Raising Money From Foundations.

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www.grantspace.org   This is a great place to find free trainings on line as well as in differing cities across the country. It's a program of the Foundation Center.

Let's begin with Do's and Don'ts

Overarching do's and don't's

- **Research the foundation before you write.** What are they interested in supporting and under that issue/program area what pieces of the work do they want or most often support?

  Don't assume because they fund environment that your work fits.

- **Do not use 10 pitch fonts.** Humans read the proposal and if they struggle with the print size then you're putting them in a bad mood to hear what you are doing.   12 pitch is best.

- **Follow their instructions.** Make a list of the things they ask for and when your done writing and ready to send - check against your list to ensure you have what you need.

- **Many have word or page limits** and if you exceed them, the intake person will kick out your proposal before it even gets to a program person to read.

  Do they want profiles of those leading the work? A 990 or W9 or audit**. If you don't have everything, they require than explain why you don't – don't just ignore the request.**

- **Use stories to move the program officer.** Tell about a family that is a victim of the problem in a human-interest way. Instead of saying families can't go outdoors because of the pollution. First tell the story of Mrs. --- who has three sick children ages 6, 9, 11. Even though Jimmy, her 11 year old, is an amazing hitter and wants to be a professional baseball player -- he can't join the little league team because he can't breath due to asthma ….Most children are, like Jimmy and unable to spend time outdoors. Data is important but only to support your goals stay away from using too much statistics or data. Refer back to Jimmy & his mom.

- **Try and avoid words that can have two distinct interpretations.** Like policy. Are you lobbying? If not use a different word or explain what you are doing in detail. (regulations practices)

Campaigns is another one where I've heard funders say we don't support campaigns rather we support local groups for the long haul. <u>Campaign</u>s can be seen as a flash activity or political activity without longevity. Use program efforts, initiatives, fight for ….

- **If you are successful in getting a grant don't wait until the report is due to talk or communicate with the funder.** Send new clips, short 1-2 paragraphs successful mtg. program people talk to each other and to give an update provides a new story to tell their boss, around the water cooler or at their next joint meetings. My rule of thumb is every 6-8 weeks.

So Let Talk A Little About The Proposal Writing Process.

This is a template that is pretty typical of most funders. This one I took from an on-line publication. You can download the full document from Fundamental Grant Proposal Template: 8 Crucial Components; Published By Jamie L. On April 17, 2018 at https://snowballfundraising.com/grant-proposal-template/

7 essential sections that should be included in most types of nonprofit grant applications:

1. Cover letter

2. Executive summary

3. Statement of need

4. Goals and objectives

5. Plan of evaluation

6. Budget information

7. Organizational background

1. Cover letter is an introduction – not the proposal keep it short. --one page

Essential you use the cover letter of your **grant proposal to make a great first impression**. Here's what a great cover letter should accomplish:

- Briefly describe your organization and its mission.

- Very loosely explain your plans and how the grant will fit in.

- Connect the funder's interests and requirements with your plans.

- Clearly state the positive impact your program will have.

- Convey your passion for your proposed project.

One smart technique is to wait to write your cover letter until you've completed the entire grant proposal.

[Date of proposal completion]

Dear _____,

The Nonprofit Organization respectfully requests a grant of [grant value] for our Nonprofit Organization Programming Project...

Serving a large community of constituents, the Nonprofit Organization works to fulfill its mission by...

Our proposed Nonprofit Organization Programming Project will allow us to:

- Achieve the specific mission of the project, and
- Create other positive impacts on the community.

2. Executive Summary

Your executive summary is especially important because there's a chance a busy grant program officer will read it first and then choose whether to read the entire proposal.

Moreover, your executive summary needs to convince the funder of three main points:

- That your proposed program is *necessary and important* to your community.

- That your organization has the *background and expertise* to accomplish your plans.

- That your proposed plans are *connected and relevant* to the funder's interests.

This **summary should be a few paragraphs not pages.**

3. Statement of need:

The challenge of a statement of need is to strike the perfect balance. Convey the importance or necessity of your project, but also fill your funder with optimism that *your* program will solve a serious problem or address an urgent need. your proposed program positively impact your community in quantifiable (measurable) ways.

Otherwise, your project looks like a very poor investment. Focus on clearly explaining the issue that drives your programs, and follow these best practices for a statement of need:

- **Convey a sense of urgency but not of pessimism.** The problem must be urgent but solvable.
- **Provide some community history.** The funder needs some context to fully understand the issue at hand.
- **Include a human story** – the ___ family can not go outside without ….
  It's not right that their children are sick and can't enjoy their yard because it's poisoned.
- **Use some authoritative statistics.** Compile the statistics and research you use in your other fundraising campaigns or media reports/releases.
- **Keep it brief.** A statement of need should be about one page long.

4. Goals & Objectives

Goals: What it is you're fighting for. For example, a healthy safe place for families to live, work, pray and play.

To achieve that goal we are beginning by –obtaining real enforcement from the USEPA around illegal air emissions on the ---name—polluter so that our community can breathe clean air and enjoy their outdoors.

Directly tie your goals to your statement of need. Our long term goal is to get _____

Objectives: Are steps your group will take to achieve that goal.

- Objectives should be realistic, specific, and time-bound.

Objective #1 Increase our membership so we have more citizen power to impact change.

In the first 3 months we will go door to door and educate community families about the problem and solutions. We will identify allies like nurses, workers, environmental and other organization and invite them to join us.

Objective #2 Develop a strategic plan how to move decision makers to enforce the law.

Following the door to door work we will bring everyone together at a community meeting to define a strategic plan to move both EPA, the state regulatory agency and the company to stop poisoning our community.

Objective #3 Build the skills of community leaders to be more affective messengers, fundraisers and community advocates.

We will also offer leadership training for local people and establish working committees. This is important for holding more organized meetings, getting out message out by training our local messengers . . . .

Remember, this section of goals and objectives with strategies to win them contains the tangible plan that you're asking the grant program officer to fund.

It can be useful to think of your methods and strategies as a high-stakes sales pitch because that's effectively what it is. Depending on the exact nature of your proposal's goals, you might

choose to format this section as either a chronological description of your program or as subsections for each of your objectives.

5. Plan of Evaluation

Your plan of evaluation should set some concrete, quantifiable goalposts for measuring your program's success. These should be established for the end objectives of your plan but also at periodic points during its implementation. For instance, you can set some final engagement numbers and statistics to reach.

6. Budget Information

This is another extremely important section for assuring the funder that your proposed program is both actionable and sustainable.

Read through your entire strategies section again, noting each individual instance in which your organization will need to expend resources. These will likely include:

- Personnel and travel costs
- Fringe benefits for staff
- Equipment and supplies costs
- Facility costs for meeting
- Printing for door to door leafleting
- Indirect or overhead costs (rent of office, phone, etc.)
- 'Market value' of in-kind contributions
- If you are using a passthrough C 3 include their fee in this budget.

With every budget you need income:

Most foundations will not support more than 1/3 of a total budge. So where are you going to get the other 2/3's from?

Be realistic if you inflate your costs (cushion) than you need to raise more revenue/money.

7. Organizational Background

Include the following information in this section:

- A brief history of the organization's founding and evolution
- A detailed list of your organizations past major projects and initiatives

- Short biographies of the organization's leaders and key staff or volunteers

- More info on the people who will be directly involved with the proposed program such as an outside trainer for leadership or speaker at a meeting to educate about a topic like a scientist or public health professional.

At this point the grant program officer has already committed to reading your entire proposal it can be useful to humanize your staff and volunteers with some personal information and background. Live here for three generations and farmed the land. Plus, highlighting your team's competence can convince them to support your proposal.

CHEJ does provide small grants to groups at the intersection of public health and the environment. You can find more information on our website at: http://chej.org/chej-small-grants-program/   For our next grant cycle proposals are due on July 16th.