/sites (tracked and reported quarterly)	Pre-work to Occur in The 2005-06 Grant cycle. Ongoing Support 4/06-3/07	

Program Narrative - Evaluation Measures

- Did you do what you said you would?
- Example from PIN:

The application includes an outcome/results oriented evaluation plan with qualitative and quantitative measures for performance of proposed activities. This plan should also address maximizing program resources, a quality control and completion of work on schedule.

Insider Tip

- A lot of benefactors do not clearly express their expectations for evaluation. This is particularly true with new, or pilot programs
- You are doing them a favor by designing clear, uncomplicated VERIFIABLE measures
- Make the measures easy to collect and report

Program Narrative - Evaluation Measures

Applicant's response:

- The WCC practices both qualitative and quantitative performance-based project management. This methodology has been crucial to our success with the HDC to this point.
- (Quantitative) The review and adjustment of the WCC Clinical Measures. The 17 measures consist of quarterly disease specific registry goals that are shared with the WCC staff and Steering Committee.
- (Qualitative and Quantitative) Review of the WCC Phase I and II progress reports. This document allows for a quick review of team reporting levels as well as summary of state based activities

Program Narrative - Support Requested

- It's the budget! Writing about numbers is hard
 - Usually includes a narrative and standard budget form
 - Be concise, make sure the narrative backs up the budget and visa versa. Don't be sloppy!
 - Make sure your computations are correct and the budget adds up
 - Make certain that budget information is consistent and accurate through all parts of the presentation
 - Do not be grandiose – experienced reviewers can tell a snow job when they see it
 - On the other hand, don't undersell – be direct about stating your needs
 - Demonstrate sustainability

A Word About Sustainability

- Build sustainability in on the front end
- Sustainability is not “I hope to get this grant next year”
- When making technology infrastructure purchases – think about return on investment and total cost of ownership – many times buying the materials is the cheapest part

Appendices

- Be conservative
- The more information you provide, the more you have back up
- Make sure they do not compete or contradict materials in other parts of the grant
- Do not include big documents or complicated charts or graphs

Final Observations

- Stick to the page limits, font specifications, and formatting
- Provide all requested materials
- SAVE!SAVE!SAVE!
- If you are submitting electronically, finish a WEEK ahead. Do not expect to get your grant in on time if you start uploading the day it is due
- Print, assemble and copy BEFORE arriving at the office of the benefactor
- Give yourself plenty of time for disasters – traffic, missed flights, delivery problems, teething puppies

Insider Tip

- ***Follow all assembly and formatting instructions to the letter. Failure to do so will get your application rejected***

Happy Writing!

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