

Community College Initiative (CCI) Program Webcast

From Frustrated to Funded: How to Write a Standout Grant Proposal

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Presentation Overview

- ❖ Understanding the competition process
- ❖ Style
- ❖ Content
- ❖ Cover letter
- ❖ Editing
- ❖ Funding agency report



Research grant writing in progress.

Poll Question

Do you have any grant writing experience?

Yes

No

General Introduction: Understand the Competition Process

- ❖ More candidates than money
 - Differentiate
- ❖ Generalist vs Specialist
- ❖ Make the reviewer happy
 - Requirements & Guidelines



Requirements & Guidelines

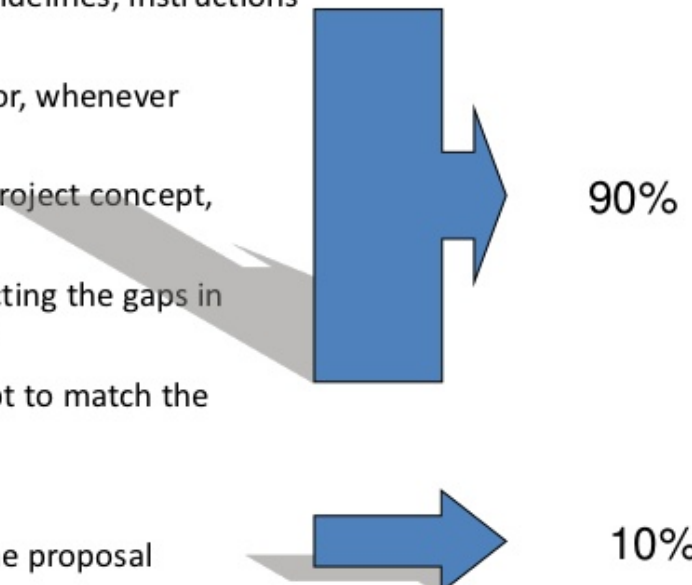
- ❖ Give readers/reviewers what they want
- ❖ Project must fit the grant requirements - reframing might be necessary
- ❖ Guidelines are not open for interpretation

Before you begin: Thinking before writing

Know the Funder

- Each agency has its own “language”
- Carefully review the purpose of the program’s funding
- Guidelines & application form – objectives & deadlines
- Reach out
- Previously funded projects

The 90% Rule of Grant-writing

- Understanding the guidelines, instructions and requirements
 - Contacting the sponsor, whenever appropriate
 - Developing a sound project concept, including data
 - Identifying and correcting the gaps in required information
 - Expanding the concept to match the guidelines
 - Identifying costs
 - Writing/submitting the proposal
- 
- 90%
- 10%

Before you begin: Thinking before writing

Know Yourself

- What exactly do you want to do?
- Well planned / feasible / qualified?
- Why is it important?
- What are we going to learn / why is it worth knowing?
- What do you need to include in your grant?

Give yourself **TIME**

- ❖ Never underestimate how much work is involved
- ❖ Don't be fooled by a small page limit
- ❖ Innovative, well-written, clear, succinct & compliant with instructions
- ❖ Convince your reader:
 - YOUR topic/program/research is important
 - YOU'RE the person to do the work
 - YOU'RE going to make a contribution/value added



Poll Question

How is the pace of the presentation so far?

Too Fast?

Too Slow?

Just Right?

STYLE

Style - Keep It Simple

- ❖ Avoid jargon
- ❖ Avoid clichés
- ❖ Avoid repeating words
- ❖ Use short sentences
- ❖ Use Short paragraphs



Style: Keep It Simple

NOT THIS: Jovial celebration of the day you were brought forth into this world!

THIS: Happy Birthday!

Style: Clear and Concise

- ❖ More is not always better
- ❖ Explicitly state your points
- ❖ Descriptive BUT specific
- ❖ Avoid ambiguity
- ❖ Avoid overused grant words
 - Eg. Very, increase, improve



achieve	distribute	halt	magnify	practice	seize
address	do	help	maintain	praise	select
administer	draft	handle	make	predict	sharpen
advance	draw	help	maintain	prepare	simulate
advise	duplicate	hold	manage	prescribe	specify
advocate	ease	hypothesize	mandate	prioritize	stimulate
allocate	edit	ignite	master	process	strengthen
analyze	educate	identify	measure	produce	study
approach	elevate	impart	mediate	program	suggest
attain	emerge	implement	meet	project	summarize
assess	embrace	improve	mend	promote	suggest
begin	empower	increase	mentor	propel	support
build	encourage	indicate	mobilize	provide	survey
calculate	endure	induce	motivate	purchase	systemize
categorize	enhance	insert	move	qualify	talk
change	engage	inspect	name	question	teach
collaborate	enlighten	inspire	negotiate	quote	terminate
communicate	estimate	institute	network	raise	theorize
compare	evaluate	interpret	note	reach	think
compile	examine	introduce	number	reason	tighten
complete	exceed	interchange	nurture	recognize	translate
compose	expand	interpret	observe	recommend	trim
conduct	explain	intervene	obtain	record	try
consolidate	extend	interview	occupy	reduce	understand
coordinate	facilitate	invent	offer	regulate	undertake
create	fill	investigate	officiate	Reinforce	unite
data	file	isolate	order	remediate	uplift
decide	finance	join	organize	renovate	urge
deduct	finish	justify	oversee	repair	use
define	fix	kindle	pack	report	utilize
delegate	force	launch	page	require	validate
delineate	formulate	lead	pass	research	verify
deliver	furnish	learn	pause	resolve	view
demonstrate	gain	lessen	perceive	revamp	welcome
describe	gather	liberate	perform	restore	widen
design	get	limit	persist	restrict	work
determine	give	listen	persuade	reward	write
direct	grapple	log	plan	sample	yield
discover	grow	look	plea	score	zoom

Style: Clear and Concise

Say What?: Drawing on a multitude of previous research conducted by leaders in the fields of psychology, sociology, neurology, and education based out of top Universities across the globe, adults enrolled in our innovative, novel program will demonstrate statistically significant improvement in their reading scores evaluated based on well established and validated empirical testing scales developed to assess comprehension, speed, word recognition and complexity within 6 months of commencing our program.

Now I get it!: After participating in our innovative learn to read program we anticipate adults will improve their reading ability and comprehension in 6 months.

Poll Question

Does your organization / company / group have someone dedicated to help with grant submissions?

Yes

No

Style: Visually Clean

- ❖ White Space
- ❖ Readability
- ❖ Headings

White Space example

This study's results corroborate the inverse relation between peer victimization and children's academic performance that has been reported previously (see Nakamoto & Schwartz, 2010). Furthermore, the findings extend what is known by clarifying how each of the identified, long-term victimization patterns is related to specific aspects of school engagement and achievement. School engagement. Particular victimization trajectories were found to be associated with all of the investigated aspects of school engagement. School liking was an indicator of children's emotional engagement toward school. Normatively, these feelings became less positive over the course of formal schooling—a trend that is consistent with evidence (see Ladd et al., 2000) suggesting that liking begins high because children initially underestimate the demands of schoolwork, but declines as they develop more realistic feelings toward school. Differences by gender were found in that boys' school liking declined at a significantly faster rate than did girls' during elementary school, and by the end of formal schooling, boys' levels of school liking were significantly lower than girls'.


Results: This study's results corroborate the inverse relation between peer victimization and children's academic performance that has been reported previously (see Nakamoto & Schwartz, 2010). Furthermore, the findings extend what is known by clarifying how each of the identified, long-term victimization patterns is related to specific aspects of school engagement and achievement.

School engagement: Particular victimization trajectories were found to be associated with all of the investigated aspects of school engagement.


School liking was an indicator of children's emotional engagement toward school. Normatively, these feelings became less positive over the course of formal schooling—a trend that is consistent with evidence (see Ladd et al., 2000) suggesting that liking begins high because children initially underestimate the demands of schoolwork, but declines as they develop more realistic feelings toward school.

Headings & Subheadings

Objectives - heading the funding agency expects

Objective 1:  what you might add for clarity for you reader
Objective 2:

Outcomes - heading the funding agency expects

Adult literacy program:  what you might add for clarity for you reader
Youth literacy program:

Poll Question

Checking in again:

How is the pace of the presentation?

Too Fast

Too Slow

Just Right

CONTENT

Content: Statement of Need

If you don't have a compelling need, you likely don't have a compelling project

❖ An Effective Need Statement.....

- Describes the target populations
- Defines the problem
- Related to the purposes and goals of your organization & that of the funding agency
- Includes documentation and supporting information
- Describes the situation in terms that are both factual and of human interest

Content: Statement of Need

- ❖ Links to funder priorities
- ❖ Return to the Request for Proposal / Instructions
 - Highlight keywords / statements
- ❖ Include throughout proposal

Content: Abstract/Introductory Summary/Aims

- ❖ Clear snapshot of entire study/project/program
- ❖ Statement of the problem / goals / objectives
 - Curtail ambition
- ❖ **S.M.A.R.T. Objectives**
 - S: Specific
 - M: Measurable
 - A: Achievable
 - R: Realistic
 - T: Time- Sensitive



Content: Abstract/Introductory Summary/Aims

❖ Key Pieces

- What's novel
- Why you're doing it / Why important / Contribution / Significance
- Action Plan
 - How you're going to do it - show you can pull it off!
- Past success / Pilot work

Content: Project Narrative

- ❖ Supplies all details of the project
- ❖ Detailed statement of the problem, research objectives/goals, hypotheses, methods, procedures, outcomes/deliverables, evaluation, dissemination plans
- ❖ Don't leave reviewers with any questions
- ❖ Make clear connections between all aspects of the project

Content: Personnel, Budget, Time Frame

❖ Personnel:

- Necessary skill sets
- Function & duration of involvement of personnel you will recruit



❖ Budget:

- Well justified
- Meet funding agency requirements (only X% of your budget can be for travel)
- If you don't know what certain costs are (i.e. salary, benefits,) ASK



❖ Time Frame:

- What's going to happen & when
- Visual representation



Poll Question

Do you have previous experience developing a budget?

Yes

No

Cover Letter: Make your cover letter stand out

- ❖ Your proposal one of hundreds
- ❖ **TIP:** Differentiate & keep it easy to read
 - Compel your reader to want to read the full proposal
 - Why your organization is the one to best accomplish the mission
- ❖ **Style:**
 - Don't over complicate your writing

Silly Mistakes - Don't make them!

- ❖ Typos
- ❖ Exceeding limits set for word count
- ❖ Exceeding limits set for page count
- ❖ Unidentified abbreviations
- ❖ Not following instructions
 - Missing information that is to be included
 - Structure of headings required
 - Font / style requirements

How to Avoid Silly Mistakes....



- ❖ EDIT, EDIT, EDIT
- ❖ Sloppy submission = sloppy work
 - Eg. proposal on Lung Cancer that reads LUNCH cancer
- ❖ The same person who writes the grant CANNOT edit it for clarity
- ❖ **Give yourself / others time to review**

Key Editing Questions

- ❖ Are the goals clearly stated?
- ❖ Does this work make a contribution / extend previous work?
- ❖ What impact will this work have?
- ❖ Is how the work is to be conducted clear?
- ❖ Does the proposal make sense as a collective piece?

You got the money, did the
work...now what??

Funding Agency Report

❖ Consider the audience

- What information do they need
- How do they want the information presented
- Why they need the information

Funding Agency Report

❖ Plan your report

- Executive summary: key findings / recommendations
- Introduction: brief description of project, purpose, methods
- Findings & discussion: what you've delivered, how you delivered it, outcomes
- Recommendations: next step actions

Funding Agency Report

- ❖ Write accurately & clearly
- ❖ Be transparent
- ❖ Minimize bias
 - Avoid overclaiming
 - Explore alternative interpretations
 - Limitations to your work (e.g. was there a group of people you ultimately could not contact)
 - Report negative findings
- ❖ Recommendations

REMINDER: CCI GRANT OPPORTUNITY

[Alumni Engagement Innovation Fund ** please note this information is from the 2019 call](#)

The U.S. Department of State's Alumni Engagement Innovation Fund (AEIF) supports alumni initiatives that promote shared values and innovative solutions to global challenges. The competition provides small grants up to \$25,000 to teams of current and former participants of U.S. government-sponsored exchange programs to carry out public service projects. CCI alumni have been part of winning teams in five out of eight competition years. Alumni teams of at least three International Exchange Alumni may submit their project proposal.

QUESTIONS?