How To Compete Effectively for Grants

by

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[Signatures]

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INTRODUCTION

Grantsmanship, or the ability to secure funds from public or private sources, has become increasingly important over the past two decades, and should continue to be important in the 1990's.

During the 1960's the federal government, through several different agencies, provided over two-thirds of the monies made available for sponsored projects. However, this figure has dropped significantly since the heyday of the federally funded project in the mid-1960's. In 1975 the federal government was involved in funding only fifty percent of the sponsored projects.1 In 1981 the Reagan Administration forecast a cut of twenty-five billion dollars in direct grants to non-profit organizations. By 1984 actual reductions totaled twenty billion dollars, or eighty percent of the predicted cuts. Grant dollars available in 1986 also were less than the available amount in the year 1980.2

During the last fifteen years, the federal government has played a key role in sponsoring projects, but its relative importance as a funding source has decreased. At present, the fastest growing

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sources of support are private industries, foundations, state governments and other non-federal organizations.

Along with diversified funding sources, the numbers and types of organizations and individuals seeking sponsored projects have changed. The field of educational research provides an example of the tremendous increase in the number of organizations seeking funds. In the mid 1960's, approximately four-thousand individuals were undertaking educational research and development. In a ten-year period, that number increased over one hundred and fifty percent, to just over ten-thousand individuals, with that number expected to increase through the 1980's.³

The change in the distribution of the funds over the same period of time is of equal importance to the increased number of individuals undertaking funding projects. In 1965, seventy percent of research and development funds were granted to colleges and universities. By 1974 the colleges and universities received only twenty-nine percent of these funds. Conversely, non-profit organizations other than colleges and universities, which received only ten percent of such funds in 1965, were awarded over fifty percent of these funds in 1974. These trends have remained consistent or stable through the mid 1980's, with minimal changes in the distribution. In fact, in 1986 corporations and foundations awarded over 9.5 billion dollars or fifty-two percent of funds to non-profit organizations other than colleges and universities.⁴

These trends, as well as similar trends in sciences, natural resources and urban renewal coupled with the fact that federal government programs, such as Urban Development Action Grants are dying or dead indicate one general trend: in the future it is likely that more individuals, from increasingly diverse organizations, will be competing for available dollars from a great number of funding sources. Therefore, the knowledge of how to compete more effectively for grants and contracts is very important.

Several techniques combined into two methods for becoming more effective in competing for grants and contracts will be explored in this paper. The first method discussed in this paper concerns improving proposal writing skills. Sections of this paper detailing elements of successful proposals include key elements of the proposal (i.e. cover letter, problem statement, budget, etc.), the evaluation process used to analyze proposals, information on why proposals fail and quick tip references for winning grants and contracts.

The second method discussed includes suggestions for choosing the correct market place, capitalizing on differences, utilizing advocates, knowing the sponsor, and other techniques for gaining a competitive advantage. Included in the paper too, is a section on where to reference funding sources.

Before continuing into the grantsmanship process, two basic terms for prospective grant or proposal applicants understanding need definition. The two terms to be defined are grant and contract. These two terms are often used in conjunction with each other, but are very distinct types of awards. These awards also may require different types of information in the proposal or application stage.

Basically, a contract is awarded for a project where the funding source has already identified or determined a number of factors involved in the project. Typically the funding source will identify a need, determine the expected outcomes for the project, chose an acceptable cost range and estimate a time frame for the project. In a contract situation, the funding source just judges who among the candidates is best suited to carry out the project. The choice may be based on several factors including: experience, geographic location, and quality of personnel. These, along with other decision factors, are discussed in greater detail later in the paper. Also, the funding sources of a contract generally will expect a great deal of management control over whomever is awarded the contract.
Several types of contracts are offered. The most commonly offered contracts are fixed price, straight-cost-reimbursement, cost-plus-fixed fee and cost sharing contracts. The type of contract awarded is usually determined by the budget contract negotiations.

The basic difference between a contract and a grant is that factors which have been predeter-
mined for a contract typically have not been determined for a grant. Therefore, proposals or applica-
tions for grants generally require more ingenuity and creativity on the part of the applicant. Grants tend to be awarded for experimental projects or for projects where the idea and purpose of the project have been suggested by the recipient. In general, grants are characterized by greater latitude in shifting funds among budget categories, more freedom in the methods used to accomplish the intended outcomes and more flexibility in the timetable. Grants are growing in popularity among foundations and corporations awarding funds, whereas contracts have been gaining popularity and use by governmental funding sources.

As stated in the above paragraph, government funding sources have been awarding an increasing number of contracts. Since government contracts often have a well-defined format which must be followed, a majority of the techniques and suggestions in this paper are applicable towards projects that have a rigid application process. In fact, the individual proposal section of this paper is based on the general government grant/contract form.

\footnote{Mary Hall, Developing Skills in Proposal Writing, (Portland, OR: Continuing Education Publication, 1977), p. 17.}

\footnote{IBID}
It is seldom a good idea to submit a blind proposal. A blind proposal is when the applicant jumps from the project formulation stage to the submitting of a proposal. When this situation occurs, the proposal is deemed 'blind' because of the applicant’s relative lack of knowledge concerning the funding source. Instead of this approach, many consultants recommend intermediate steps in the proposal preparation process. These intermediate steps allow an applicant to gather further information on potential funding sources. Information which will allow an applicant to:

1. Make a realistic determination of the availability of funds;
2. Identify priorities of the funding source that should be identified in the proposal;
3. Identify types of information that should be included in the proposal and determine the proper format of the proposal;
4. Prepare a feasible timetable for preparation of the proposal;
5. Determine the degree of interest the funding source may have in a specific project;
6. Obtain any suggestions or comments the funding source may make prior to the final proposal submission.\footnote{Judith Mirick Gooch, \textit{Writing Winning Proposals}, (Washington, DC: Council for Advancement and Support of Education, 1987), pp. 6-7.}
A majority of the information needed about Federal and State agencies and the grant-in-aid programs can be secured by a phone call or an initial letter of inquiry. A grant applicant should secure the following information in order to strengthen a proposal:

- The correct name for the specific grant-in-aid program or the program category under which the application will be made.
- The priorities of the agency for the use of funds.
- The fashion in which the program will be announced in the coming year (i.e. through a notice in The Federal Register, a general program description or a Request For Proposal).
- The amount of money available in the current fiscal year for this program, also the amount projected for the next fiscal year. It will also be important to know how much money the program will need for continuing awards.
- The regulations for the involved program. Federal agencies, by law, must periodically update regulations to be used when administering each grant-in-aid program. These regulations are printed in The Federal Register. The regulations will provide eligibility requirements of applicants, application deadlines, detail matching requirements and list other pertinent information.
- An indication whether the program is administered by a state or regional agency, and, if so, whom should be contacted. This also will allow the applicant to inquire if an A-95 review is required. (A-95 reviews are a circular issued by the Federal Office of Management and Budget. These applications are to be reviewed by state and local governments prior for submission for federal funds. This theoretically minimizes unnecessary duplication of progress and maximizes coordination.)
- The proposal format and any accompanying state or federal forms that need to be attached. This will also allow the applicant to find out if preliminary letters of intent are required prior to the submission of a proposal.
- The application deadline and the dates proposals are expected to have been reviewed.
• The purpose of the legislation under which the program is authorized. A citation to the Public Law that authorizes each grant-in-aid program can be found in the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance. A copy of the Public Law and the House and Senate committee reports can be acquired through a Congressman or state library. These items can be useful when trying to pinpoint priorities that Congress has registered for uses of the funds.

• The average amount (number and dollars) of grants or contracts previously awarded through the program.

• The matching requirements. Many Federal programs require some amount of local contribution, either in services or cash.

• A list of previous years grants and contracts financed through the program. This will allow applicants to rule out duplicate ideas, and to assess how closely the program follows its stated priorities when actually granting funds.

• An indication of whether geographic location is a factor in the evaluation process and, if so, what agency in the region has received an award from the funding source. This will allow the applicant to possibly learn additional information concerning the funding source from another agency in the region.

• A detailed list of any restrictions placed on the use of funds.

• The procedures used for proposal review.

• Details on whether any meetings are scheduled to answer questions or provide technical assistance to applicants.⁸

A simple letter of inquiry, as stated before, can secure most (if not all) of the aforementioned information listed. This information is important because it will help applicants fine tune their proposals. A well-prepared, accurate document gives a positive reflection of the applicant agency. However, other techniques exist for increasing an applicant's competitive edge. These techniques include choosing the correct market, knowing the sponsor and utilizing information sources.

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Choosing the Correct Market

In shopping the general market place, applicants should remember that the federal government, despite its diminishing importance, is still the largest single funding source in the world. The Federal government awards between 20-25 billion dollars yearly, through different types of grants or contracts. The first type of grant is a categorical or project grant.

Categorical Grant

Categorical grants are designed to solicit proposals within narrow governmental guidelines. These types of grants address a very specific area, for example, drug abuse prevention, National Cancer Research, or nutrition education for the elderly. The government decides what problems need to be addressed, and the applicant designs an approach to solve the problem.

Project grants are awarded by numerous federal agencies through congressionally authorized programs. Grants are awarded to applicants who submit the best proposals in meeting the guidelines of the funding agency. Most of the programs have outside review panels evaluating their proposals. Each grant category also has its own federal office to administer the funds. Project grants are also considered one of the most popular government grants because project design is left to the applicant.

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GAINING THE COMPETITIVE EDGE
**Formula Grant**

The government also awards formula grants. Formula grants refers to programs where funds are awarded according to a set criteria. Criteria used for these types of programs are numerous. The government may award funds based on census data, unemployment figures, number of handicapped, or the number of veterans a state, city, or region may have. These types of programs are also often used to filter money into economies, CETA (Comprehensive Employment Training Act) and the “job bill” of 1983 are prime examples.

Funds for these programs are not directly passed from the federal government to the recipient. Funds are first disseminated through an intermediary, such as state, city, or county governments. The general rules and guidelines for rules are developed at the federal level, but local political input and interpretation can alter the program and tailor it to an area’s needs.\(^\text{11}\)

**Block Grant**

A third type of grant is a block grant. The block grant and the aforementioned formula grant are conscious efforts on the government’s part to shift the decision process of how to spend federal money to the local level. The federal government is allowing local governments greater freedom in deciding what to do with federal funds.

In the early and mid 1970’s, over ninety categorical-grants programs were combined to create less than a dozen block grants, covering such areas as health and housing and community develop-

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opment. In 1981, 54 categorical grants were combined into 9 block grants. The cuts and consolidations of 1981 also revamped previous community service and community development block grants. Each state is allotted a calculated figure for each block category based on money received from the former categorical grants. The process allowed the federal government to reduce its workforce and hand the decision-making process to the state, which governs distribution of funds.\textsuperscript{12}

\textit{Contract}

Contracts are becoming increasingly popular with the federal government.\textsuperscript{13} Popularity has risen because control over project need and budgets are easily maintained in a contract situation. A contract generally has all of its major components (i.e. goals, objectives, timeframe, budget and range) stipulated by the funding source. Contracts are awarded on a low-bid basis to those deemed qualified to do the specific work. To be successful in the contract arena, expertise in the field and a reputation for solid work are helpful. Some experts suggest the best way to break into this market place is as a subcontractor, to gain confidence, contacts and experience.\textsuperscript{14}

\textit{The Foundation Market}

There are approximately 21,967 private foundations in the United States. These foundations have assets of 48.2 billion dollars. This may seem very promising to perspective grant applicants


\textsuperscript{13} IBID, pg. 49.

but the following statistics may give prospective applicants a more realistic idea of the foundation marketplace:

- Fifteen percent of the foundations (approximately 3368) account for 92 percent of all foundation assets.
- Approximately 15 percent, or 3368 foundations, give 82 percent of all grant dollars awarded.
- The larger foundations, with assets between $20 and $100 million, average grant sizes in the $20,000 to $25,000 range.

In short, a small percentage of the foundations have most of the assets and a relatively high average grant size.\(^{15}\)

Selecting the proper foundation marketplace and requesting a proper grant award from a potential funding source involves having knowledge of the types of foundations. For use in this paper, the foundation marketplace is divided into four classifications:

1. Community Foundations;
2. National Foundations;
3. Special Purpose Foundations;

**Community Foundations**

The community foundation group is composed of roughly 300 foundations. It is the newest and fastest growing area in the foundation marketplace. The main purpose of these foundations

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is to provide a grant award system to address problems and areas of interest that effect the geographic area the foundation was created to serve. Funds for these foundations are usually the result of endowments. This allows citizens to leave a bequest to the funding source ensuring the money will be used to enhance the community.

As the name implies, these foundations are primarily designed to promote the betterment of a limited geographic area. The primary beneficiaries of community foundation grants are in the health area, social welfare arena, education, and arts and culture. As of 1988, the ten largest community foundations are:

**LARGEST COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS BY ASSETS**  
(All dollar figures expressed in thousands)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FOUNDATION</th>
<th>STATE</th>
<th>ASSETS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. New York Community Trust</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>$634,967</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Cleveland Foundation</td>
<td>OH</td>
<td>498,767</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Marin Community Foundation</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>424,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Chicago Community Trust</td>
<td>IL</td>
<td>269,458</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Boston Foundation</td>
<td>MA</td>
<td>197,964</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. San Francisco Foundation</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>164,144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Communities Foundation of Texas</td>
<td>TX</td>
<td>139,774</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Columbus Foundation</td>
<td>OH</td>
<td>135,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Hartford Foundation for Public Giving</td>
<td>CT</td>
<td>125,895</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Pittsburgh Foundation</td>
<td>PA</td>
<td>108,690</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


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National Foundations

When thinking of large foundations, the names Rockefeller and Carnegie often come to mind. Large foundations, however, number only a few hundred, but account for over two-thirds of all assets among foundations. In addition, this limited number of foundations also account for 50 percent of all grant dollars awarded by foundations. These foundations give across the United States, and have a general scope to their interest and funding (e.g., The Sage Foundation is concerned with urban problems).

These types of foundations generally support projects that have a potential effect on a broad scale. It is common for these foundations to fund projects which allow other groups to replicate an approach and resolve similar problems. National foundations like to promote positive change and usually do not fund projects that are not highly visible.17

Special Purpose Foundations

Several hundred foundations fall into the special purpose category of foundations. Such foundations include those whose funding records consistently support a specific area, and their funding represents a significant contribution in that area. For example, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation specializes in the health area. In general, applicants wishing to receive a special purpose foundation grant should tailor their respective projects to the area of the grantees specialization.

The potential impact of a project on the area of special interest is often a major factor in the funding decision process.\textsuperscript{18}

**Corporate Foundations**

The number of corporations utilizing a corporate foundation to award funds is on the rise. However, there are several things to remember when approaching a corporate foundation for funds. The first thing to remember is that a corporate foundation is an extension of a profit making company. Most corporate foundations give for these reasons:

- For tax purposes;
- To help attain corporate goals, i.e. man power training;
- To benefit employees or management through health programs, cultural programs, or recreation facilities;
- To improve the corporate image by bettering their reputation;
- To gain market place advantage through product research and development.

Corporations usually have giving patterns related to the geographic concerns of their employees and factories. If a perspective grantee wants to secure a corporate grant, the applicant should approach the process as an investment process. Whenever possible, the applicant should stress the future benefits the corporation will receive.\textsuperscript{19} Information concerning the interest of a particular foundation can be found in foundation reports which are available in the Foundation Center Library, headquartered in New York City.

\textsuperscript{18} IBID, p. 56.

PRIVATE-SECTOR SUPPORT
FOUNDATIONS/CORPORATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>COMMUNITY FOUNDATION</th>
<th>NATIONAL FOUNDATION</th>
<th>SPECIAL PURPOSE</th>
<th>CORPORATE SOURCES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;THE NEED&quot;</td>
<td>Local needs only</td>
<td>National needs widespread</td>
<td>Need in their &quot;speciality&quot; product concerns</td>
<td>Needs of workers or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;YOUR PROJECT METHODS&quot;</td>
<td>No experiments - time tested, proven approaches</td>
<td>Unique, cost-effective</td>
<td>Viewed as special to this area</td>
<td>Proven safe project methods more unique research protocols</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YOUR FRIENDS -- CONTACTS WITH FUNDERS</td>
<td>Very important local contacts</td>
<td>Important</td>
<td>Important, especially in field of interest</td>
<td>Very important -- gives money to those they trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRANTS EXPERIENCE</td>
<td>Credibility and need can overcome lack of experience</td>
<td>Important, must like to work with others</td>
<td>Not as important as the potential contribution</td>
<td>Important -- they expect experience</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: The "How To" Grants Manual, David Bauer, pg. 61

**Capitalizing On Your Differences**

Many grant and contract applicants forget that funding sources have many prospective grantees. To be successful, applicants must distinguish themselves from the competition. How can an applicant project an image of being uniquely qualified?
The most popular method is to prove you, as an applicant, are different from the crowd. Your difference, or uniqueness, makes your agency the logical choice for the investment of their grant dollars. Many grant applicants have trouble distinguishing their unique qualifications. Most applicants view their agencies as just another college, hospital, or local economic development office. Applicants need to move beyond this stereotyping and examine what makes their agency unique or special. Attributes, such as staff, location, building, special areas of interest and specialization should be considered.

Developing this information can be a very worthwhile investment allowing an organization to capitalize on its unique qualities. Such a list will also be useful when writing contact letters, proposals and while making personal contacts. The list also helps prepare applicants to answer the question “Why should we give the money to your organization?” which is almost a universal question if an interview is required in the final application process.20

One way to develop this information is to utilize a variety of groups to brainstorm a few simple questions. Groups asked to participate should include:

- Volunteers
- Clients
- Staff
- Board members

Sample questions to ask these groups can be tailor-made to reflect the agencies special interest, or they can be as simple as these:

**Question 1**  What makes our organization good at what we do?

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Question 2  Why would a funding source give a grant to our organization as opposed to another organization in the same field?

Answers to these questions should help applicants develop a list that may include:

- Staff experience
- Special equipment available
- Ability to recruit and train staff and volunteers
- Fund raising techniques

Such an exercise can serve to form a general list which can be refocused to select unique qualities suited to different funding sources.

Know The Sponsor

After identifying the correct marketplace, a prospective grantee must realize that credibility becomes an important factor. When dealing with sponsors, a prospective grantee's credibility is always on view. However, credibility is not earned in one meeting or contact but developed over time. During initial contacts, applicants should seek to establish relationships and find areas of mutual interest. Applicants should objectively and realistically communicate their agencies' capabilities and how they correspond with the needs of the funding source. There are three readily available sources of sponsor information: primary, secondary, and the network.
Primary Information Sources

The sponsors themselves are primary information sources. Establishing a contact with sponsors appears to be easy. Funding sources are quick to send literature but slow when in-depth information is required. However, primary information contains insights that cannot be found through other sources. The problem is getting through the bureaucratic and political barriers that separate applicants from the needed information. The amount and type of information a funding source will provide is usually dependent upon an applicant's credibility. If an agency is viewed as trustworthy and respectable, funding sources are open and willing to pass on information. Conversely, if an agency is an unknown entity or has had negative experiences with other sponsors the flow of information will probably be highly formalized.21

Secondary Information Source

Secondary information sources are the reference guides, books, catalogues and computer retrieval systems used when trying to choose the correct marketplace. The sources are readily available and contain large amounts of appropriate information. However, the information is also not as current and not as representative of funding source support patterns.

Secondary information sources can provide valuable assistance in gathering general funding source information regarding:

- Sponsor location
- Contact individual
- Types of programs funded

- Amounts generally available
- Funding priorities
- Areas served
- Previous recipients
- Program deadlines\(^2\)

Secondary funding sources should always be consulted to ensure no potential sponsors go unidentified. A list of secondary funding sources will be provided in the funding sources section of this paper.

The Network

Colleagues are a highly valuable source for sponsor information. They can serve as the link between secondary and primary resources. For the most part, colleagues are more than willing to help, especially the novice, who is seen as a minimal threat. Thus, advice should be sought from individuals who have experience or active relationships with sponsors that maybe potential funding sources. In this context, experience or active relationships could refer to proposal applicants, grantees, consultants, or reviewers.

The network, and the individuals within in the network, can play a major role in identifying and activating sponsor interest. To establish a network, applicants need to forge collaborative relationships with others possessing complementary expertise, those who understand potential funding sources, who they are and how they work. Seek people that have "ins" with sponsors. There is no formal way to identify possible collaborators but groups such as business acquaintances, peers, associations, local universities and colleges, business groups and the government can be of assist-

\(^2\) IBID, p. 70.
ance. Once teamed-up with appropriate individuals, collaborative efforts can provide a range of assistance, including:

- help in preparing proposals
- arranging meeting with funding sources
- reviewing proposal concepts
- sharing of technical and research information
- identifying other resources to aid in the proposal process

The network can be as valuable a source as primary information and should be utilized. However, just as for the primary information source, the network source takes time to cultivate but once in place it will serve as a valuable tool.\textsuperscript{23}

Once funded, a grantee can form closer ties with a sponsor. By consistently delivering on time, at budgeted cost, and with high quality, a grantee can become a member of "the inner circle." When this happens, the grantee has made a step towards forging an ongoing beneficial relationship. Agencies with experience rarely have to rely on secondary sources for sponsor information. They gain a competitive edge because they can receive information directly from the funding source prior to its normal release. Members of the "inner circle" can gain prior knowledge of budgets, priorities, levels of competition and program announcements.

Congenial relations with a funding source can significantly enhance a prospective applicant’s access to critical bits of information. This type of information can be particularly useful in determining whether competition for a particular grant is truly open or "wired." In other words, has the funding source worked at directing the award to a specific applicant? In the grant arena, as in other aspects of life, there is a certain amount of nepotism. If sponsors are trying to restrict access to certain grants to "favorite" agencies, prospective applicants should ascertain this. It is of little use

competing for funds which will not be awarded to unfamiliar sources. Under these circumstances, applicants should seek another more suitable funding source.\textsuperscript{24}

Experienced applicants use both formal and informal relationships to enhance their competitive edge. That is why experienced applicants have a greater success record than uninitiated applicants. Ready access to primary sponsor information provides the needed boost to make a proposal successful. Advanced notification of new announcements gives critical additional time to plan and write a proposal. It is similar to a private showing, in that, an “inner circle member” looks as long as they like, while others wait for the general announcement.

Perhaps one of the greatest advantages to those considered in “the inner circle” is access to end-of-the-year opportunities for grants. These opportunities occur at the end of a fiscal year in public agencies. Rather than return unspent funds and face the possibility of a future budget reduction, agencies will scramble to find fundable projects. These types of opportunities are rapid fire. The total process from announcement to award must be completed quickly, so it is a great help to be plugged into the loop. Once applicants have established credibility, active sponsors will often offer information as to where surplus funds may be located. Well-connected grantees may even be asked by sponsors to request additional funds to broaden the scope of existing projects.\textsuperscript{25}

\textsuperscript{24} IBID, pp. 71-72.

KEY ELEMENTS OF A PROPOSAL

A well thought-out and well written proposal is the key to securing grant funds. A proposal should reflect the applicant's desire to increase and improve services to its constituency. However, these desires are not always communicated in the proposal process. This section of the paper will provide the necessary information and format to guide applicants through the proposal writing process. The format is designed to allow project ideas to be effectively communicated in a systematic, logical fashion. Each section of the proposal, from the cover letter to the budget, is discussed.

The Cover Letter

Proposals to foundations and corporations are usually accompanied by a cover letter. This letter should be signed by the chairperson of the Board of Directors for non-profit organizations, or an individual of high authority in the applying organization. The primary purpose of the cover letter is to assure the funding source that the proposal is endorsed by the authority which binds the applicant/organization. Even if the chain of command has given an executive director the authority
to endorse a proposal, the cover letter should have the signature of the board chair-person, and be sent on the letterhead of the applicant agency.26

The cover letter should briefly describe the proposal's contents, but should not be as detailed or used as a substitute for the proposal summary. Cover letters are often personal contact letters which are separate from the proposal. In addition to being a personal contact letter, the cover letter can be utilized to arrange follow-up meetings. This can be achieved by offering to meet a committee member at their convenience, offering to provide any additional information needed or clearly stating a meeting with the foundation or corporation would be a welcome opportunity.

A cover letter may seem like a trivial process, but it can often cast a positive or negative shadow on a proposal. This list will help applicants construct a useful cover letter:

- Avoid trying to restate the interest of the funding source by using terms such as “knowing of your interest in.” This type of approach can be perceived as patronizing or arrogant. If a proposal focuses on an area of interest of the funding source, it has reached its proper audience and does not need to reidentify the issue in a cover letter.
- Avoid telling the reader that they should fund the project, or do not attempt to tell the reader what they may think. Phrases such as: “we know that you will find this proposal to be,” or “it is obvious that you...” should not be used.
- Address the letter to a specific person at the funding source, and make sure to do research to identify the proper person that will be the contact. Cover letters should not be sent “To whom it may concern.”
- Avoid a lengthy cover letter, be concise.27

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SAMPLE COVER LETTER

Mr. John Doe
The Grant Foundation
123 Willow Avenue
Nowhere, VA 22222

Dear Mr. Doe:

I would like to take this opportunity to forward this formal request from the Applicant Agency for a grant of $100,000 from The Grant Foundation. The money is to be used towards renovating space in the Applicant Agency for a homeless shelter.

The Trustees and Board of Advisors of the Applicant Agency sincerely hope your foundation will act favorably upon the request for this much-needed addition. If we can provide you with any further information, we would welcome the opportunity to meet you and provide any further detail.

Sincerely,

John Johnson
Chairperson,
Board of Trustees

Proposal Summaries

When a proposal exceeds seven to eight pages, a summary or abstract of one to two pages should be included. The summary covers, in brief form, the highlights of the material in each section of the proposal. By preparing his or her own summary, the applicant can stress the points he or she believes are strengths of the project. In addition to highlighting the strengths of the proposal,
the summary should outline how the proposal is responsive to the funder's requirements and interests. There are several theories on placement of the actual proposal summary:

- Inclusion of the summary in a cover letter.
- Inclusion of the summary in the introduction section.
- Preparation of a separate summary section at the beginning of the proposal.
- Preparation of a separate summary section at the end of the proposal.28

A separate summary at the beginning of the proposal is recommended for use because it is consistent with most government formats. Most governmental applications provide a box on the cover sheet of the application where applicants are asked to place a summary or abstract. Although summaries appear first, they should be the last section of the proposal to be completed. This is to assure that all significant points will be included.

Proposal summaries can be considered important for several reasons. The inclusion of a summary often fills a requirement of the funding source. In addition to being a possible requirement, the summary will probably be the first thing read. This provides the applicant an opportunity to capture the interest of the reader. For this reason, applicants should afford as much effort and skill as possible to writing the summary. The summary may also be the only section of the proposal read, at least in the preliminary review sessions. Funding sources often have a perfunctory proposal review to assure that projects are in accordance with stated priorities. A clear, well organized summary should present a reviewing staff with the information needed to make such decisions. The summary should also serve to frame the proposal, or put the proposal into a context. This will provide the reviewing staff with the purpose of the project, making their task less painstaking.29

Now that the importance of a summary has been explored, the substance of a summary will be detailed. A clear, concise summary should achieve the following:

- Identify the applicant and support the applicant’s credibility when possible.
- Identify the reason for the grant request: the issue, problem or need to be met.
- State the objectives to be achieved through the funding of the project.
- State the types of activities that will accomplish the objectives.
- State the total cost of the project as well as funds that are already committed to the project, and the amount requested in the accompanying proposal.\textsuperscript{30}

The following summary from a city in California contains all the elements of a good summary:

The City Association for Retarded Children (CARC) currently operates 22 programs for 300 retarded children in this City, in addition to programs for 200 adolescents and adults. Over the past year these services have been extended to the Other city area, with the financial assistance of the State Department of Health. More than 75 additional severely retarded children from the This City area have been identified by Qualified Agency as needing the intensive rehabilitation training and therapy offered by CARC. Appropriate treatment can increase the level of functioning for many of these youngsters to the point that they can attend normal Department of Education classes and develop to their maximum potential. The alternative is abandonment to expensive care in custodial institutions. Both the State Departments of Health and of Education have recognized that rehabilitative services are most effective at an early age.

This proposal would expand the services of CARC to more fully meet the needs of retarded children in This City.

The total cost of this program is $110,000. Of this, $45,000 has already been committed by local corporations and foundations. This request is for the balance needed of $65,000.\textsuperscript{31}


\textsuperscript{31} IBID.
Checklist for Proposal Summary

Placement

☐ At the beginning

Identification

☐ Identifies grant applicant

Includes

☐ A statement addressing credibility
☐ A statement on the problem
☐ A statement on the objectives
☐ A statement on the methods
☐ A statement or total cost, funds obtained and the amount for the total request

Style

☐ Brief
☐ Clear

The Introduction

The proposal introduction is the section in which the applicant describes his agency’s qualifications for funding. In a proposal for private funding, the introduction should be extensive. This is because an agency’s qualifications or credibility plays a major factor in the funding process decision. In a governmental proposal, introductions are very rarely asked for, instead applications usually ask for a "description of the applicant" or "background of the applicant." However, the respective sections for public and private sector proposals should be similar and contain the same
elements. The major difference should be the length. Introductions to private funding source proposals should be as thorough and complete as possible because establishing credibility is so important.

The introduction begins the proposal and therefore is a very important part of the document. However, there has been no consensus as to what format an introduction should follow. There is a fine line between an introduction that lends credibility and an introduction that is mired down with explanations of an agency's organizational structure and philosophy. An applicant should attempt to balance past accomplishments with present activities and goals. Funding sources are interested in how and why an agency was formed, but do not wish to dredge through an agency's history to uncover the information.32

When trying to establish credibility, the information gathered in the "capitalize on your differences" section of this paper can be very useful. Other elements of the introduction may include:

- How and why the organization was started
- A statement of purpose and goals
- Significant prior and current activities
- Accomplishments and impacts
- Previously received grants
- Funding sources for other projects and their positive comments on the agency
- Size and characteristics of poor clientele
- Letters of support from clients, experts in the field and public figures.

Additional material to build a credibility statement can be gathered by having clients and staff list the two most important accomplishments and/or events in the agency's history. This should supply ample information for a proposal introduction.33

Statistics and letters of endorsement are also used to build credibility and can be used in introductions. However, each should be used carefully because they can be counterproductive. In the case of statistics, applicants should use those statistics which are germane to the proposal and prospective funding source. Statistics are often abused and used to misrepresent accomplishments; do not attempt to overwhelm the funding source with useless or superfluous information.

Letters of endorsement can be very useful in establishing credibility, but they can be cumbersome in an introduction. Try and limit the number and make sure they are truly supportive. The best way to incorporate letters of endorsement is to include a quote in the introduction, then refer the reader to the attached letter. These methods should be used to establish credibility in the program area in which funds are requested.34


KEY ELEMENTS OF A PROPOSAL
Checklist for Proposal Introduction

☐ Clearly states who is applying for the funds
☐ Describes the applicant agency’s purpose and goals
☐ Describes agency programs
☐ Describes clients and benefactors of the agency
☐ Offers statistics to support credibility
☐ Offers statements and endorsements to support credibility
☐ Supports credibility in program area which funds are requested
☐ Provides transition to the problem statement.

The Problem Statement/Needs Assessment

The problem statement or needs assessment is a critical element of the proposal. It should present the reason for setting up a program. A needs assessment generally focuses on a condition existing in the lives of a program’s clients. A problem statement looks at a situation and relates it to similar situations that exist in other communities usually addressing the broader implications of the program.35 This component of the proposal should relate:

• A precise understanding of the problem that the project is attempting to solve;
• The relationship of the project to a larger body of problems or needs, and why focusing on this need was chosen;
• The significance of the need in relation to other areas (local, national, or international);

• The potential contributions of the problems findings or results to other problems of importance;
• The significance and appropriateness of the approach to be used in solving the problem; to provide a groundwork for the methodology section.36

There are several things to consider when writing this section of a proposal. The need or problem should be clearly related to the purposes and goals of the applicant organization. In addition, the needs identified must be consistent with the project objectives and procedures. Applications often describe a complex need but propose a project which addresses only a small part of the problem. This type of problem is not uncommon or insurmountable. The purpose behind a project can be tied to a complex national or world problem, but project limitations should be clearly explained in a rationale for why only one part of the problem is being addressed. If this is the case, it should also be detailed why the one particular aspect of the problem is more significant than other areas of concern.

Projects should be designed so that accomplishments can be recognizable over the course of the grant. The problem or need must be focused enough to leave the funding source with the expectation that the problem can be solved, given the time and funds requested. Reducing the scope of a project to a manageable level shows a funding source experience and sincerity; while proposing an overly complex project shows inexperience or an agency that will promise anything to get funded.

Two additional points to remember when writing a problem statement/needs assessment are to use appropriate statistical data and show that research has been completed that relates to other research in the field. The problem statement/needs assessment section should be supported by evidence and statistics from authoritative sources. The statistical data should:

• Substantiate a need;
• Describe the significance of the population to be served;
• Illustrate the importance and potential contribution of the project.

If several complex tables and graphs are involved, they should be referred to in the text and should appear at the end of the section or in an appendix.\textsuperscript{37}

It is also important to demonstrate that a proposal project has been constructed with an awareness of related research in the field. Statements that claim "the first major contribution" should not be used. Such statements usually indicate a poorly researched topic, and an agency that has not taken time to investigate past and present projects related to the need or problem. The problem statement/needs assessment section should communicate how a project will compliment, extend or reevaluate prior projects as appropriate. The last purpose of this section is to lay groundwork for the methodology section. This is accomplished by briefly discussing the appropriateness and the need for a certain approach. This serves to create a flow in the proposal, making the document readable and easy to understand.

In summary, the problem statement/needs assessment section of the proposal focuses the proposed project and answers the question of "why" the project should be undertaken. It also sets the stage for the rest of the proposal, helping the reviewer understand the significance of the next section.\textsuperscript{38}


\textsuperscript{38} IBID, p. 50.
Checklist for Problem Statement/Needs Assessment

- Relates to the purpose and goals of the organization
- Is of reasonable dimensions
- Is supported by statistical evidence
- Is supported by statements from authorities
- Considers past and present work in the field
- Lays the groundwork for the program objectives

Program Objectives

Proposals should include both statements of goals and objectives. The two are often confused because both describe a desired condition or outcome. The difference between goals and objectives is the level of specificity. Goals are included to provide a conceptual idea as to the purpose of the project. They are more abstract in content, have a broad scope, and are not subject to direct measurement. Proposals generally contain a limited number of goals.

Objectives, on the other hand, should be specific and measurable. Proposals may have several objectives and depending on the level of specificity, may have several of objectives. These types include product, process and performance objectives.

- Product objective: this objective usually refers to the type of product that is to be produced by the project (such as a book, report, video seminar or training films, etc.)
Each product objective should answer:

1. Who will produce the product?
2. What the product is that will be produced;
3. When will the product be available?;
4. Who will evaluate the product; and
5. How will the product be evaluated?\textsuperscript{39}

EXAMPLE: Within sixty days of receipt of a signed contract, the project staff shall provide ten copies of an evaluation model for testing the water quality of fresh water lakes which shall be judged at least ninety percent effective by five of the six participating counties on a staff developed checklist covering the specified criteria by the Environmental Protection Agency.

- Process objectives are used in cases where the process will significantly impact on the project success. These are most often used in experimental projects. The objectives help ensure the efforts of those running the experiment or analysis remain consistent in the application of the technique. Additional information concerning timing and expected performance levels can also be included.\textsuperscript{40} This serves to preserve the validity of the project. When structuring process objectives, these questions should be answered:

1. Who will perform the process?
2. What is the activity or performance that will result from the process?
3. How will the process be evaluated?

- Performance objectives are often required in proposals. Six elements are frequently found in performance objectives:

1. Who is going to perform the specified behavior?
2. What behavior is expected to occur?
3. Under what circumstance will the behavior be observed?
4. How is the behavior going to be observed?


\textsuperscript{40} IBID, p. 156.
5. What amount of time is necessary to bring about the specified behavior?

6. What is the expected proficiency level?\textsuperscript{41}

EXAMPLE: At the end of a four-day workshop, 85 percent of the participating county employees will demonstrate their comprehension of safety techniques as measured by a minimum gain of 10 raw score points on a workplace safety staff-developed pre- and post-test.

Depending on the proposal process, applicants may need to just clearly state:

1. Who is going to be doing what?
2. When and how much?
3. How it will be measured?

Objectives usually start with \textbf{To} and are followed by a verb.\textsuperscript{42} (i.e. to increase; to decrease; or to reduce.

The importance of writing clear appropriate objectives should not be underscored. Perhaps a quote form J.D. Batten clearly states the importance, "The correct statement of an objective is the first step in its attainment."\textsuperscript{43} However, the preparation of objectives is no easy task. If this text does not suffice, the novice in the field may benefit from a trip to the library where extensive literature on objective writing can be found. Another helpful tip is to state objectives in numerical terms when possible. Percentages can be very helpful. Quantification helps clarify what variables are to be measured and what outcomes are expected.


\textsuperscript{42} IBID, p. 158.


\textbf{KEY ELEMENTS OF A PROPOSAL}
Checklist for Objectives

☐ Describes the problem related outcomes of the program

☐ Does not describe the methods

☐ Defines the population served

☐ States the time when the objectives will be met

☐ Describes the objectives in numerical terms when possible

Methodology

At this point in a proposal, the problem has been identified, the reason why the problem should be addressed has been explained, and the objectives section has described what needs to be done. Next the methodology section of the proposal will describe the steps to be taken to achieve the desired results.

Just as objectives should flow from the problem statement/needs assessment, the methodology should flow from the objectives section. The basic requirements for the methods section are clarity and justification. The methods should be understandable and supported by an accompanying explanation of why they were chosen. Usually this explanation is drawn from an applicant's past work or evidence drawn from the work of others in the field.44

Clarity and justification are required to create a good methodology section, but the key elements that should be included are:

1. Selection of staff
2. Staff training
3. Selection of participants

These elements should be clearly stated with a rationale provided as to why they were chosen. Resource charts can also be very useful in providing a clear picture of program activities concerning staff selection, training and participation selection.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIME CHART</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

1. Recruit new staff
2. Pre-program training
3. Meet with referral agencies
4. Prepare client recruitment materials
5. Finalize intake criteria
6. Finalize training curriculum
7. Recruit initial 50 clients
8. Finalize client pre-test
9. Administer pre-test to 50
10. Conduct first workshop

SOURCE: Norton J. Kirtz, "Program Planning and Proposal Writing"

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Checklist for Methodology

☐ Flows form the problems and objectives
☐ Clearly describes the project activities
☐ States reasons for selection of activities
☐ Describes the sequence of activities
☐ Describes staffing of the project
☐ Describes clients and client selection
☐ Presents a scope of activities that can be accomplished within the allotted time and resources

Evaluation

Most funding sources will require proposals to contain an evaluation section. Before the importance of an evaluation section is discussed, perhaps a brief explanation of what should be included in an evaluation section is necessary. An evaluation section actually should have two components. The first is an impact evaluation and the second is a process evaluation. The impact evaluation uses procedures to determine to what extent the program achieved its objectives and the extent to which the accomplishment can be attributed to the program.

The process evaluation utilizes procedures to determine if the program has been conducted in a manner consistent with the plan and determines the relationship of different project activities to
the effectiveness of the program. Both process and impact components evaluate different aspects of the program to test the validity of the project.46

There are several reasons for including an evaluation design in a proposal:

- If the presented evaluation design is acceptable, it greatly reduces the chance of the funding source conducting an evaluation, using different measures and techniques the grantee may not have considered or prepared for;
- Designing an evaluation forces the applicant to examine the clarity and measurability of his objective. This indicates evaluation methods should be considered early in the process;
- Process evaluation allows a grantee to determine which elements of his methodology have and do not have the desired results;
- Evaluation can provide administrators, staff and policy makers with valuable information to base future decisions concerning the problem area;
- Evaluations can serve as a public relations tool and also serve to assure present and future funding sources that the agency is sincere in its efforts.47

Evaluations are completed by one of two parties; either project staff of the program will perform an evaluation or an outside consultant will be hired to perform the evaluation. There are several factors to consider when making this decision. If the evaluation is to be completed by a consultant, the applicant needs to consider cost. The applicant may wish to strike an agreement that the evaluator would forego a fee if the project is not funded. A grant applicant must consider if the outside evaluator has a reputation that will lend credibility to the application.

47 IBID.
If the evaluation is done internally, applicants must determine if anyone on the staff is competent in the area of performing evaluations. If staff are capable, an applicant must then consider if the responsibility of evaluation will detract from staff ability to perform other required duties. Biases also may be considered when making the evaluation decision. Many funding sources may perceive an inside evaluation as biased.

An applicant's decision will depend on resources, and funding agency policies. Whichever route is chosen, the critical issue is to ensure the development of valid information that will benefit the project, the funding source, and the client.48

The next issues are data collection and analysis. These elements determine the validity of the project. An applicant's selection of a data collection and analysis mechanisms depends on the nature of the project, available resources, and the degree of rigor the applicant wishes to achieve. The data collection and analysis can be completed in a five step process:

1. Identify what is going to be evaluated -- this can be done by listing the questions the evaluation will attempt to answer, restating the objectives or providing a few descriptive sentences.

2. Describe what information will be needed -- this step is used to specify the type of evidence that will be acceptable to determine whether an objective has been met.

3. Describe where the information will be obtained -- this section just describes where the data will be obtained. Sources could include project staff records, historical files or data banks from other studies. Applicants may wish to include information on cost, availability, comparability, etc.

4. What instruments will be used to obtain the data -- this step is where the applicant defends the validity and reliability of the measurement techniques chosen.

5. Describe the intended analysis -- many evaluations are subject to statistical analysis. The techniques used should be briefly explained in the proposal. This will serve to demonstrate the technical competence of an applicant and also determine what type of information can be extracted from the project.49

**Commonly Used Analytical Techniques**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analytical Technique and Its Symbol</th>
<th>Key Elements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CHI SQUARE ($x^2$)</td>
<td>Used to test the significance of differences between: (1) observed frequencies and expected frequencies and expected frequencies; or (2) two sets of observed frequencies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t TEST ($t$)</td>
<td>Used to test whether the differences between two means (group averages) is significant. It can measure the difference between two groups or between the pre- and post-test scores of the same group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE (ANOVA)</td>
<td>Used to test the significance of differences among more than two variables or more than two groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MULTIPLE ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE (MANOVA)</td>
<td>Used to test the significance of differences between two or more groups simultaneously on more than one variable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANALYSIS OF COVARIANCE (ANCOVA)</td>
<td>Used to test the significance of differences between two groups when the two groups are not considered equal at pretest time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MULTIPLE REGRESSION</td>
<td>Combination of several predictive measures to predict achievement or other outcomes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The final procedure of this section is to describe how the evaluation material will be reported. There are several factors to consider when making this decision. The first consideration is if the funding source has any requirements concerning the reporting of the information. If so, these wishes should be followed. Other factors to consider are how and when the evaluation information will be fed back to the staff. This is important because the staff will utilize the information to make project adjustments and improvements. The last item to consider is whether or not the report should be prepared in different formats, depending on the audience that will be interested in the project.\textsuperscript{50}

\begin{center}
Checklist for Evaluation
\end{center}

- Covers product and process
- Describes who will perform the evaluation and how they will be selected
- Define evaluation criteria
- Describes data collection method
- Explains test instruments and questionnaires, if they are to be used
- Describes data analysis
- Describes evaluation reports to be produced

\textsuperscript{50} Mary Hall, \textit{Developing Skills in Proposal Writing}, (Portland, OR: Continuing Education Publications, 1977), p. 211.
The Proposal Budget

Funding sources require varying degrees of detail in budget proposals. Most governmental funding sources require a high degree of detail and provide budget forms and instructions. Foundations and corporations are usually less stringent. However, a well thought-out and complete budget is usually a positive reflection on the applicant.

One of the most useful formats for governmental and private grants is divided into two basic components, personnel and non-personnel costs. There also should be a budget summary which should be prepared after the budget is completed, and presented at the beginning of the budget section.\(^{31}\) Instead of describing the intricacies of the budget process, a mock budget will be provided with comments concerning the format.

### BUDGET SUMMARY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total This Grant</th>
<th>Funding Source</th>
<th>Applicant Contribution</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$78,362.62</td>
<td>$22,308.50</td>
<td>$100,671.12</td>
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</table>

1. Personnel
   a. Salaries and Wages  $58,479.12  $19,233.50  $77,762.62
   b. Fringe Benefits  43,200.00  6,750.00  49,950.00
   c. Consultant and Contract Services  10,479.12  1,669.50  12,148.62
   4,800.00  10,864.00  15,664.00

2. Non-Personnel
   a. Space Costs  9,900.00  2,400.00  12,300.00
   b. Rental, Lease or Purchase of Equipment  $2,085.00  625.00  2,710.00
   c. Consumable Supplies  1,287.50  0.00  1,287.50
   d. Travel  1,761.00  0.00  1,761.00
   e. Telephone  3,500.00  0.00  3,500.00
   f. Other Costs  0.00  1,350.00  1,350.00


KEY ELEMENTS OF A PROPOSAL 43
Indirect costs can be included in budgets, depending on if the funding source provides for these costs. Indirect costs, as defined by The Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, are "costs of an institution which are not readily identifiable with a particular project or activity but nevertheless are necessary to the general operation of the institution and the conduct of its activities." The cost of operating and maintaining buildings and equipment, depreciation, and departmental administrative salaries and expenses are usually considered indirect costs. Funding sources may or may not provide for indirect costs, or may place restrictions on allowed indirect costs. Restrictions may include a ceiling cap or restriction on which budgeted items the percentage for indirect cost can be figured, (i.e. total direct costs or salary and wages alone). If applicable to the project, budget indirect costs should be figured in the non-personnel section of the budget, and should have a separate sub-heading. In the sample budget summary, indirect costs would be item 3,G.\textsuperscript{52}

Cost have been divided into two columns: requested and contributed. The requested column represents those items the funding source is being requested to pay. Contributed items are those which are paid for from another source or which are contributed to the project by the applicant. The requested and contributed columns represent the "federal share" and "non-federal share" columns on federal grant applications.

\textsuperscript{52} IBID, p. 76.
**BUDGET DETAIL**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Requested</th>
<th>Donated</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td><strong>Personnel</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Salaries and Wages</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(1) Executive Director: @ $1,500/mo x 10% x 12 mos.</td>
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<td>$1,800.00</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>(2) Counselors: @ $900/mo x 100% x 11 mos.</td>
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<tr>
<td>(1) Counselor*: @ $900/mo x 50% x 11 mos.</td>
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<tr>
<td>(1) Secretary: @ $750/mo x 100% x 12 mos.</td>
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<td>$6,750.00</td>
<td>$49,950.00</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*This half-time counselor position is contributed to this program by another social service agency.

Salaries can be a tricky item. In this proposal budget, the number of workers is entered first, the title of the position second, and third the full-time salary at that position. Following the full-time salary is a percentage time the employee will work, followed by how many months the person will be employed. Also be sure to indicate any salary wage position that is being donated by another agency or organization.53

b. Fringe Benefits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Requested</th>
<th>Donated</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SUI - 3.2% x $24,000 (California rates)</td>
<td>$ 768.00</td>
<td>$ 0.00</td>
<td>$ 768.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workers' Compensation Policy</td>
<td>350.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>350.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FICA - 6.13% x $43,200</td>
<td>2,648.16</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>2,648.16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Health Insurance - 2 single employees  
  @ $35/mo; 2 employees with dependents  
  @ $98.00/mo; x 12 mos. (employer pays 100%) | 3,192.00  | 0.00    | 3,192.00 |
| Extended Disability Insurance - 4 employees @ $4.02/mo x 12 | 192.96    | 0.00    | 192.96  |
| Vacation & Sick Leave - 16 wks @ avg. salary of $208.00/wk. | 3,328.90  | 0.00    | 3,328.00 |
| Fringe benefits for donated executive director, based on agency's total fringe benefit percentage (24 percent) of salary ($1,800) | 0.00      | 432.00  | 432.00  |
| Fringe benefits for donated counselor, based on donating agency's total fringe benefits percentage (25 percent) of salary ($4,950) | 0.00      | 1,237.50| 1,237.50|
|                                    |           |         | $10,479.12 |

It is advisable to spell out the benefits that will be covered by the grant. These include mandatory State Unemployment Insurance (SUI) and those which are voluntary. Voluntary benefits may be negotiated out of the final budget.  

---

Consultants and contract services are listed separate in this format.

2. Non-Personnel
   a. Space Costs
      Office rent - 1,200 sq. ft. @ $6.00/ft/yr.  $7,200.00  $0.00  $7,200.00
      Tutoring space - contributed by local private school: one classroom 20 hrs/wk x $50/wk x 48 wks.  0.00  2,400.00  2,400.00
      Office janitorial @ $100/mo x 12 mos.  1,200.00  0.00  1,200.00
      Office utilities @ $125/mo x 12 mos.  1,500.00  0.00  1,500.00
      $9,900.00  $2,400.00  $12,300.00
   b. Rental, Lease or Purchase of Equipment
      (1) Secretarial Desk @ $150.00  $150.00  $0.00  $150.00
      (1) Secretarial Chair @ $65.00  65.00  0.00  65.00
      (2) Desks @ $100.00  200.00  0.00  200.00
      (2) Chairs @ $65.00  130.00  0.00  130.00
      (2) Desks donated by applicant @ rental value of $5/ea/mo x 12 mos.  0.00  120.00  120.00
      (8) Chairs donated @ rental value of $5/ea/mo x 12 mos.  0.00  480.00  480.00
      (4) File cabinets @ $55  220.00  0.00  220.00
      (2) Spendthrift typewriters @ $30/mo leased x 12 mos.  720.00  0.00  720.00
      (1) Framed scenic wallposter of Big Sur - donated  0.00  25.00  25.00
      (1) Dynamite Copying machine leased @ $50.00/mo x 12 mos.  600.00  0.00  600.00
      $2,085.00  $625.00  $2,710.00

The first two items under non-personnel are office space and rental, lease or purchases of equipment. It is important to check prevailing rents and cost of materials when budgeting these items. Funding sources will require an explanation if budget rates are not in accordance with average rates for that geographical area.\footnote{Norton J. Kirtz, "Program Planning and Proposal Writing" in The Grantsmanship Reprint Series, (Los Angeles, CA: The Grantsmanship Center, 1979), p. 74.}
### c. Consumable Supplies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Description</th>
<th>Requested</th>
<th>Donated</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Desk top supplies for 6.5 staff @ $125.00/ea/yr.</td>
<td>$812.50</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td>$812.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100 reams copy paper @ $2.75/ea and 5 toner refills @ $40/ea</td>
<td>475.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>475.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,287.50</strong></td>
<td><strong>$0.00</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,287.50</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### d. Travel

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Description</th>
<th>Requested</th>
<th>Donated</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local mileage for Project Director: 100 mi/mo @ $0.17/mi x 12 mos.</td>
<td>$204.00</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td>$204.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local mileage for (2) Counselors: 200 mi/mo @ $0.17/mi x 12 mos.</td>
<td>816.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>816.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel expenses for Project Director, to attend Grantsmanship Center Training Program in Los Angeles, June 11-15, 19-- ($325 tuition plus $218.00 round-trip air plus 6 days per diem @ $33/day</td>
<td>741.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>741.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,761.00</strong></td>
<td><strong>$0.00</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,761.00</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### e. Telephone

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Description</th>
<th>Requested</th>
<th>Donated</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Installation @ $260.00</td>
<td>$260.00</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td>$260.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) Instruments @ $45.00/ea/mo x 12 mos.</td>
<td>3,240.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>3,240.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$3,500.00</strong></td>
<td><strong>$0.00</strong></td>
<td><strong>$3,500.00</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### f. Other Costs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Description</th>
<th>Requested</th>
<th>Donated</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Postage</td>
<td>$600.00</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td>$600.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance (Fire, Theft and Liability)</td>
<td>750.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>750.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,350.00</strong></td>
<td><strong>$0.00</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,350.00</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With these remaining items, be as specific as possible, the funding source will be impressed with the thoroughness and be less likely to question budget expenditures. If this budget section does not provide enough detail, a local library should have many sources of information concerning budgeting.\(^{56}\)

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CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING PROPOSALS

Many funding sources, including federal agencies, apply formal criteria when evaluating proposals. Applicants will find it useful to request the criteria and priority statements used by the funding source. These materials are usually public information. The criteria and priority statements can be used to further refine proposals before final submission.

The criteria used by funding sources vary. However, the following list presents criteria which are frequently used:

- Clarity
- Completeness
- Responsiveness
- Internal consistency
- External consistency
- Capability
- Efficiency and accountability

Such criteria are often applied very formally with points (sometimes weighted) awarded for each criterion. In other cases, they simply serve as guidelines in the mind of the reviewer. The formality
of the review depends on the funding agency. These criteria will now be explained in general terms. It should be remembered that, when applied by a specific funding source to a specific proposal, the criteria are used in a more specific sense. For example, if the proposal is for a low income housing program, the funding source will want the applicant to demonstrate an understanding of the low income housing problems and of the delivery of services in the field.\textsuperscript{57}

\textbf{Clarity}

The proposal should be clearly written and organized so that it can be easily followed and understood. The organization and style of writing should be as simple as possible. Cross referencing, complicated sentence structure and long sentences should be avoided. Applicants also should avoid the use of vague jargon, but use a limited amount of the generally understood technical or professional language relevant to the proposal.\textsuperscript{58}

Clarity is enhanced by a logical flow of ideas. The use of headings and sub headings are very helpful. They serve to break-up the text and describe what is to follow. Applicants should utilize a format with headings and subheadings whenever possible.

Applicants cannot assume the funding source will understand all aspects of the proposal unless the proposal includes full explanations. An applicant should ask himself "will someone unfamiliar with this organization have a clear idea of what is being proposed?" Applicants should ask two or three non-staff workers to critically review the proposal. This will give the applicant a chance to address and clarify potentially weak areas of the proposal.


\textsuperscript{58} Ibid, p. 15.
Completeness

If the proposal is written in response to a request for proposal, (RFP) program announcement, or is an unsolicited application, it should meet all funding source deadlines and requirements. The proposal should cover all relevant points so the funding source has no major questions about purpose, objectives, need, activities, staffing, organization, timing, or budget requests. Applicants should also avoid the use of etc. and phrases such as "and so forth." These types of words and phrases can be interpreted to mean the applicant does not know the complete range of material to be presented.59

Responsiveness

Proposals must be responsive to the funding sources requirements, purpose and documented need. Applications to government funding sources must be responsive to all format and content specifications, as well as regulations and legislation relevant to the program under which funding is sought. Proposals should be responsive to the general interests and purposes of the funding source. Information concerning general interest and purpose can be secured through a simple letter of inquiry.

Some foundations and corporations also have written guidelines that proposals must meet. This information can usually be secured with a phone call or letter to the appropriate office. Additional information can be provided in foundation reports. These reports can be found in the Foundation Center Library which is headquartered in New York City or its publications.

The proposal should demonstrate that it is responding to a documented need by providing the funding source with evidence, from reputable sources, that a problem exists. Evidence may include testimony from experts in the field, statistics from governmental or established agencies and transcripts from congressional hearings.60

**Internal Consistency**

All parts of the proposal should be related to, and consistent with, each other. For example, the activities or methods proposed should be consistent with the objectives that are set-forth. Similarly, the proposed staff should be of sufficient size and possess the expertise to deliver the proposed services. Statements of need should be directly relevant to the specific project activities that are being proposed. In short, all elements of the proposal should be consistent with each other and the need the project is addressing.61

**External Consistency**

The proposal should recognize the generally accepted ideas in a particular field. Project approaches, methodology and activities that are accepted as effective should also be recognized. If an applicant proposes alternative definitions and approaches to a need, they should be justified in systematic approach that allows the opportunity to address how the proposed proposal methods

61 IBID, p. 17.
fill shortcomings of the dominant ideas and methods. This will highlight the innovativeness of the proposal while still showing a familiarity with existing ideas in the field.\textsuperscript{62}

\textbf{Capability}

Funding sources give major consideration to an applicant’s capability to successfully carry-out the activities submitted in the proposal. Capability is difficult to convey, but there are some effective ways an applicant can demonstrate capability. The quality of the proposal is the first key. A well-planned and written proposal can reflect favorably on an applicant as well as demonstrate familiarity with the problem, the relevant literature, current accepted methodology and other similar ideas. Highlighting the qualifications of the proposed staff and the experience and resources of the agency is also helpful when emphasizing capability. Funding sources are often concerned with an applicants prior work or “track record.” To address this concern, letters of endorsement from clients and respected organizations should be utilized.\textsuperscript{63}

\textbf{Efficiency and Accountability}

Funding sources want assurance that projects will be efficiently managed and executed. A strong proposal will provide assurance to the funding source. A proposal detailed in organization of program activities, staff and analysis will indicate the ability to efficiently implement a project. Detailed timetables also are important indicators of efficient projects. Other measures of efficiency

\textsuperscript{62} IBID, p. 18.

deal with monetary matters. Comparisons between the proposed project and alternative projects or comparisons between the cost of the problem to the community and the cost of the project can also indicate efficiency. Unit costs, or the cost to implement the project per target client are also used to ensure funding sources of efficient management. Accountability can be achieved by providing progress reports to the funding source and other concerned agencies.64

The following table provides an indication of shortcomings in research proposals. The statistics were compiled from Ernest H. Allen’s analysis of 605 disapproved research grant applications submitted to the Public Health Service of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. Further information can be found in Allen’s study “Why are Research Grant Applications Disapproved?” Many of the shortcomings are a reflection of poorly expressed proposals.

To become more familiar with the formalized government procedure, review the evaluation form in the Appendix.65

One of the best ways to identify shortcomings or weaknesses in a proposal is to complete a self evaluation prior to submitting a proposal. These evaluations should be performed by individuals in the agency that are not involved in the writing of the proposal. Other possible evaluators could be past or present clients, members of a town council or any colleague that is familiar with the grant system. The following forms from the Public Management Institute provide a very useful system for evaluation a proposal.66

64 IBID, p. 19.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Shortcomings</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>THE PROBLEM (58 percent)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>The problem is of insufficient importance or unlikely to produce any new or useful information</td>
<td>33.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>The proposed research is based on a hypothesis that rests on insufficient evidence, is doubtful, or is unsound</td>
<td>8.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>The problem is more than the investigator appears to realize</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>The problem has only local significance, or is one of production control, or otherwise fails to fall sufficiently clearly within the general fields of health-related research</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>The problem is scientifically premature and warrants, at most, only a pilot study</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>The research as proposed is overly involved, with too many elements under simultaneous investigation</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>The description of the nature of the research and of its significance leaves the proposal nebulous and diffuse and without clear research aim</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>THE APPROACH (73 percent)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>The proposed tests, or methods, or scientific procedures are unsuited to the stated objective</td>
<td>34.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>The description of the approach is too nebulous, diffuse, and lacking in clarity to permit adequate evaluation</td>
<td>28.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>The overall design of the study has not been carefully thought out</td>
<td>14.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>The statistical aspects of the approach have not been given sufficient consideration</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>The approach lacks scientific imagination</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Controls are either inadequately conceived or inadequately described</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>The material the investigator proposes to use is unsuited to the objectives of the study or is difficult to obtain</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>The number of observations is unsuitable</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>The equipment contemplated is outmoded or otherwise unsuitable</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>THE MAN (55 percent)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>The investigator does not appear to have adequate experience or training, or both, for this research</td>
<td>32.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>The investigator appears to be unfamiliar with recent pertinent literature or methods, or both</td>
<td>13.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>The investigator's previously published work in this field does not appear to inspire confidence</td>
<td>12.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>The investigator proposes to rely too heavily on insufficiently experienced associates</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>The investigator is spreading himself too thin; he will be more productive if he concentrates on fewer projects</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>The investigator needs more liaison with colleagues in this field or in collateral fields</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>OTHER (16 percent)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>The requirements for equipment or personnel, or both, are unrealistic</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>It appears that other responsibilities would prevent devotion of sufficient time and attention to this research</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>The institutional setting is unfavorable</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Research grants to the investigator, now in force, are adequate in scope and amount to cover the proposed research</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING PROPOSALS 55
## PROPOSAL EVALUATION FORM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Evaluation Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Comments and suggested improvements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Writing style (readability)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Appropriate tone</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Summary (succinct &amp; motivating)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Documentation of need</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Establishment of track record</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Explanation of method</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Objectives (specific/measurable)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Staff credential/organization resources</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SOURCE:** Public Management Institute
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Evaluation Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Comments and suggested improvements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Evaluation design</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Future funding plans</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Budget (thorough)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Budget (clear)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Budget (all items justified)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Appendices</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Logical flow between parts of proposal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>Visual attractiveness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Omissions/Unnecessary Inclusions in this proposal | Things that should have been emphasized more in this proposal

SOURCE: Public Management Institute
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Scope of Work-Questions</th>
<th>Need More</th>
<th>Need Less</th>
<th>Acceptable</th>
<th>Suggestions for Improvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Does the proposal show sufficient understanding of funder priorities and guidelines?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Do the proposal's objectives fit those of the funder?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Can the proposal's approach meet its objectives?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Why is the proposal's approach a good one?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Has the proposal introduced any elements which could result in delay or expansion of the project?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Does the proposal have an efficient time schedule?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Is the time schedule realistic?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: Public Management Institute
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Scope of Work-Questions</th>
<th>Need More</th>
<th>Need Less</th>
<th>Acceptable</th>
<th>Suggestions for Improvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Will proposal reports be issued to coincide with major milestones of the project? (e.g. publications)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Does the proposal provide for the use of community resources and input?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>If a survey sample is needed, has the proposal chosen an adequate one?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Does the proposal clearly indicate its possible products? (e.g. publications)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Does the proposal deal with all clearance requirements from federal agencies (e.g., use of animal subjects)?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Has the proposal set up an efficient and realistic evaluation procedure?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: Public Management Institute
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Personnel Questions</th>
<th>Need More</th>
<th>Need Less</th>
<th>Acceptable</th>
<th>Suggestions for Improvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Does the proposal clearly specify personnel assignments?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Are personnel assignments time efficient?</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Are the personnel assigned to specific tasks qualified to perform them (according to experience and training)?</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>Is there sufficient information (e.g., vitae) with which to evaluate personnel and their tasks?</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>Are the personnel clearly available?</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>Have provisions been made to deal with sudden personnel changes?</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>Is there efficient administrative management?</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>Will there be consultants?</td>
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</table>

SOURCE: Public Management Institute
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Personnel-Questions</th>
<th>Need More</th>
<th>Need Less</th>
<th>Acceptable</th>
<th>Suggestions for Improvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>How will the consultants be used?</td>
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<td>10.</td>
<td>Is the proposal writer one of the key personnel?</td>
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<td>11.</td>
<td>Does the project depend on too many outside personnel?</td>
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SOURCE: Public Management Institute
<table>
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<th>Need Less</th>
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<th>Suggestions for Improvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Has the proposal specified the necessary facilities and equipment?</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>Does the proposal make clear its access to outside facilities?</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Are the organizations providing the outside facilities qualified?</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Is the use of facilities realistic in terms of evaluation?</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Is the time schedule realistic for use of outside facilities?</td>
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</table>

SOURCE: Public Management Institute
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<th>Need More</th>
<th>Need Less</th>
<th>Acceptable</th>
<th>Suggestions for Improvement</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Is the organization’s track record related to the proposal in a clear way?</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>What is the organization’s reputation in its field?</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>What are the professional honors won by the organization?</td>
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SOURCE: Public Management Institute
**QUESTIONS REVIEWERS ASK: A RATING WORKSHEET**

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<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Budget Information - Questions</th>
<th>Need More</th>
<th>Need Less</th>
<th>Acceptable</th>
<th>Suggestions for Improvement</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Is the overall proposal budget within the scope of agency funding?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Are equipment costs clearly stated?</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Is the personnel budget realistic?</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Does the budget account (at a reasonable rate) for use of consultants?</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Does the budget account for use of outside facilities?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Does the budget cover development of new measuring instruments (e.g., questionnaires for surveys)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**SOURCE:** Public Management Institute
Even the most experienced proposal writer should start each search with a review of secondary resource references. Many excellent secondary sources exist. A majority of colleges, universities, and public libraries have secondary sources available, and are often willing to assist grant and contract seekers. The most commonly available resources will be identified and briefly described to assist prospective grant applicants.

**Federal Information Sources**

The following sources are published by the United States Government.
Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance

This catalog offers one of the most complete listings of federal assistance programs available to individuals, organizations and governmental jurisdictions. The catalog contains detailed descriptions of funded programs, application procedures, program eligibility and guidelines.

Federal Register

This daily publication covers a wide range of government activities as well as proposed or newly implemented agency and executive branch regulations. The register is used to publish all governmental legal documents and regulations. The document is complicated but is useful for detecting program changes and new priorities as well as opportunities for new grants and contracts.

Federal Funding Guide

The guide is geared to the needs of local government. It identifies programs of potential value to local jurisdictions.

Commerce Business Daily

This is the official source for all government procurement announcements. The Daily also includes contract awards made, foreign business opportunities and available subcontracting relationships. All federally initiated Requests For Proposals appear in the Commerce Business Daily.
Other Federally Focused Sources

U.S./R&D (Governmental Data Publications)

U.S./R&D is published monthly and provides a comprehensive analysis of federally supported research and development activities including contracts, trends, studies, and meeting announcements.

Director of Grants Research (Oryx Press)

This is a printed version of the on-line Grants Data Base. It includes over 4,000 funding opportunities concentrated in research and social services.

Federal Grants and Contracts Weekly (Capitol Publications)

This weekly includes updated information on federal funding trends and a listing of current program announcements.
The Grant Seeker for State and Local Government (Revenue Sharing Advisory Service)

This publication lists grant and program opportunities for state and local government. It also includes legislative updates.

Federal Yellow Book (The Washington Monitor)

The Yellow Book is an organizational Directory of White House, executive offices, agencies and federal departments. The book contains lists of 29,000 top employees by location and telephone number.

Foundation and Private Philanthropic Information Sources

The Foundation Center is the most comprehensive provider of information regarding private philanthropy and foundations. The Foundation Center is a nonprofit clearinghouse that operates libraries, publishes reference books, and maintains on-line data bases to assist in identifying foundations that provide support. The following are Foundation Center Publications.
Foundation Center Source Book Profiles

The Source Book contains detailed and updated information for the 1,000 largest foundations. The Source Book also includes an analysis of each foundation's grant making policies and a listing of grants awarded and their amounts.

The Foundation Directory

The Directory list over 4,000 foundations with assets of one million dollars or more, or that grant $100,000 or more on an annual basis. It provides mailing addresses, statements of purpose, names of directors and other financial information.

Foundation Grants Index

The Index analyzes and identifies grants made by foundations to nonprofit organizations in amounts of $5,000 or more. It contains 39,000 entries with grants indexed by subject, key word, geographic location and names of recipient organizations.

National Data Book

The Data Book lists over 23,000 active U.S. Foundations. The publication is particularly useful for researching smaller foundations not reviewed in other major published resources and for developing lists of foundations by geographic area.
Grants Information System

Information is provided on over 2,000 grant opportunities of potential interest to academics and institutions of higher education. Public and private sources are included.67

Other Foundation Directories and Sources

Taft Foundation Reporter (Taft Corporation)

The Reporter contains profiles of 500 prominent foundations with assets of $500,000 or more or those awarding at least $100,000 annually. Profiles include fiscal information, grants analysis, application procedures, contact information and giving levels.

Annual Register of Grant Support (Marguis Professional Publications)

This publication details grant support programs sponsored by government, public and private foundations, corporations, community trusts, unions, and educational and professional associations are provided. Details include descriptions of type, purpose, duration and eligibility for grants as well as amounts awarded.

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Mitchell publishes a biannual series of state and regional reference books which includes names of potential funding sources by specific geographical location. The guides are geared towards the nonprofit sector.

Guides to Corporate Philanthropy

The Corporate Fund Raising Directory (Public Service Materials Center)

The Directory identifies over 600 corporations and corporate foundations that give grants. The publication includes contact persons, primary giving areas, corporate giving policy, guidelines, geographical limitations, application procedures, typical grants and amounts.

Taft Corporate Giving Directory (Taft Corporation)

The Taft Directory identifies the largest donors in corporate philanthropy. It provides company information, contact individuals, amounts given, types of grants made and funding priorities.
Corporate Foundation Profiles (Foundation Center)

This publication profiles 230 of the largest company sponsored foundations. Included are types of support, geographic indexes and financial summaries.

Corporate 500 The Directory of Corporate Philanthropy (Public Management Institute)

This Directory profiles over 550 corporations. Profiles include giving analysis, contribution committee members, number and amount of grants given, funding areas and the application process.

On-Line and Computer Accessed Databases

Federal Assistance Program Retrieval System (U.S. Government)

This is the computerized version of the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance. The computer version provides fast, current information.
Foundation Center Databases (Foundation Center)

The Foundation Center has automated versions of their reference books. Those available are Foundation Directory Database, Foundation Grant Index Database, Grants Database, and National Foundations Database.

Sponsored Program Information Network (Research Foundation of the State University of New York)

This is a computerized database of federal, non-federal foundation and corporate funding opportunities. Each report contains program descriptions and availability, program objectives, restrictions, follow-up dates and deadline dates. The database is designed to aid university faculty and administrators in the identification of external support for research and projects.64

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TIPS ON HOW TO WRITE WINNING GRANT PROPOSALS

Procedure, content and style are important factors to consider when writing a proposal. The review tips in this section of the manual are provided as a summary of techniques and ideas concerning procedures, contents and style of effective proposals.

Procedure

1. Personalize and tailor your proposal to individual funders.
2. Know as much as you can about the funding source before writing the proposal.
3. Ask other grantees about the funding sources preference in:
   • length
   • complexity
   • budget detail
   • statistical support
   • personal contact before proposal submission
4. Get your project idea critiqued by a number of associates before writing a full scale proposal.
5. Do not use a committee
   • Use as few a writers as possible
• The project innovator should be the main author.

6. Write the summary last after the major sections of the application have been finished.

7. Do not try for perfection on the first draft, edit and rewrite.

8. Use a proposal committee to give you input on strengths and weaknesses of the proposal.

9. Have associates proofread for:
   • grammatical mistakes
   • logical inconsistencies
   • unjustified budget items
   • undefined or confusing terms

Content

1. Do not delude your proposal, start with the most important point.

2. Use one or two clear statistics rather than a number of ineffective ones.

3. Fill in blanks on federal applications.

4. When responding to an RFP, follow the suggested format as closely as possible.

5. Always include "donated" and "requested" columns in the budget.

6. If appropriate, quote enabling legislation, or the funding sources words, to show how the project matches the intent of the funding organization.

7. Include copies of endorsement letters in the appendices.

Style

1. Use short paragraphs (4-6 lines if possible).

2. Use simple terminology, but do not insult the reader's intelligence.

3. Use the active voice.

4. Accentuate the positive.

5. Mention the amount of money being requested at the beginning of the proposal.
Producing a professional proposal is a critical step in securing grant funds. Implementing the aforementioned tips and techniques will contribute to
BIBLIOGRAPHY


SPECIAL WHITE HOUSE COMMISSION
ON EDUCATIONAL IMPROVEMENT

SCHOOL ADVANCEMENT PROGRAM
TIER I FUNDING ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION

Proposal Title:
Applicant Name:
ID No.:
Reviewed by:

I. Submission Compliance
   A. Proposal submitted within deadline □ yes □ no
   B. Correct number of copies □ yes □ no
   C. Proper format and page limitations □ yes □ no

II. Applicant Eligibility Review
   A. Eligible applicant □ yes □ no
   B. Required transmittal signatures □ yes □ no
   C. Eligible program □ yes □ no
   D. Contains required certifications and representations □ yes □ no

Comment and Justification

Reviewers please indicate reasons for “no” responses to any preliminary eligibility criteria.

Action Alternatives

Proposals receiving a “no” designation on any criteria will be considered “out of compliance.” However, at the option of the program manager submitting organizations may be given three working days from date of notification to bring the document into compliance. If the option is not exercised the proposal is removed from further consideration and applicant so notified.

Program Manager Recommendation

i. Place into program review statistics

II. Proposal is “out of compliance” remove from further consideration and notify applicant.

III. Proposal is “out of compliance” notify applicant and give three working days from time of notification to bring the proposal into compliance.
TIER II PROGRAM REVIEW

Proposal Title:
Applicant Name:
ID No.:
Reviewer:

Review Methodology

• Familiarize yourself completely with all program guidelines, policies, procedures and announcements.
• Review enclosed evaluation forms. If you have any questions consult with your evaluation team leader.
• Read the proposal carefully and take notes on all critical factors.
• Complete the review forms for each of the five factors in the order provided. Do not jump around.
• Score each factor. If you do not have sufficient recall then refer back to the proposal. Do not assign a numerical rating until after providing written justifications, including indicators and examples. The score given on each factor should be intuitively reasonable and obvious to someone reading your comments.
• Proceed through all five dimensions in this manner.
• Complete summary sheet, sign and date.
• Each proposal will be reviewed by three independent readers and a composite score determined.
I. Demonstration of Problem Significance and Existing Need

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<th>6</th>
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<th>16</th>
<th>18</th>
<th>20</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Weak</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Strong</td>
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Consider:

- Educational improvement problem being addressed.
- Magnitude and criticality of the problem - how many and in what ways are schools, students, communities impacted.
- Characteristics of students and schools being targeted.
- Existing capacity of the school to deliver quality education.
- Level of supportive or alternative educational resources and social services available in the community.
- Recognition that problems exist by appropriate governmental, community or professional organizations.

Provide specific examples or indicators as justification for assigned numerical ratings.

II. Anticipated Impact of Proposed Project or Program

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<td>Moderate</td>
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Consider:

- Number of potential schools impacted by improvement program.
- Number of students that can potentially benefit from enhancement efforts.
- Degree to which program serves those most in need of educational improvement.
- Potential for lasting or long term improvement.
- Program objectives clearly stated and realistic.

Provide specific examples or indicators as justification for assigned ratings.
III. Ability to Deliver Educational Improvement Programs on Schedule and Within Cost

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<th>20</th>
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<td>Limited</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Strong</td>
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Consider:

- Comprehensive and realistic work plan.
- Implementation clearly defined and achievable.
- Organizational relationships are sound and supportive of program objectives.
- Staffing plans are reasonable and in keeping with primary objectives.
- Deliverables related to objectives.
- Schedule detailed and realistic.
- Resources are adequate to accomplish objectives and produce deliverables.

Provide specific examples or indicators as justification for assigned ratings.

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IV. Applicant and Major Contributor Qualifications and Capability

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<td>Highly Qualified</td>
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Consider:

- Applicant record of previous successful accomplishment and experience in similar or related programs.
- Demonstrated applicant technical capability and qualifications.
- Demonstrated applicant management capability and competence.
- Competence and expertise of key personnel.
- Applicant organizational history and relationships with critical educational organizations, parent and community groups necessary to implement program.

Provide specific examples or indicators as justification for assigned ratings.

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Appendix A.
V. Budget Plan

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<th>16</th>
<th>18</th>
<th>20</th>
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<td>Unsound</td>
<td>Somewhat Sound</td>
<td>Very Sound</td>
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Consider:

- Budget is well documented and thought out.
- Figures are realistic given the magnitude of the problem, deliverables anticipated and funding availability.
- Indication of significant cost sharing commitments and partnerships.
- Budgeted items are necessary and essential to achieve program objectives.

Provide specific examples or indicators as justification for assigned ratings.

Summary Rating Sheet

Proposal Title: 
Applicant: 
ID No.: 
Title: 

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Reviewer 1</th>
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<th>Reviewer 3</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Problem</td>
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<td>II. Impact</td>
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<tr>
<td>III. Delivery</td>
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<td>IV. Qualifications</td>
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<td>V. Budget</td>
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<td>Totals</td>
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<td>Final Average</td>
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Transmitted to: 
Transmitted by: 
Date: 

Appendix A. 84
Ranking and Funding Procedures

Determine funding zone locations:

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<th>Zone</th>
<th>Score Range</th>
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<tr>
<td>Zone 2</td>
<td>70-83</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zone 3</td>
<td>0-69</td>
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</table>

- Proposals falling within Zone 1 are eligible for full or partial funding. Forward to review committee for final determinations.
- Proposals falling within Zone 2 are not eligible for funding, unless a statement of special merit and consideration is made by the program director to the review committee outlining reasons for special consideration.
- Proposals falling in Zone 3 are considered noncompetitive and receive no further consideration.
- All proposals scoring 84 and above will be sent to the Awards Committee for final review, ranking and disposition. The committee has the option of awarding funds according to strict ranking procedures or by quartile groups. However, no applicant in a lower quartile group should receive an award until all others in the higher quartile have been fully or partially funded.