



# Preparing Your Grant Proposal

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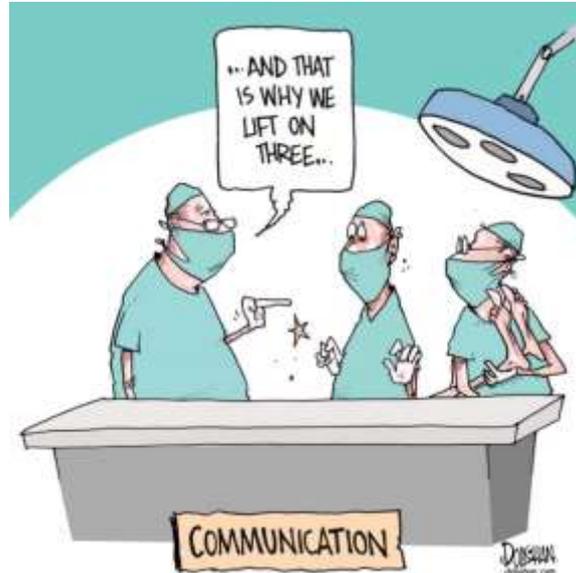
**THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION**

Serving Richmond and Central Virginia

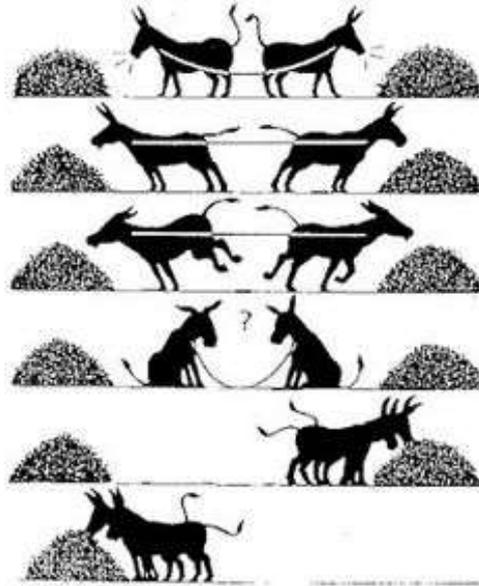




- Do your research ahead of submitting a proposal to know if your organization is a good fit.
- Cookie cutter proposals don't work because each funding entity has its own personality, guidelines, and reasons for giving money.
- Don't turn yourself into a pretzel in order to make the fit...demonstrate that your organization is the right fit because you are the best provider of a specific service or program.



- Communication with the foundation is key!
- If you have questions, call your program officer or foundation staff.
- If you are new to the funder, are submitting a request for a new project, or are asking for an unusual amount, call first.



- Be aware of other organizations who are working in your field, or with a similar population.
- Listen, be present in the community, meet with other providers, talk with colleagues on the state and national level.
- Participate in local resource councils to better understand the community-wide picture and how your organization and programs fit into this larger view.

# Essential Elements of a Proposal



# NEEDS STATEMENT

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graph LR; A((NEEDS STATEMENT)) --> B((What is the specific need you are addressing with this program or project?)); A --> C((How do you know? From research? A needs assessment or community data? Your own experience? BE SPECIFIC!));
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What is the specific need you are addressing with this program or project?

How do you know?  
From research? A needs assessment or community data? Your own experience?  
**BE SPECIFIC!**

# YOU BE THE JUDGE...

**Is this a strong needs statement? – The request was for a prevention program targeting underage drinking in one local middle school.**

Underage drinking and other high risk behaviors contribute to a wide range of costly social and health problems including injury and death, interpersonal violence, brain impairment, substance dependence, risky sexual activity, and poor academic performance.

# YOU BE THE JUDGE...

**How about this one? – This high-impact grant request was for the establishment of a Rapid Re-Housing program in one county.**

In 2013, 13 families in the county identified themselves to the agency as currently experiencing homelessness or in danger of becoming homeless. Reasons given by the identified citizens included unemployment, domestic violence, and disagreements with landlords. A Point in Time Count conducted in January 2014 identified five individuals experiencing homelessness. Since January, the agency has identified an additional family of four experiencing homelessness. While the agency does have limited funds available to assist families with children under the age of 18 experiencing homelessness, there are no funds specifically earmarked to assist single adults and/or senior/disabled citizens experiencing homelessness. With limited funds available to assist families with children, the agency is only able to assist with a rental deposit and first months rent. These funds are typically depleted by March of each year....

# PROJECT DESCRIPTION

**WHO?**

**WHAT?**

**WHEN?**

**WHERE?**

- This the place to really explain the nuts and bolts of the program.
- Demonstrate that the program is well laid out, realistic, and that you are far enough along to be requesting support.
- Even if you have received funding for this program in the past, provide details. There are often new committee members, that may not be familiar with your work.
- Is the program implementing a BEST PRACTICE in the field you are working in? Is the program evidence based, model based or based on your own experience?

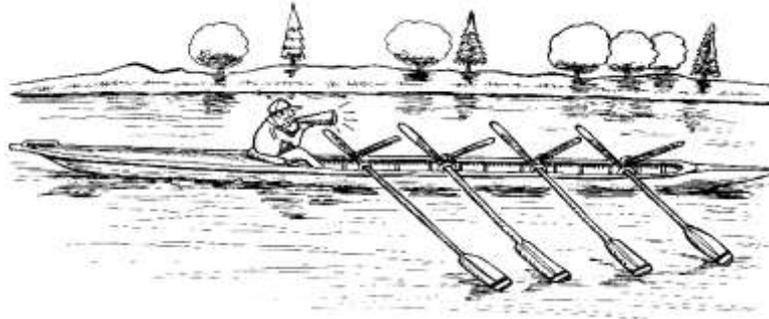
# MISSION RELATION

**Is the program in support of the agency's mission? Does it advance your strategic plan and make sense for where you are now?**

**This can be a very simple answer, unless you are reaching into a new space. For example, a job training program who is requesting funds for a childcare program. Make the connection here.**



# COLLABORATION



- Are you partnering to maximize the impact of your work? Can you demonstrate you are not duplicating efforts?
- Do not list every agency you talk to or work with. Focus on your key partners in this specific program request. If it is a vital partnership, consider including a memorandum of understanding between those organizations.
- Nearly every year, a grants committee receives multiple requests from multiple organizations doing very similar work. It can be difficult to understand if this is necessary (distinct populations, locations, etc.) or if organizations are not working together. Think about the questions the committee may have around this issue, and address them in this space.

# COMMUNITY IMPACT

“Our programs are designed to be bigger than the success of one kid. Our vision is that the neighborhoods in which we now work will become places where every young person not only believes they can succeed, but also has the opportunity to do so, regardless of the family they were born into.”

This is an opportunity to be more expressive in your language to show how you are making a higher-level, big picture impact. What would success look like? What are the long-term goals that will make your community a better place?

While questions previously wanted the nailed-down specifics – this question allows you to be broad and overarching.



# ANTICIPATED RESULTS

List three specific project goals with anticipated results. These are goals you expect to meet in the grant period (one year, one summer, etc.). All results should have clearly defined numbers or percentages attached that are both realistic and measurable.

If the program or project is long-term or spans beyond the grant period – note this, and use the anticipated results as your benchmarks for this specific time period.

Try and think beyond activities (counting people) to think about how your program improves the lives of participants in a measurable way.

PROJECT GOALS	ANTICIPATED RESULTS
Improved school readiness	80% of parents whose children are enrolled in preschool will read to their children three times a week.
Improve parents' budgeting and debt reduction knowledge and skills	50 parents will attend financial literacy workshops. 80% (40) of parents will demonstrate an increase in knowledge, and 70% (35) of parents will report changes in behavior.
Decrease wait time between a referral and a medical appointment	By the end of the grant year, the wait time between referral and appointment will decrease from an average of 20 days to an average of 10 days.
Ensure all newly enrolled patients will receive a mental health assessment	95% of newly enrolled patients will receive a mental health assessment.

# EVALUATION PLAN

## *How will you measure progress toward these goals?*

- Parents will keep a weekly reading log and logs will be reviewed by staff each month.
- Clients are provided with pre/post tests for the financial skills workshop series, which provides quantitative feedback on knowledge gained.
- The patient database captures referral date and appointment date for each patient. This information can be reviewed by time frame to assess the average number of days a patient waits between referral and appointment.
- Newly enrolled patients are entered into the patient tracking database, and all services received are tracked.

# USE OF FUNDS

“Funds from this grant will be used to help adults receive their GED.” *Versus...*

Description	Amount
Two laptop computers	\$1690
One-year license GED Academy Study Program (10 reusable seats)	\$1362
Mavis Beacon Typing Program	\$100
New Reader Pleasure Reading Series (5 levels)	\$500
<b>TOTAL:</b>	\$3652

Which way provides a clearer answer to the question?

Use this space to clearly articulate exactly how foundation funds will be used, even if you are requesting operating support.

# SOURCES OF SUPPORT

- DEMONSTRATION OF CAPACITY for this program request
- Not just a list...include #s or %s

Source of Revenue	Amount
Foundations	\$133,000
Corporations	\$25,000
Memorials	\$4,000
Patrons	\$85,000
Special Events	\$15,000
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$262,000</b>

# LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY

Because foundation grants are often a single year of support:

- What happens after the grant year ends?
- Will you request additional funding next year from the foundation?
- Do you have a plan in place to ensure the program will sustain?
- Are there revenue streams from the program that will help sustain it after the initial start- up?



# ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY



- Your proposal needs to demonstrate that your agency has the capacity (internal infrastructure) to carry out and sustain an effective program, which includes:
- Strong and engaged board – including a strategic plan
- Diverse financial support
- Staff or volunteer resources
- Vision for the future

## DO...

...your homework.

...call and ask questions.

...follow the directions for applying.

...use the current year's application.

...submit a concise, well thought out program.

## DO NOT...

...apply blind.

...be afraid to pick up the phone.

...wait until the last minute, and rush.

...print out last year's and change the date.

...glaze over details or go too broad.

## DO...

...request an appropriate amount.

...keep it simple.

...stay honest to the mission of your organization, and the programs you are best at delivering.

...stay connected, even after grants are awarded – even when things don't go as planned.

## DO NOT...

...ask for more than your current budget.

...try to solve world peace in one grant proposal.

...chase the money.

...be afraid to be honest about changing circumstances and situations.



# QUESTIONS?

Call or Email Leslie Franklin  
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