INTRODUCTION TO PROPOSAL WRITING

The Proposal Writing Process

PLANNING — *What do you need the money for?*

RESEARCH — *Who will you approach?*

WRITING — *How do you put it all together?*

FOLLOW UP — *What do you do once the decision has been made?*

Key Takeaways

- Start with an outline
- Keep the language clear and concise
- Focus on the funders' interests
- Follow the funders' guidelines
- Revise and edit before submitting

Notes:

RESEARCH

Finding the Right Fit

- Many proposals focus on what's in it for them (the applicant organization), few pay enough attention to what's in it for the funder.
- A grant proposal should be viewed as a win/win proposition.
- Use the *Foundation Directory Online, COS Pivot,* and other databases and print directories to find a potential funding partner.

Typical Proposal Elements: The Blueprint

- Executive Summary
- Narrative
    - Statement of need
    - Project description
    - Organization information
    - Conclusion
- Budget
- Supporting Materials

How does what you do fit with the funder's interests?

Use the resources at the Grants Information Collection to find the right fit: go.wisc.edu/grants

Notes:

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: WHAT TO INCLUDE

The executive summary is one of the most important parts of the proposal. The reviewer will often read it first to determine if they want to continue reading the rest of the proposal.

> Even though the executive summary comes first, you should write it last.

♦ Statement of need
♦ Goals and objectives
♦ Background on you organization
♦ Costs of the project and amount requested

Notes:

WHAT DO FUNDERS REALLY WANT TO KNOW?

♦ **What specific *need* are you addressing?**
  o What audience and community are you serving?
  o What evidence do you have to support your need?

♦ **What are you trying to achieve?**
  o What are your goals and objectives? (Think S.M.A.R.T.)

♦ **How will you know if you are successful?**
  o Specify program objectives in measurable outcomes
  o Identify key indicators of success
  o Outline data collection and analysis activities
  o Develop a timeline to monitor the success of the program on an ongoing basis

♦ **Why are you the best organization to do this work?**
  o Mission and history
  o Programs
  o Leadership
  o Accomplishments

♦ **How will this project sustain itself in the long run?**
  o How will your project move toward self-sufficiency in the future?
  o How will this project sustain itself without foundation support?

Contact us with any questions or to schedule an appointment: go.wisc.edu/grants
Additional materials and handouts are available here:
http://researchguides.library.wisc.edu/proposalwriting/proposalworkshop

Notes:

CONCLUSION: THE FINAL APPEAL FOR YOUR PROJECT

♦ Make it compelling
♦ Tailor it to speak to THIS particular funder's guidelines and interests

FOLLOW UP

The answer is yes	**The answer is no**
♦ Send a thank you letter	♦ It's not personal
♦ Keep the funder informed	♦ Find out why
♦ Be responsive	♦ Ask about future funding
♦ Do what you said you were going to do	♦ Move on; seek other prospects

Notes: